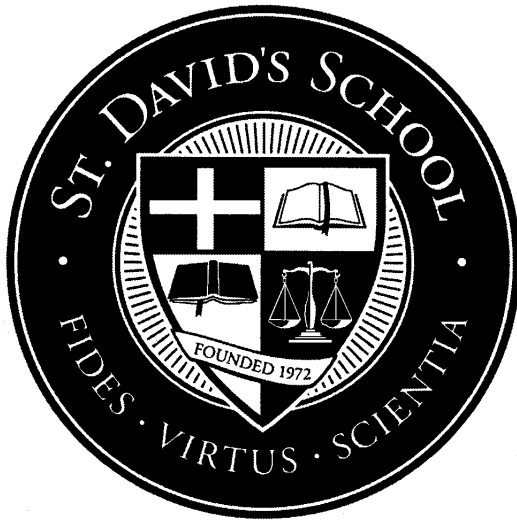


# ST. DAVID'S SCHOOL



## Middle School Curriculum Guide 2012-2013

Dear Parents and Students,

As students move through the Middle School at St. David's, their experience will include challenging courses that create a curiosity and desire to know more. This Curriculum Guide is designed to help you select courses that will challenge, but not overwhelm, the student.

Please take time to read and review this 2012-2013 Middle School Curriculum Guide with your student and carefully select the courses he/she desires to take for his/her appropriate grade level. As you begin to plan your student's courses for next year, you will find it helpful to consider these points:

### **Homework Load**

All courses follow a homework guideline policy as outlined in this Curriculum Guide. In selecting your courses, please be aware of these guidelines and choose carefully. Homework assignments will be posted on Edline at [www.edline.net](http://www.edline.net) making this information readily available for your needs.

### **Course Selection**

English and Math courses have been delineated as Standard and Advanced/Honors courses. Advanced courses, such as Algebra I and Geometry, are a year or more ahead of the standard course of study. Honors courses have the same basic content as the Standard courses but with assignments and reading requirements at a more challenging level and accelerated pace. Standardized testing and teacher recommendation will determine English and Math placement.

### **Physical Education/Electives**

Fifth and sixth graders are required to take P.E. for a full year, leaving them only one year-long elective class period. Physical Education in 7th and 8th grade may be pursued in one of the following ways.

- Participation in one season per year of extra-curricular sports, or school-sponsored physical activity:

#### **Fall Sports**

\*Cross-Country  
\*Cheerleading  
\*Football  
Boys Soccer  
Girls Tennis  
Girls Volleyball

*\*No-cut sports*

#### **Winter Sports**

Basketball  
\*Cheerleading  
\*Swimming  
\*Track

#### **Spring Sports**

Baseball  
Golf  
Girls Softball  
Boys Tennis  
\*Track and Field  
Girls Soccer

- A commitment to a year-round physical activity such as swimming, equestrian sports or Tae Kwon Do, **with the prior written approval of the P.E. department chair and Middle School Principal.**
- Serving as manager for one or more extra-curricular school sports teams.

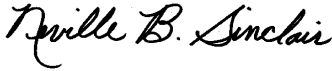
## **Foreign Language**

Seventh grade students may choose between Introduction to Classical Languages, which consists of one semester of Latin, followed by one semester of Greek, OR Latin I. Please consult the course descriptions under the Classics department for more information about the nature of these two courses.

Eighth grade students are required to either further their study of a classical language (Latin I, II or Greek I), or they may choose to begin their study of a modern language (French I or Spanish I). **Greek is not considered a 'core' language in terms of meeting the Upper School language requirement.**

Throughout the registration process, do not hesitate to contact a grade chair, department chair, the registrar or division principal if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Neville B. Sinclair". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Neville B. Sinclair  
K-8 Principal

## **General Information**

### **Course Registration**

Class schedules and teacher assignments are determined on the basis of information provided during registration the previous spring; therefore, students should carefully consider their selections in registering for the following year. Although student choices of electives will be honored to the greatest extent possible, balance in class size and numbers of requests may preclude granting a first choice in all instances.

All scheduling conflicts will be addressed prior to the start of the course with the approval of the division principal. All drop/add requests must be made to the Registrar within the first two weeks of the start of the course. Drop/add request forms are provided by the Registrar's office, or may be downloaded from the school website.

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### **Exams**

The school year is divided into two semesters, at the end of which 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders take two-hour examinations. Examinations account for 10 percent of the total grade in the Middle School. A student who is ill and cannot take an exam should:

- Supply a parental note.
- Contact the Grade Chair who will schedule make-up exams.

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### **Extra Help**

Students may obtain individualized help from teachers at the end of the school day, Monday through Thursday, in Extra Help. This time allows students to ask questions, to clarify ideas, to practice or reinforce skills, to make up work, quizzes or tests missed due to absences, or to pursue a special topic of interest. Any student having difficulty scheduling Extra Help should see the Grade Chair. If a student requires more than one Extra Help session per week in a given subject, we encourage outside tutorial help or, if approved, inclusion in our Academic Support Program. Private tutors are not allowed to tutor on campus.

- Any student with a grade below 75 is strongly encouraged to seek Extra Help.
- Any student with a grade below 70 will be required by the subject teacher to report to Extra Help.
- A student may be required to attend Extra Help at the teacher's discretion.
- Once Extra Help is required, students and parents should make the necessary arrangements for transportation home. Failure to attend required Extra Help will be treated as if the student has skipped the class, and will result in a detention.

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## Failures

Any grade below 70% is a failure. To receive a passing grade and earn credit in a yearlong course, a student must earn a two-semester average of 70%.

A student failing two or more core subjects for the year will be considered for repetition of the grade or dismissal.

Middle school students who have failed a semester as the result of failing an exam are eligible for a re-exam under the following conditions:

1. Student must have a passing pre-exam average (70% or above).
2. Examination grade must not be lower than 50%.
3. Student must take the re-exam at a specified time and date.

To receive a passing grade for the course, the student must pass the re-examination. The maximum semester grade, based on passing the re-examination, is 70%. If the student passes the re-exam, both the exam grade and the semester grade will be recorded as 70%. A student who does not receive a passing grade on the re-exam receives the higher of the two exam grades and the resulting final average.

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## Homework

Teachers assign homework on a regular basis. Students should prioritize and manage their own schedules to allow time for homework to be balanced with personal activities. In planning, students should allow for adequate time to complete assigned homework.

**Homework is assigned in various classes according to the following guidelines:**

- **Full Homework Course:** 30 minutes per night
- **Light Homework Course:** 15 minutes per night
- **No Homework Course:** No homework on a regular basis – homework may be assigned occasionally

Please note that in some Honors and Advanced classes, homework may exceed 30 minutes per night.

### ***Homework Guidelines:***

- Parents may and should be interested in and encourage their child's efforts; however, homework ultimately represents a student's effort. (*Sharing homework, unless specifically permitted in certain cases of group work by teachers, breaks the Honor Code.*)
- No assignments are given over Thanksgiving Break, Christmas Break, Winter Break, Easter Break, or on other occasions specified by the Middle School Principal.

### ***Study habits:***

The following are suggestions for students reinforcing or improving upon present habits:

- ***Do not procrastinate.*** Plan ahead. Do not put off assignments, papers, or homework. Use your assignment book to plan ahead, and mix major assignments with your daily homework so both will be completed well.
- ***Set up a regular study time and location.*** Do not study in a busy part of the house where there are other distractions. Set up a regular study location and let other family members know so they can work their own routine around your schedule.
- ***Collect all materials needed.*** Set up everything you will need for your study time so that you will not need to get up constantly, and be distracted from your tasks.
- ***Be realistic about time expectations.*** Do not expect to do all of the preparation work in one hour the night before a test or a major paper is due. Allow enough time to do your best job on the expected work, but also some time to do some additional research or problem solving which may not have been assigned. Allow yourself time to be curious and creative.

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### **Records and Recommendations**

Requests for records and recommendations must be in writing to the Registrar, preferably 48 hours in advance of a deadline. During June and July, at least seven working days notice will be necessary to avoid disappointment. The school reserves the right to withhold student records when accounts are delinquent.

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### **Test Scheduling**

St. David's School attempts to avoid overburdening students with too many tests on the same day. No student should ever have more than two tests on the same day (note that this does not apply to quizzes, projects or papers due).

If a student has more than two tests scheduled on the same day, the student must speak with his/her teachers at least one day prior to the test to arrange for rescheduling.

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## Middle School Four-Year Course of Study

*Please note: Advanced coursework is designed as a year or more ahead of the standard course. Honors courses have the same basic content as the standard course, but with assignments and reading requirements at a more challenging level and accelerated pace.*

5 <sup>th</sup> Grade Course of Study		
Subject	Standard College Prep	Honors
English	English 5	English 5 Honors
Math	Math 5	Math 5 Honors
History	World Geography 5	
Science	General Science	
Language	Language Arts 5	
Physical Education	P.E. 5	
Fine Arts	Beginning Band Voice and the Stage 5 Art 5	
Computer	Computer 5	

<b>6<sup>th</sup> Grade Course of Study</b>		
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Standard College Prep</b>	<b>Honors/ Advanced</b>
<b>English</b>	English 6	English 6 Honors
<b>Math</b>	Math 6	Math 6 Honors Pre-Algebra 6 (Adv.)
<b>History</b>	World Cultures 6	
<b>Science</b>	Life Science	
	Life Long Learning: Media Studies, Health, Grammar in Action, Writing and Roots	
<b>Physical Education</b>	P.E. 6	
<b>Fine Arts/ Electives</b>	Beginning Band Intermediate Band Voice and the Stage 6 Art 6	

<b>7<sup>th</sup> Grade Course of Study</b>		
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Standard College Prep</b>	<b>Honors/ Advanced</b>
<b>English</b>	English 7	English 7 Honors
<b>Math</b>	Math 7	Pre-Algebra (Hon.) Algebra I (Adv.)
<b>History</b>	US History 7 Bible Survey	
<b>Science</b>	Earth Science	
<b>Language</b>	Intro to Classical Languages Latin I	
<b>Physical Education</b>	See note under PE department	
<b>Electives (Choose total of 4 semesters)</b>	Concert Band Computer electives English electives Science electives History electives Fine Arts electives	

<b>8<sup>th</sup> Grade Course of Study</b>		
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Standard College Prep</b>	<b>Honors/Advanced</b>
<b>English</b>	English 8	English 8 Honors
<b>Math</b>	Pre-Algebra	Algebra I (Hon.) Geometry 8 (Adv.)
<b>History</b>	U.S. History 8	
<b>Science</b>	Physical Science	
<b>Language</b>	Latin I Latin II French I Spanish I	
<b>Physical Education</b>	See note under PE department	
<b>Electives (Choose total of 4 semesters)</b>	Spanish I French I Concert Band Wind Ensemble Computer electives English electives History electives Science electives Fine Arts electives	

## St. David's Middle School Course Offerings

### Life-Long Learning

This sixth grade course offers a sampling of four different subject areas that are of particular relevance and interest to the sixth grade student's academic, physical and spiritual development. The class consists of four nine-week components: Grammar in Action, Health, Media Studies and Writing and Roots. Students will rotate through all four classes throughout the course of the 6th grade year.

*(Light Homework Course) (Full Year Course)*

Grammar in Action: A thorough understanding of English grammar is crucial for any student who wishes to read with understanding and write with fluency. In fact, our ability to engage the written word, to unlock it as readers and to employ it as writers, is directly correlated to our success in any field of study. Thus, in this course, students will begin by fine tuning their knowledge of grammar. We will explore parts of speech, parts of the sentence, phrases, and clauses. Using that knowledge, students will then move to the practical application of writing with confidence, with consideration for sentence composition, fluid transition, and paragraph formation.

Health: Students will focus on the understanding of health issues and the importance of practicing proper health skills. Students will build personal and social skills they need to choose lifelong, healthy behaviors. The course will focus on four essential areas: Nutrition, Building Healthy Relationships, Human Growth and Development, and Safety.

Media Studies: Students will analyze multiple forms of media in order to understand the role of media in society, and to develop the critical skills of inquiry necessary for the 21st century. By examining news, advertising, movies, television, and the internet, students will learn to access, analyze, evaluate, and create various types of media and understand their part in a constantly changing world.

Writing and Roots: Writing is an important skill that one will use throughout his or her lifetime. In this modern age of technology, faster forms of communication often take precedence over formal writing; yet, it is a timeless skill that is essential to expressing ideas and providing information. In this nine-week course, students will explore various types of writing such as informative, persuasive, narrative, and point-of-view in an environment that allows for the freedom of expression while at the same time incorporates the formal process of writing. Students will practice a variety of forms such as journaling, story writing, essay writing, and editorial writing. Also, students will write about topics that they are currently studying in their Life Science, World Cultures, and English classes. As a culminating activity, students will compile a complete portfolio. In addition to the writing component of this course, students will also expand their knowledge of vocabulary by learning Latin roots and their English derivatives, as sixty-five

percent of the English language is derived from the Latin language. The study of vocabulary will provide students with opportunities to use new words in their writing.

## Classics

### Introduction to Classical Languages

This course introduces students to the foundational languages of western civilization: Latin and classical Greek. Students first learn about the nature of Latin as an inflected language and develop critical thinking skills to understand it. The Romans' role in the society of the new, 1st century AD Christian church is emphasized. Students then switch to ancient Greek, learning the alphabet and first principles of the language in which the New Testament is written. At the end of the course, students will have a strong appreciation for the ancient context of the Christian faith and a solid grounding in language study, so that they may proceed to their Upper School elective languages, whether ancient or modern, with great confidence. **Introduction to Classical Languages, or Latin I, is required for all seventh-grade students at St. David's.**

*(Full Homework Course) (Full Year Course)*

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### Latin I

Latin I provides an academically rigorous introduction to the Latin language and Roman culture. Building on the foundations provided in Introduction to Classical Languages, this course extends and deepens student knowledge of Latin grammar, syntax, and vocabulary (with attention to Latin-derived English vocabulary, giving the student a thorough grounding for future Latin study. The Roman context of New Testament society is reemphasized, and students develop a full appreciation for Roman contributions to western civilization. **Introduction to Classical Languages or Latin I is required for all seventh-grade students at St. David's.**

*(Full Homework Course) (Full Year Course)*

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### Latin II

In Latin II, students will both solidify and add to the foundation of the previous year with the ever-present goal of understanding authentic Latin. Instruction will focus on the problem-solving elements of translation, building mental capacity for memorization, and mastery of more advanced vocabulary and its influence on the English language. The year will culminate in translation of portions of the Latin Bible, myths in Latin, and Roman historical writers. Middle and Upper School Latin II classes may be combined depending on class enrollment, availability of faculty, and scheduling needs.

*Prerequisite: Latin I (Full Homework Course) (Full Year Course)*

## Computer

### Computer 5

Computer 5 continues to build foundational skills in keyboarding, file management, and the use of the Microsoft Office Suite package with an emphasis on publishing and presentation programs such as Powerpoint and Windows Movie Maker. Keyboarding instruction is done through our web based program entitled Typing Pal. Students work both at school and at home to reach grade level benchmarks. Computer 5 includes other aspects of the digital arena including, but not limited to, copyright law, cyber etiquette, and the use of many Web 2.0 sites. *(Light Homework) (Full Year Course)*

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### Computer Programming

This course is designed to give students an introduction to the structure and syntax of common programming languages such as Java, C+ and C#. Students learn in an interactive 3-D graphical programming environment (Alice) which allows students to develop and animate 3-D objects by inserting and changing traditional programming statements. Students learn to make short films and games with their programs and immediately watch the effect of subtle changes to their programmed statements. While developing in Alice, students are introduced to basic.

*Prerequisite: One computer elective or permission of the instructor. (Light Homework Course) (Semester Course)*

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### Digital Media Tools

This single semester technology course will develop skills with applications and interactive resources of digital media. Students will learn to use software, such as Adobe Acrobat and Photoshop; and web technologies, to engage in the creative and expressive processes of visual, audio, and written digital mediums. Students will not only use the computer, but also digital cameras, video camera, and other digital media devices in the creative learning process. Learning to use and implement these innovative skills will enhance a student's ability to present themselves in class, on paper, and in the digital realm, all the while providing a solid foundation to their digital portfolio. The only prerequisite for this course is a desire to engage in the digital creative process, while learning the virtual nuts and bolts of these tools.

*(Light Homework Course) (Semester Course)*

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## **Robotics**

This one semester course is designed for students with a strong interest in technology who wish to further their abilities. In this one semester course, students learn how to create robots that perform simple maneuvers. This course includes both the construction of a robot, as well as development of computer programming skills. A basic understanding of computers is expected of students enrolling in this course.

*(Light Homework Course) (Semester Course)*

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## **Web Design**

In this one-semester course, students will examine computer history, development, and hardware components. Students will then learn how to explore the Internet and develop efficient searching techniques. Students will use both HTML commands and page layout programs to construct web pages. Students will also work with graphics and audio files. As a final project in the course, students will develop an extensive web page to be posted on the World Wide Web.

*(Light Homework Course) (Semester Course)*

## English/Language Arts

### English 5

This middle school course focuses on the various genres of literature. The elements of fiction and general literary terms will be introduced. An emphasis will be placed on the following skills: decoding, finding context clues within a passage, and improving analytical and critical thinking skills. Challenging vocabulary words will also be introduced and mastered with each literary selection.

*(Full Homework Course) (Full Year Course)*

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### English 5 Honors

English 5 Honors students learn to read various genres of literature and grow in their understanding of the elements of fiction including character, setting, and plot. Basic reading concepts are strengthened while improving analytical and critical thinking skills. An emphasis on literary analysis and composition is incorporated into the course. Book reports are assigned to students throughout the year. Students also participate in three novel studies during the year. Honors students are expected to have a solid foundation in grammar and to read well at an advanced pace.

*(Full Homework Course) (Full Year Course)*

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### Language Arts 5

As a complement to the English 5 course, Language Arts 5 integrates the components of vocabulary, grammar, and writing. Student vocabularies are enhanced through the combined study of Latin roots and advanced English vocabulary. The grammar study provides students with a solid understanding of parts of speech, components of a sentence, phrases, and clauses. Students practice their developing grammar and writing skills, particularly correct sentence and paragraph formation, through various types of writing assignments, including creative writing, journal writing, and research-based writing.

*(Light Homework Course) (Full Year Course)*

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### English 6

The English 6 course facilitates the development of students' skills in reading comprehension, vocabulary, and fluency of expression through the study of excellent selections of literature. Students read and carefully examine various novels, short stories, and poems. As full comprehension of a piece of literature is preceded by a fundamental understanding of the individual words which comprise it, vocabulary study is given high priority and is continually approached in the context of literature. Once comprehension of the written word is attained, students are guided to use their own words, both oral and written, to express clearly what they have read and understood.

*(Full Homework Course) (Full Year Course)*

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## **English 6 Honors**

The English 6 Honors course facilitates the development of students' skills in reading comprehension, vocabulary, and fluency of expression through the study of excellent selections of literature. Students read and carefully examine various novels, short stories, and poems. As full comprehension of a piece of literature is preceded by a fundamental understanding of the individual words which comprise it, vocabulary study is given high priority and is continually approached in the context of literature. Once comprehension of the written word is attained, students are guided to use their own words, both oral and written, to express clearly what they have read and understood. Oral skills are integrated throughout the course, from reading passages aloud to articulating literary concepts in class discussion. Honors students are expected to have a solid foundation in grammar and to read well at an advanced pace.

*(Full Homework Course) (Full Year Course)*

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## **English 7**

Students in English 7 increase their knowledge and appreciation of fine literature through the study of short stories, short novels, poems, and plays. Students will develop their communication skills, both oral and written, as they increase their understanding of the elements of fiction including character, setting, plot and theme. Examination of the intentional use of figurative language, atmosphere, and symbolism will help students improve their analytical skills. In addition, the course includes vocabulary, frequent writing assignments, and incorporates a review of basic grammatical concepts as pertinent to writing. Additionally, students learn proper research techniques and MLA style through the writing of at least one interdepartmental research paper during the year.

*(Full Homework Course) (Full Year Course)*

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## **English 7 Honors**

In English 7 Honors, students increase their knowledge and appreciation of fine literature as they also develop communication skills, both oral and written. Particular attention is given to developing the habit of critical thinking by delving deeper into the elements of fiction including character, setting, plot, and theme, and by examining authorial intent, the intentional use of figurative language, atmosphere, and symbolism. Students learn to express themselves clearly, concisely, and correctly through regular vocabulary and spelling tests, and frequent writing assignments, including poetry and essays that incorporate the application of advanced grammar in writing. Additionally, students learn proper research techniques and MLA style through the writing of at least one interdepartmental research paper during the year. Honors students are expected to have a solid foundation in grammar and to read well at an advanced pace.

*(Full Homework Course) (Full Year Course)*

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## **English 8**

Students in this class will increase their knowledge and appreciation of fine literature through the study of short stories, short novels, poetry, and drama. Particular attention is given to themes, techniques, styles, and authorial intent to help students establish the habit of critical thinking. Additionally, students develop communication skills, both oral and written as they learn to express themselves clearly, concisely, and correctly through the study of grammar and writing assignments, including at least one inter-departmental research paper this year.

*(Full Homework Course) (Full Year Course)*

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## **English 8 Honors**

In English 8 Honors, students increase their knowledge and appreciation of fine literature; develop their communication skills, both oral and written; and establish the habit of critical thinking. Through the use of the literature text and supplemental readings, students study short stories, short novels, poetry, and drama. Honors students are expected to have a solid foundation in grammar and to read well at an advanced pace. Particular attention is given to themes, techniques and styles, and authorial intent – what does the writer say, how does he say it, and why. Students learn to express themselves clearly, concisely, and correctly through frequent writing assignments including essays, poetry, and short stories. In addition, at least one interdepartmental research paper (e.g., history-English, science-English) will be assigned during the year.

*(Full Homework Course) (Full Year Course)*

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## **Creative Writing**

Everyone loves stories, and everyone has a special story to tell. Would you like to have more confidence in your writing? Would you like to take greater pride in reading your pieces aloud in class? The Creative Writing Class, open to all seventh and eighth grade students, gives students opportunities to write and share their short stories and essays with each other and teaches students to polish both their creative and expository pieces to perfection. We work on writing a successful essay and practice creating the types of essays required in high school classes. Students read and discuss published pieces of literature for inspiration.

*(Light Homework Course) (Semester Elective)*

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## **Poetry**

Inspiration for poetry constantly invades our world! This course is designed as an opportunity to liberate words from our souls! Explore different styles of poetry through new perspectives on familiar items. In this class, expression through various forms of poetry is the goal. Everyone shelters a poet within, but this course is open only to 7th and 8th graders. It is time to set that poet free!

*(Light Homework Course) (Semester Elective)*

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## **Writing Lab**

“Writing is a form of personal freedom.” Have you been looking for a great way to improve your writing abilities? This elective offers the opportunity to become more comfortable with your own writing and to gain constructive feedback about the ways in which you can improve. We will work on written assignments in conjunction with core classes and encourage the development of specific skills. This hands-on lab to take your writing to a new level is open to 7th and 8th graders.

*(Light Homework Course) (Semester Elective)*

## History

### World Geography 5

This course explores Europe, Russia, and the Western Hemisphere. It serves as a foundational course for further study of geography and history at St. David's School. Using map skills and the five themes of geography, students learn the location of countries and the effect that environment has on lifestyles and historical events. World Geography 5 equips students with map and geography skills, such as using latitude and longitude, map legends, and timelines.

*(Light Homework Course) (Full Year Course)*

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### World Cultures 6

Building upon the concepts of geography, World Cultures is a comparative study between western and non-western regions. Each unit begins with a historical survey of a region, and then explores its contemporary religious, economic, and political systems. As students are introduced to the origins and philosophies of these civilizations, they will learn to recognize how these principles manifest themselves in all facets of society. Current events will play an exciting role in this course, as students observe the modern application and relevancy of the respective cultural values.

*(Light Homework Course) (Full Year Course)*

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### United States History 7 - European Origins of the United States

This course will examine the movements in Europe that lead to advances in exploration and philosophical thought which culminated in the discovery and formation of the United States. Included in this course will be a discussion of different Native American cultures and the clash between Native Americans and Europeans during colonization. The course concludes with the study of the American Revolution and the writing of the United States Constitution.

*(Full Homework Course) (Semester Course)*

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### Bible Survey

The influence of the Bible on our western culture is practically immeasurable. In addition to being the sacred text of Jews and Christians, it has the respect of Muslims and other world religions. Furthermore, a full or complete understanding of western literature, art, music, and drama is impossible without some measure of Biblical literacy. The goal of this class is to give students a basic introduction to the content, organization, and historical impact of the Bible. Students will exit this course prepared to recognize and discuss the Bible's influence in western society.

**Required for 7<sup>th</sup> graders.**

*(Full Homework Course) (Semester Course)*

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## **United States History 8**

This course is a study of American history from the founding of our government to the modern era. The class concentrates on the political, economic and social developments of the country and where applicable, focuses on North Carolina history. Class discussions, reading of primary sources, and essay writing workshops will challenge students to develop consistent arguments and to think critically. Current events will be incorporated through projects and comparative chronological studies.

*(Full Homework Course) (Full Year Course)*

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## **Germany between the World Wars and the Rise of Hitler: Through Primary Sources**

Ever wondered how Hitler came to power in Germany in 1933? Ever wondered what it was like to live in Germany when the Nazis were in power? Through an exploration of primary sources, these questions and more will be answered. Practice important historical skills while learning more about a turbulent time in our world's history. The student will develop the ability to ask relevant questions about the past and to investigate them critically using a range of sources in their historical context. Nazi Germany has been specifically selected as a thought-provoking period in World History, and will introduce the student not only to the skills necessary for success in college and life, but also concepts and knowledge still pertinent to the world today.

*(Light Homework Course) (Semester Elective)*

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## **Japan: A Cultural Study**

From samurai to WWII. From kabuki to origami. Japan is a culturally rich and fascinating country! This semester course on Japan will be an activities based class where we get to dive into Japanese culture and history. We'll experience Japanese language, poetry, animation, and customs. Come discover why Japan is one of the most exciting countries to study!

*(Light Homework Course) (Semester Elective)*

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## **The Sixties: A Decade of Turmoil**

The Civil Rights Movement, Vietnam War, protests, the draft. The 60's are one of the most intriguing times in US History. This semester course will focus on how the American people used protests, clothing, and music to make their voices heard. We will also look at many first hand accounts of the Vietnam War. Come prepared to investigate, experience, and reenact one of the country's most pivotal and exciting decades!

*(Light Homework Course) (Semester Elective)*

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## Math

### Mathematics 5

In Mathematics 5, students will focus on vocabulary, problem solving, reasoning, and review, using Scott Foresman-Addison Wesley Mathematics 5. Instruction will include a step-by-step approach to the development of math concepts and skills, as well as the use of cooperative learning, board work, teacher demonstrations, note-taking, and class recitation. Students will use the four fundamental operations of math (addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division) with whole numbers, decimals, and fractions. Geometry, measurement, data, probability, number theory, and ratios will be reinforced and developed throughout the year. The concepts of variables, inverse operations, integers, percent, and the coordinate plane will be introduced.

*(Full Homework Course) (Full Year Course)*

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### Mathematics 5 Honors

In Mathematics 5 Honors, students will be challenged to apply math knowledge in new ways as they use the four fundamental operations of math (addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division) with whole numbers, decimals, fractions, and integers. Using Glencoe's textbook, Mathematics: Applications and Connections, Course 1, instruction will include review, vocabulary usage, teacher demonstrations, and a step-by-step approach to the development of math concepts and skills. Geometry, ratios, number theory, probability, data, and measurement will be reinforced and developed. Algebraic concepts and terminology will be introduced with the application of the order of operations, exponents, variables, algebraic expressions, inverse operations, ordered pairs and percentages.

*(Full Homework Course) (Full Year Course)*

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### Mathematics 6

Math 6 challenges students to use their math knowledge in new ways as they apply the four fundamental operations of mathematics using whole numbers, rational numbers and integers. Basic skills of geometry, ratios, graphs, charts, number theory, and problem solving are further developed. Algebraic concepts and terminology are related to the use of the order of operations, exponents, variables, inverse operations, ordered pairs, proportions, ratios, and percents, as well as expressions and equations.

*(Full Homework Course) (Full Year Course)*

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## **Mathematics 6 Honors**

Math 6 Honors challenges students to apply previously learned knowledge in new ways as they use the four fundamental operations of math with integers and rational numbers. Basic skills of geometry, ratios, graphs and charts, number theory, and problem solving are further developed. Algebraic concepts and terminology are introduced with the application of the order of operations, exponents, variables, inverse operations, ordered pairs, proportions, ratios, and percents, as well as expressions and equations.

*(Full Homework Course) (Full Year Course)*

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## **Mathematics 7**

Mathematics 7 challenges students to apply previously learned knowledge in new ways as they use the four fundamental operations of math with integers and rational numbers. Basic skills of geometry, ratios, graphs and charts, number theory, and problem solving are further developed. Algebraic concepts and terminology are introduced with the application of the order of operations, exponents, variables, inverse operations, ordered pairs, proportions, ratios, and percents, as well as expressions and equations.

*(Full Homework Course) (Full Year Course)*

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## **Pre-Algebra (6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>)**

Pre-Algebra provides the opportunity to learn and enjoy math by applying previously learned knowledge in new ways. The realm of numbers, variables, square roots, inequalities, multiples, algebraic expressions, and other fantastic concepts are waiting to be discovered. Explore exponents, scientific notation, formulas, factor trees, geometric designs, coordinate planes, monomials, and much, much more. The process of solving equations enables students to gain a better understanding of the relationships of the four basic operations using integers and rational numbers. Word problems, percents, proportions, ratios, number theory, and the properties of mathematics are also key elements of this learning process.

*(Full homework course) (Full Year Course)*

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## **Algebra I (7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>)**

Algebra is a means of mathematical representation and algebraic methods provide numerous problem-solving tools. This course is designed to move from the hands-on focus of pre-algebra into a greater emphasis on conceptual understanding. This year we will explore the language of algebra in verbal, graphical and symbolic forms while modeling patterns and relationships with variables and functions. This course is somewhat unique in that we will be engaging in different activities in order for you to discover many algebraic concepts and/or applications for yourself.

*Prerequisite: Pre-Algebra (A Texas Instruments TI-30 XIIS calculator is required.) (Full Homework Course) (Full Year Course)*

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## **Geometry 8**

Geometry is a part of mathematics concerned with questions of size, shape, and relative position of figures and with properties of space. Throughout the year, we will study the ways in which these concepts relate to each other and lay foundations for proofs. In many ways, the study of geometry prepares a student for making predictions outside of mathematical thought through the development of evaluative thinking. This course is somewhat unique in that you, as a student, will be engaging in different activities in order to discover many geometric concepts and/or applications for yourself. Additionally, we will be striving to connect every concept being taught with its use in the “real world.”

*Prerequisite: Algebra I (A Texas Instruments TI-30 XIIS calculator is required.) (Full Homework Course) (Full Year Course)*

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## **Mathcounts**

MATHCOUNTS® is a national math enrichment, coaching & competition program that promotes middle school mathematics achievement in every U.S. state & territory. With over 23 years experience, MATHCOUNTS is one of the most successful education partnerships involving volunteers, educators, industry sponsors & students.” The math problems vary in topic and intensity and are meant to challenge students who excel in mathematics. A regional competition is held each year on a Saturday in February at an area high school. Teams and individuals are allowed to participate with a maximum of eight students per school. *(Semester elective) (Light homework course)*

## Modern Languages

### French I

This course introduces students to the French language and the cultures of France and other francophone countries, using the communicative approach to learning vocabulary and grammar. With special emphasis on speaking, the course stresses the acquisition of four skills: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. As the year progresses, classroom instruction and interaction are increasingly conducted in French. Students practice speaking in pairs; listen to a variety of native accents encountered through an array of French-language recordings, films, and Internet sites; read authentic French texts; and practice their written expression. They are also trained in the use of learning and study strategies, some unique to language education and some highly interdisciplinary. The successful student will reach the Novice-Mid level of competency as described by the ACTFL proficiency guidelines.

*(Full Homework Course) (Full Year Course)*

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### Spanish I

This course introduces students to the Spanish language and the cultures of Spain and other Spanish-speaking countries. The student begins hearing, understanding and using words and phrases in the form of simple questions, statements, and frequently used commands. Practice of new skills and vocabulary occurs through various classroom activities and at-home assignments, such as paired conversations, practice activities, oral presentations, spoken and written exercises, and assigned readings. After a few weeks, the students are able to communicate personal information and describe their physical setting at a basic level. As the year progresses, an increasing portion of classroom instruction and interaction is in the target language. Spanish I also introduces the students to the geography and culture of the Spanish-speaking world through authentic materials, music, magazines, and video clips. Students are trained in the use of learning and study strategies, some unique to language education and some highly interdisciplinary. The successful student will reach the Novice-Mid level of competency as described by the ACTFL proficiency guidelines.

*(Full Homework Course) (Full Year Course)*

## Physical Education

Physical Education is an integral part of the total education program. It is that phase of education which provides an opportunity, through activity, for physical, mental and social development, and improvement of the individual to meet the challenges of life. It is our mission at St. David's School to empower all students to sustain regular, lifelong physical activity as a foundation for high school experiences, and also a healthy, productive and fulfilling life. The St. David's Physical Education Staff provides the students with the opportunity to develop the body, mind and spirit. It is our vision to create an atmosphere of wellness in our classroom that will extend into the community. The foundation of our program lies in physical fitness, social development, skill development and the acquisition of sports knowledge. These key elements of our Physical Education department, when delivered with care and sensitivity, will enable the St. David's student to flourish.

### Physical Education 5 and 6

The transition from Lower to Middle School Physical Education will include new experiences such as dressing out for class, lockers, a larger facility, and interacting with a larger number of peers. A supportive environment will enable students to make this transition successfully, setting the stage for a positive Middle School experience. The P.E. program emphasizes learning, success and enjoyment for all students, conceptual knowledge, appropriate challenges and cooperation. The focus shifts from the practice of fundamental movement, to applying these skills in the field or court of specific sport activities.

*(No Homework) (Full Year Course)*

### Physical Education 7 and 8

Physical Education in 7th and 8th grade may be pursued in one of the following ways.

- Participation in one season per year of extra-curricular sports, or school-sponsored physical activity:

#### **Fall Sports**

\*Cross-Country  
\*Cheerleading  
\*Football  
Boys Soccer  
Girls Tennis  
Girls Volleyball  
*\*No-cut sports*

#### **Winter Sports**

Basketball  
\*Cheerleading  
\*Swimming  
\*Track

#### **Spring Sports**

Baseball  
Golf  
Girls Softball  
Boys Tennis  
\*Track and Field  
Girls Soccer

- A commitment to a year-round physical activity such as swimming, equestrian sports or Tae Kwon Do, **with the prior written approval of the PE department chair and Middle School Principal.**
- Serving as manager for one or more extra-curricular school sports teams.

## Science

### **General Science (5<sup>th</sup> Grade)**

Students engage in an exciting activities-based curriculum that introduces topics in the natural and physical sciences. Relationships between the disciplines being studied and real-life applications are stressed as students develop their laboratory skills. Students keep a science notebook and technology is integrated where appropriate.

*(Light Homework Course) (Full Year Course)*

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### **Life Science (6<sup>th</sup> Grade)**

Students engage in hands-on activities, inquiry-based study of ecology, cell structure and function, genetics, and human body. An emphasis is placed on developing the student's science vocabulary and improving skills in observation and classification.

*(Light Homework Course) (Full Year Course)*

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### **Earth Science (7<sup>th</sup> Grade)**

Earth Science is a study of the earth, how it works and the interaction between its living and nonliving things. The course will touch on many different areas of science including geography, chemistry, geology and oceanography. This course also serves to help students become more organized and efficient. This is achieved by weaving study habits and organizational skills into daily instruction.

*(Full Homework course) (Full Year Course)*

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### **Physical Science (8<sup>th</sup> Grade)**

Physical science introduces students to the disciplines of chemistry and physics, as well as the methods and techniques used in scientific research and application. The course is intended to foster an interest and appreciation for science, as well as prepare students for more rigorous science courses in the Upper School.

*(Full Homework Course) (Full Year Course)*

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### **Elements of Engineering**

Elements of Engineering is a project-based course that will allow students the opportunity to experience a hands-on approach to understanding various challenges in engineering. We will explore a variety of topics ranging from construction design and aerodynamics to energy efficiency and electrodynamics.

*(Light Homework Course) (Semester Elective)*

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## **FUNdamental Wellness**

Fundamental Wellness is a course specifically designed to focus on important health issues facing young adolescents today. Students will learn how to make healthy choices regarding their personal fitness and well being. Activities include journaling, investigative labs, reading, exercise, and some time for quiet reflection.  
*(Light Homework Course) (Semester Elective)*

## Fine Arts

### Performing Arts: Music

#### **5th-6th Grade Choir and Theater Experience-“VOICE AND THE STAGE”.**

Come join the fun as we learn the basics of singing and acting technique. Your confidence will grow as you work with Mrs. Darden and Mr. Peck toward the goals of staging a production and singing in choral ensemble by the end of the semester. Past groups have sung in choral concerts and have performed *Annie* and *Beauty And The Beast*.

*(Light Homework) (Semester or Full Year Elective)*

#### **7th-8th Grade Vocal Ensemble**

The Vocal Ensemble is a non-auditioned group that meets for the entire year. This group will sing a variety of literature in 3-4 part harmony and will have a solid working knowledge of the musical score. Sight reading and ear training will be a daily routine along with learning basic vocal pedagogy. Singers in the Vocal Ensemble are eligible to audition for the Scholar Singers and will go on the Spring competition trip. Singers in the Vocal Ensemble are also eligible to audition for N.C. All-State Choir and the N.C. Middle School Honors Chorus. Students unable to take this class for a full year may sign up for one semester.

*(Light Homework Course)(Semester or Full Year Elective)*

#### **Beginning Band**

Beginning Band is open to students in the 5th and 6th grade who have no instrumental experience or limited experience. The students are assisted in instrument selection to assure everyone is properly fitted to an instrument and that the band is properly staffed for tonal balance. They learn proper instrument nomenclature, care and assembly, hand position, embouchure formation, and proper breathing technique. As they are learning proper playing technique, they are also achieving music literacy and a basic knowledge of functional harmony and basic music theory. Regular individual playing tests and quizzes are given for evaluation and graded practice logs are turned in each week.

The Beginning Band performs for the first time at the St. David's Christmas Concert and again in a Spring Concert.

*(Light Homework Course) (Full Year Elective)*

#### **Intermediate Band**

Intermediate Band is for 6<sup>th</sup> graders that have one year of band experience. While beginning concepts such as posture, breathing, and tone will continue to be reinforced, intonation and balance will now be major components. The players are

transitioned from primarily focusing on their own playing ability to their playing in the context of a group. 8-10 scales will be learned and memorized, including the chromatic scale. Music will be selected from the method book and on par with the NC graded list, level 2-3. The purpose of this class is to prepare students for entrance into Concert Band.

*Prerequisite: Successful completion of Beginning Band or director's approval. (Light Homework Course) (Full Year Elective)*

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### **Concert Band**

The Concert Band is open to students in the 7th and 8th grade who have successfully completed the year of Intermediate Band. Students work to achieve a more mature tone, precise intonation, range expansion, phrasing, musical interpretation, and expression. More advanced skills in harmony and musical theory are also covered. Regular individual playing tests and quizzes are given for evaluation and graded practice logs are turned in each week.

The Concert Band performs for the first time at the St. David's Christmas Concert, Celebration of the Arts, the Spring Concert, as well as other campus events.

*Prerequisite: Successful completion of Intermediate Band or director's approval. (Light Homework Course) (Full Year Elective)*

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### **Wind Ensemble**

This Upper School instrumental ensemble is open, by faculty recommendation only, to selected 8<sup>th</sup> graders playing instruments in the woodwind, brass and percussion families. Students are held to high standards of ensemble playing, being challenged each day toward musical proficiency. In this course students focus on developing fully mature tone quality, strong technical skills, superior phrasing and musicianship, as well as advanced music theory concepts. Regular individual playing tests are given for evaluation and quarterly music theory and music history quizzes are given. Students in the Wind Ensemble are featured during various concerts and school assemblies throughout the year. In addition, the Wind Ensemble embarks on an annual overnight trip to an adjudicated festival each spring.

*Prerequisite: Three years of prior band experience or Director's approval. (Light Homework Course) (Full Year Elective)*

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### **Instrumental Ensemble**

Instrumental Ensemble is a class that forms small ensembles such as duets, trios, quartets, and quintets out of like instruments (brass, woodwinds and percussion). This class will focus on students relying on each other for entrances and musicality as they will not be conducted like a large wind ensemble. Students will perform for on-campus events such as Lessons and Carols and Veteran's Day.

*Prerequisite: Students must be currently enrolled in Concert Band or Wind Ensemble. (No Homework Course) (Full Year Elective)*

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## **Beginning Guitar**

The Beginning Guitar course is designed to introduce the novice player to the acoustical classical guitar. The student will learn basic music notation and apply that knowledge to the instrument. Concepts that will be covered include: how to tune the instrument, fingering charts, basic chords, tablature and traditional score writing, fingering styles, accompaniment verses melody and chordal progressions. Each student will need to provide his/her own acoustic six-string guitar (nylon string is preferable). This class will be small in number. Preference will be given to students who give the class a high priority on the Course Request form, and, if necessary, to students concurrently signed up for one of the performing class ensembles: Concert Band, Wind Ensemble or Vocal Ensemble

*7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> graders (Light Homework Course) (Semester Course)*

## Performing Arts: Theater

### Theater I

This course will introduce basic acting skills through storytelling, characterization, and scene work. Students will gain an understanding of the importance of expression through words and body, participating in a variety of exercises and forming constructive criticism of actors from clips of theatrical presentations that will be shown in class. Students will learn that all good acting starts with oneself and will begin to formulate the necessary questions to ask when working on any text. Throughout the semester, students will put their new skills to use by performing monologues and scenes that will be presented in class.

*(Light Homework Course) (Semester Elective)*

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### Theater II

This is a course dedicated to the artistry of theater. You will develop a technique that will allow you to stay present to your scene partner and identify ways to make the work have deep personal meaning to you. Class assignments will include scene work from published plays.

*Prerequisite: Theater I and permission of faculty. (Light Homework) (Semester Elective)*

## Visual Arts: Studio Art

### Art 5

Much of the history of civilization is recorded through art. In this course, the students study examples of art from ancient civilizations through the present day. This class creates a time line and examines maps to study art in the context of time in history and geographic location. Students create works of art that relate to each period and style of art studied.

*(Light Homework Course) (Semester Elective)*

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### Art 6

Using the elements of art and principles of design as a framework, students will use a variety of media and techniques to achieve proficiency in selected technical skills and techniques in art. Understanding that students have basic knowledge in the use of traditional art media, the objective of this course will be to refine those skills. Students will benefit from the creative process of making art as well as the satisfaction of the finished product. Areas that students will explore are basic techniques within drawing, painting, and sculpture.

*(Light Homework Course) (Semester Elective)*

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### Art 7

This class continues to build on techniques and technical skills learned throughout Art 6. Students will gain experience through advanced units of study in drawing, painting, sculpture, and design. Each unit will involve completing one major art project. Small art exercises will also be completed in order to learn specific techniques. Each project will incorporate aspects of the Elements of Art (line, shape, form, color, value, texture, and space) and the Principles of Design (balance, rhythm, movement, proportion, contrast, repetition, emphasis, harmony, and unity). Art 7 will also include the study of Art History as well as individual artists.

*(Light Homework Course) (Semester Elective)*

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### Art 8

Art 8 seeks to further advance students in creating a variety of two and three-dimensional works. As in Art 7, the semester is broken into units that will build on conceptual skills while working in drawing, painting, sculpture, and design. Students will grow in their ability to use both style and medium in order to communicate their thoughts and ideas more effectively.

*(Light Homework Course) (Semester Elective)*

## Academic Support Program

Participation in the Academic Support Program requires a diagnosis of ADHD or a learning disability identified by a licensed psychologist. A complete and full psychoeducational evaluation current within the last three years must be on file in the ASP office. There is an additional fee associated with this program.

Seventh and eighth grade students who participate in the program must sign up for a study hall. Students in fifth and sixth grade must select an ASP meeting time during either a study hall or during their PE time. The students who select a study hall will forego an elective class period for the semester that they are in ASP. All students will attend ASP twice a week. The Director of Academic Support will be in contact with the 5th and 6th grade students who enroll in ASP about their desired meeting time option.

## Library

The goals of the St. David's Library Program are to provide access to information and resources in various forms, promote the love of reading, and encourage students to become effective researchers and discerning, life-long learners. In the Middle School, students learn and apply research skills to support and extend classroom study. Students learn to locate, evaluate, and use information effectively and to pursue personal interests in research and pleasure reading.

Students in fifth grade and all new Middle School students receive an orientation to the library and its services at the beginning of the school year. Library staff works in collaboration with classroom and enrichment teachers to integrate information literacy skills into the curriculum in a project-based approach, making learning more meaningful and relevant. These skills are taught in formal class settings as well as informally throughout the school year, and include instruction in research methodology and strategies, website evaluation, and the ethical use of information. Students also enjoy library-sponsored enrichment activities and programs that promote the love of reading.

The St. David's Library curriculum is designed to fulfill the objectives set forth in:

- *The North Carolina Standard Course of Study*, NC Department of Public Instruction
- *Standards for the 21st-Century Learner in Action*, prepared by the American Association of School Librarians, 2009.

## Accreditations/Affiliations

St. David's School is fully accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools for grades kindergarten to twelve.

### **ST. DAVID'S SCHOOL affiliations:**

*National Association of Independent Schools*

*National Association of Episcopal Schools*

*Southern Association of Independent Schools*

*North Carolina Association of Independent Schools*

*Council on Educational Standards and Accountability*

*Educational Records Bureau*

*Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History*

*The College Board*

Feel free to print this curriculum guide and keep it in a convenient place, as you may need to refer to it in the future. Thank you for your careful attention to this important process. As you begin to plan for a new school year, we look forward to working with you and your student in making this their most successful year.

**ST. DAVID'S SCHOOL**  
**3400 White Oak Road**  
**Raleigh, NC 27609**  
**Phone: 919-782-3331 • Fax: 919-787-9417**  
**[www.sdsww.org](http://www.sdsww.org)**