



MIDDLE SCHOOL CURRICULUM GUIDE 2008-2009

19800 Devonshire Street, Chatsworth, CA 91311
Phone (818) 363-8127 Fax (818) 363-1219
www.chaminade.org

COURSES OFFERED

Chaminade College Preparatory is a Catholic school and promotes Christian values through its academic program. All students are required to take the religious education classes and attend the liturgical celebrations and retreats.

The course of studies prepares students for academic success in high school and college. It is a reflection of California State Standards, University Requirements, and individualized programs of study. The curriculum is designed to develop academic skills and to foster inquiry, creativity, and a love of learning:

SIXTH GRADE

REQUIRED

- ♦ Religious Studies
- ♦ Earth Science
- ♦ Ancient Civilizations
- ♦ Literature
- ♦ Language Writing Skills
- ♦ Physical Education
- ♦ Mathematics *or*
- ♦ Advanced Mathematics

EXPLORATORIES

(based on student interest & teacher availability)

- ♦ Computer Keyboarding
- ♦ Art
- ♦ Band
- ♦ Drama
- ♦ Introduction to Foreign Language
- ♦ Music

SEVENTH GRADE

REQUIRED

- ♦ Religious Studies
- ♦ Life Science
- ♦ World History
- ♦ English
- ♦ Foreign Language
- ♦ Physical Education
- ♦ Pre Algebra *or*
- ♦ Honors Pre-Algebra *or*
- ♦ Honors Algebra
- ♦ Chinese
- ♦ French
- ♦ Spanish

EXPLORATORIES

(based on student interest & teacher availability)

- ♦ Art
- ♦ Band
- ♦ Music
- ♦ Computer Literacy
- ♦ Speech Communications

EIGHTH GRADE

REQUIRED

- ♦ Religious Studies
- ♦ Physical Science
- ♦ U. S. History to 1877
- ♦ English
- ♦ Physical Education
- ♦ Algebra *or*
- ♦ Honors Algebra *or*
- ♦ Honors Geometry
- ♦ French
- ♦ Spanish

EXPLORATORIES

(based on student interest & teacher availability)

- ♦ Band
- ♦ Web Page Design
- ♦ Student Librarian
- ♦ eDisk Interactive Yearbook
- ♦ Drama
- ♦ Journalism
- ♦ Leadership 101
- ♦ Digital Imaging
- ♦ Art
- ♦ Screenwriting
- ♦ Mock Trial
- ♦ Creative Writing
- ♦ Rhythms of the World
- ♦ Radio Drama

Computer Science Department

Philosophy

Chaminade Middle School computer science curriculum is based on the premise that students today will be using computers daily as they continue their education, graduate, attend college, and join the work force. No matter what their chosen profession, Chaminade students will have the foundation required to effectively use technology to their advantage.

Course work is designed to impart practical skills and current information that is of immediate value and use. Emphasis is placed on learning through doing, with as much time as possible spent gaining hands-on computer experience.

It is important for students to enjoy computing and feel comfortable with its capabilities. Therefore, age-appropriate information is presented in an exciting and stimulating manner using state-of-the-art software and hardware.

Computer Keyboarding - Sixth Grade, One Quarter

Computer keyboarding focuses on the fundamental skills of touch-typing using Chaminade Middle School's stimulating Keyboarders Gone Ballistic (K.G.B.) curriculum. The goal is that all graduating students will type a minimum of 20 words per minute with 90% accuracy on two-minute timed writings. The course challenges students according to their prior experience and presents material in a motivating and stimulating manner. Emphasis is on correct technique as well as the development of accuracy and speed. For home practice, students purchase the same keyboarding computer software used in the classroom.

Computer Literacy - Seventh Grade, One Quarter

Computer Literacy is a practical hands-on course that lets students work to become Computer Intelligent Agents (C.I.A.), adept in file management, word processing and multimedia authoring. From the computer operating system to application software, students will become fluent using the computer as a tool to produce several projects in class.

Extensive training in the management of files and folders focuses on teaching students to maintain organized data at school and at home. The word processing component of the course presents students with the fundamentals of word processing using Microsoft's Word. Using Microsoft PowerPoint, students learn to communicate within a multimedia environment including text, visuals, animation and sound for electronic presentations

Web Page Design – Eighth Grade, One Semester

The Internet Programmers OnLine (InterPOL) eighth grade Web Page Design course assists students in designing creative, eye-catching, memorable web pages that reflect students' individual personalities. Students become webmasters as they learn to create and maintain a personal web presence on Chaminade's web site www.Chaminade.org, and embrace their webmaster roles while learning web page construction, along with graphic creation and editing. Using student-centered learning approaches, students will independently develop and present web design concepts to the entire class, then collaborate with classmates to help each other in applying those concepts to websites. In addition to learning Adobe software applications such as Dreamweaver CS3 and PhotoShop CS3, students are introduced to the underlying language of Internet documentation, HyperText Markup Language (HTML). Students get an in-depth look at design-related issues to gain a better understanding for the way visual components interact in web-based publications. Extending the immediate classroom experience into a realm of inquiry and further growth, students are challenged to find additional design techniques such as Java to integrate into their websites, while looking at online uses of more advanced web-based concepts. Students also learn to create and edit sounds, scan and modify images, and generate custom graphics and animations. Ethical issues relating to ownership and use of creative property are examined with emphasis on originality and creativity. As a final project, students create a website for an ongoing class project called Eagletown, a cyber-village simulation created specifically for web design students to apply what they have learned.

Digital Imaging – Eighth Grade, One Semester

The Digital Imaging course for eighth graders is a new offering for the 2008-2009 school year. Students will use the PhotoShop CS3 program from Adobe Software for editing photos to create dazzling effects. From framing and filtering to manipulation of images for adding or deleting material, students will become familiar with ways to help draw out the subject matter of photos while learning to adjust images for improved coloring and subject focus. Students will learn the power of layering images for artistic control, as well as rendering images for optimal Internet transmission, both in photo and graphic format. Not just for photographs, PhotoShop will also help students create original free-hand and staged (stop-frame) animations, much in the cell-by-cell style that was so prevalent with the animation industry, but with a digital twist for ease of composition. Limited use of a digital camera will help students learn to download their digital photo files for editing. With a wide facet of concepts to learn and strong student excitement that will be generated from using PhotoShop CS3 in the classroom, students will be asking to have PhotoShop at home. PhotoShop Elements 6.0 (\$50-\$99 online/local retail), a downsize version of the \$450 full version used in class, will allow students to access many PhotoShop features at a family-friendly cost

Eighth Grade – eDisk Interactive Yearbook, Full Year

Watch drama production highlights, see and hear the school bands, replay sports triumphs as your yearbook comes alive—lights, camera, ACTION! eDisk has come to Chaminade Middle School capturing your memories in video, sound, and photos. Students in this advanced computer science course produce the eWings, an interactive multimedia CD-ROM electronic yearbook that accompanies the printed yearbook. Working as a collaborative team, eDisk staff develop the project theme; shoot digital videos and photos, record audio and music, and author stories. Using a variety of software tools including Pinnacle Studio and Adobe PhotoShop Elements students learn multimedia production skills such as video/audio capturing and streaming, and video/photo editing. Limited to a select group of dedicated eighth graders, eDisk staff need to have demonstrated a commitment to cutting-edge technology, artistic confidence, self-motivation, responsibility, and organizational skills to successfully meet the high standards and deadlines of this production class.

American Technology Honor Society

Participation in the American Technology Honor Society (ATHS) is offered to all continuing students that share a common interest in technology. Eighth and seventh graders are invited to join ATHS, with expected attendance at weekly meetings. The ATHS is a service-based honor society that recognizes and encourages the use of technology for school and community projects and service activities. Service projects are oriented to meet the needs of the immediate school community and the greater community at-large. ATHS activities consist of weekly meetings where members are involved in developing projects that provide for specific needs, such as assisting the MIS department with hardware/software repairs and upgrading, annual sponsorship of a springtime school-wide typing contest, and operation of the middle school's Low Power FM radio station, Radio Chaminade.

Radio Chaminade

Radio Chaminade is a student-run FM radio station that produces a weekly live lunchtime broadcast using our Low Power FM radio equipment. Our LPFM radio station serves the immediate school community with a limited range signal heard campus wide and slightly beyond the school site. Students serve as DJs and audio technicians and learn aspects of producing an ongoing radio show. Participation is open to any student members of ATHS, the sponsoring organization of Radio Chaminade. To foster school-wide participation in the radio station, interested sixth graders will be invited to join Radio Chaminade in the second semester.

Technology Resource Center

The Technology Resource Center is available daily each morning before school at 7:30 in the Computer Lab, Rm. 205). The Technology Resource Center can be used for students to catch up on homework or class assignments for computer or other classes, or as a ready resource to use technology for study and discovery. The computer science instructor is available daily before school to help students with their technology needs in the Technology Resource Center.

English Department

Philosophy

The English Department at Chaminade Middle School embraces a belief in the fundamental power of language to define, shape, and enrich lives. In today's climate of instant information, critical language competencies and thinking skills empower students to discern the credible, the reasonable, and the valuable. The successful English curriculum, therefore, must build upon traditional foundations of grammar and composition to provide students with the tools to discover "truth" in an information-saturated society and the skills to communicate clearly as effective citizens. In addition, the curriculum must maintain a broad, inclusive canon that recognizes the realities of an ethnically diverse population without abandoning classic literary selections. Through an intensive reading, writing, speaking, and listening program, the department provides students with a solid body of knowledge and critical thinking skills. The program offers students the opportunity to confront important human issues, and to develop a strong sense of personal, social, and aesthetic values.

Literature - Sixth Grade, Two Semesters

Sixth grade literature is an introductory course in the various styles and genres of literature. Students read short stories, poetry, nonfiction, drama, and novels. Concepts such as plot development, characterization, and theme are introduced. Comprehension strategies of finding main ideas and supporting details as well as discerning fact from opinion are reinforced. Students use these skills to develop other comprehension skills such as drawing conclusions and making inferences. Students explore the concept of analysis through writing a variety of responses to literature.

Language Skills - Sixth Grade, Two Semesters

Sixth grade language skills is a basic course in the structure and usage of the English language with an emphasis on writing and grammar. Developing students' abilities to write and speak clearly and effectively is the central objective of the course. Exposure to the writing process, along with the development of grammar skills, is the main focus. The course also includes units on punctuation, usage and study skills.

English - Seventh Grade, Two Semesters

Seventh grade English uses thematically based units to teach reading comprehension, vocabulary, writing, grammar, speaking, and listening. Students read two novels, one fiction and the other non-fiction; in addition, students read supplemental texts, mostly in the genre of non-fiction in order to help them understand the historical and literary context of the novels read in class. Vocabulary is taught within the context of the reading assignments. Students learn to weave textual evidence and logical reasoning in their writing, as they experiment with a variety of ways to organize evidence and reasoning in persuasive, expository, and narrative paragraphs and essays.

English - Eighth Grade, Two Semesters

Eighth grade English focuses on the continuing development of skills of expression and of listening and understanding. Reading material includes a variety of short fiction, poetry, nonfiction essays, novels, and a Shakespearean play. Concepts such as symbolism, plot development, character motivation, and theme are stressed. Students write analytical papers in which they use direct quotations from the texts to support their theses; they develop their writing fluency in a variety of assignments that may include descriptions, narratives, letters, journal entries, and expository paragraphs. Students are expected to master a basic level of analysis, as well as to develop their critical thinking skills. The course is thematically designed to prepare students for high school level English courses.

EXPLORATORIES

Philosophy

The cornerstone of the Marianist-Catholic educational philosophy is “to educate the whole person”. The fine arts are essential for the completion of this Marianist-Catholic philosophy.

The Fine Arts Department of Chaminade College Preparatory Middle School is committed to the belief that students should have the opportunity to explore their potential in several areas. It is the intention of the department to provide a wide selection of experiences within the parameters of the prescribed curriculum. The department further believes that elective courses should provide the opportunity for the exploration and expression of talents in such a way as to create in the student a positive self-image.

The Fine Arts Department places high value on effort, participation, and teamwork. The department recognizes and appreciates the innate talent with which certain students are gifted, however we do not consider talent a prerequisite to success.

Music - Sixth, Seventh & Eighth Grades, One Quarter; Eighth Grade, One Semester

The purpose of the music program is to help students acquire basic musical skills; to gain a keener awareness of their own and other cultures; to develop an appreciation of music of many kinds; to increase a sense of school community; and to develop self-esteem through performance. The following are some of the course offerings, which are chosen according to the abilities and interests of the class:

Discovering Music

In this course students will learn that music is an important part of the lives of all peoples and cultures. The students will discover that music speaks to every person in unique ways, emotionally and intellectually. Through this course, students will develop a basic understanding and knowledge of music which they will carry with them throughout their lives. Topics that will be covered in this course include: Music is Everywhere, What is Rhythm?, Let's Read and Compose Music, Let's Play Instruments, Meet the Families of the Orchestra, The Orchestra, The Science of Sound, Meet the Composers, and Music Around the World.

Medieval and Renaissance Music

Frolic through the Middle Ages and Renaissance with knights and ladies, kings and queens, dragons, monks, minstrels, and squires. Medieval and Renaissance songs are sung, and compositions for the recorder are played. There is usually a final performance in costume.

Music Literature and Forms

Standard classical music literature and the lives of composers are studied. Students learn to sing and perform, as well as listen to and analyze the music of the masters.

Contemporary Forms of Music

This course looks into the artists, the bands, and the extensions of the music that is being composed today, including movie scores and current musicals. Students learn the elements of music by analyzing them in this familiar music and then seeing how those same principles apply to other music. The object is to grow from a passive consumer of music to an intelligent, critical listener.

World Music

This course is singing with a multi-cultural approach. The students learn about various world cultures through the study and performance of native folk songs. The opportunity to explore music representatives of their own ethnic heritage is also provided. A performance completes the course.

Vocal Music/Theory

This course is singing with an emphasis on good vocal production and musical reading. Familiarity with the components of music and music notation is stressed. Students learn to become comfortable with their singing voices, while singing music that is used in student body activities and class performances. Basic music theory is introduced with a piano/keyboard application. When appropriate students will perform choreographed pieces.

Band

Instrumental Music Program

The instrumental music program is open to all grade levels. Each group meets three or more times a week during the entire year. The material that is taught is progressive and cumulative. Students can be in as many as 5 groups or just one. They can sign up for an exploratory class and/or Concert Band. If they are a beginner they can join Concert Band only if they are in the exploratory class as well. All groups perform at school events during the year. The Concert Band performs at regional festivals and takes a music clinic at Disneyland. In addition to the regular rehearsals, there are coaching sessions for sections and individual players.

Advanced Band and Composition - Eighth Grades, Two Semesters

Students will have the opportunity to learn a computer music program where they can either create or arrange their own music. They will also have the opportunity to play in small ensembles if they choose. Students will learn how to perform with good tone production, articulation, sight-reading, and musicianship which depends heavily upon discipline, responsibility, and enjoyment. Students perform at school events, liturgies, and festivals. Students will also be involved with the high school band.

Beginning & Intermediate Band I - 6th grade, Two Semesters

Sixth grade students can have absolutely no experience or have prior experience. Students will learn to play together as an ensemble. More advanced students will learn to be leaders in their sections as well as learning to lead the group for those who are interested. Students learn how to perform with good tone production, articulation, sight-reading, and musicianship, which depend heavily upon discipline, responsibility, and enjoyment. Students perform at school events. Taking lessons enhances the music playing experience greatly. Any student who finds a way to continuously play usually enjoys it. Concert Band is an option to every student if they would like in addition to Beginning Band.

Beginning Band II - 7th grade, Two Semesters

Seventh grade students having absolutely no or little musical experience should take this class. Students will learn to play together as an ensemble. Students learn how to perform with good tone production, articulation, sight-reading, and musicianship, which depend heavily upon discipline, responsibility, and enjoyment. Students perform at school events. Taking lessons enhances the music playing experience greatly. Any student who finds a way to continuously play usually enjoys it. Concert Band is an option to every student if they would like in addition to Beginning Band.

Intermediate Band - 7th grade, Two Semesters

Seventh grade students who have taken sixth grade band may sign up for Intermediate Band. New students need to audition for the class or have a private teacher's recommendation. Students learn how to perform with good tone production, articulation, sight-reading, and musicianship, which depend heavily upon discipline, responsibility, and enjoyment. Students perform at school events. Lessons are a great way to enhance a student's learning and protect your investment in your child's future. Students, who find a way to continuously play, enjoy it. Concert Band is an option to every student if they would like in addition to Intermediate Band.

Concert Band

Students will learn how to perform with good tone production articulation, sight-reading, and musicianship, which depend heavily upon discipline, responsibility, and enjoyment. Students perform at school events, festivals, on field trips, and participate in music clinics. They are also involved with the high school band. Experience is required; however, if a student is taking an exploratory class they may take Concert Band in addition to their Beginning or Intermediate Band Class. Students are not required to be in an exploratory class in order to be in Concert Band, but it does enhance the experience. Course meets daily at 7:00 a.m. and receives a grade.

Jazz Band

Jazz band is in addition to advanced band or beginning band. Students work with a different style of music. Students perform at different events and concerts. Experience is required. Course meets Wednesdays and Fridays.

Orchestra

Students play orchestral instruments with good tone production, articulation, sight-reading, development skills, and musicianship, which depend heavily upon discipline and responsibility. Students perform at school events and concerts. Experience is required. Course meets Mondays and Thursdays.

Prerequisites

Instructor approval, school spirit, computer experience helpful

Drama

Drama – Eighth Grade, One Semester; Sixth Grade, One Quarter

The drama curriculum is designed to provide the student with an introduction to drama including theater history, acting techniques, play production, and performance. It is the premise of this course that theater skills are life skills. Training in theater can enhance a student's life whether or not that individual has the "talent" or the drive to pursue theater as a career. This course aims to:

Further develop and strengthen the basic life skills of concentration and cooperation and their application in both theater and in life. Further develop and strengthen the basic life skills of imagination and observation and their application in both theater and in life. Further develop and strengthen the basic life skills of physical and verbal expressiveness and their application in both theater and in life.

Students will learn the advanced forms of improvisation – the basis for all acting.

In-class workshops, classroom visitations by performing groups and the regular use of filmstrips and videos are often parts of the courses. The following are some of the offerings that may be used at any grade level.

Theater History

Theater history teaches an overview of theater history from tribal man to the present, including terms, styles, and techniques. The class uses material from various periods of history in class scene work.

Play Production

Play production concentrates on breaking down the components of production into (1) the play, (2) the director, (3) the actor, and (4) the designers. It also includes explanations and discussions of the function and importance of each component and practical application in a one-act play or scenes. The performing arts group produces two plays annually that include all three-grade levels.

Acting Techniques

Acting techniques explores the tools of the actor through activities and discussion, voice-only work, (radio plays or puppetry), storytelling and scenes. The actor progresses from body language to voice interpretation, to the combination of the two through storytelling and the addition of secondary tools (design) in a full scene.

Makeup, Costuming, and Technical Theater

Makeup, costuming, and technical theater class uses filmstrips and video presentations as well as the practical use of makeup, costuming, and equipment. The class develops a thorough understanding of the role of the designer in the theater.

Literature as Drama

Literature as drama explores the use of literature class curriculum as a base for choice of material. Students discuss the difference between prose, poetry, and drama and work on dramatizations of literary classics, short stories, and poems.

Theater Games and Improvisation

Theater games and improvisation students achieve a higher awareness of an actor's tool (himself) and the development of skills. The content of the semester-long class is drawn from these courses. Choices are made based on the size, complexion, and interest of the individual class.

Student Librarian

Student Librarian - Eighth Grades, One Semester

Student Librarians gain familiarity with library organization and resources. They often have the opportunity to hone advanced information literacy skills including experience searching online databases and becoming proficient with the Dewey Decimal system. Part of the Student Librarian's class requirements is to read one Accelerated Reader book a month and post a review on our Middle School library website for our students to read. Student Librarians assist the Librarians with special projects, sometimes even helping other students with research.

Visual Arts

Visual Art - Sixth, & Seventh Grades, One Quarter

The main purpose of the art curriculum is to introduce and explore art through the student's manipulation of materials, art history, and contemporary art. Implementation of the thought and creative processes used in producing visual communication are stressed in its use across the curriculum and in life. A computer, books, videos, and slides are available to art students while in the art room. The school library is also an excellent multimedia resource center. Integration of all disciplines is emphasized by their inspiration and application in creating art.

Six basic elements of art apply to all design and media; Graphic Design Graphic design best exemplifies the combination of image and word and its application to modern society. The effectiveness and importance of visual communication is evident in the (commercial) world of any printed commercial material; from ads, posters, signs, and logos to packaging and publication design, to name a few. Basic principles of design (art) lay a solid foundation for applying to any visual problem solving, and clear, visual thinking and communication to any discipline. Tools of the profession to career choices are presented.

Fine and applied arts are defined and explored. Two-dimensional work may include drawing, painting, printmaking, animation, graphic design, paper-decorating techniques, computer graphics, and collage. Three-dimensional work may include ceramics, crafts, mobiles, sculpture, printmaking plates, architecture concepts to scale models, and papier mache.

Drawing

Drawing is seeing. Students begin with flat basic shapes and line to create the illusion of depth on the page. Drawing techniques and compositional choices are represented and practiced through assignments. Exposure to various drawing media and paper choices and its exploration is provided in class.

Animation

Animation is not only a wonderful art, but in education, cartoons and comics are undeniably an effective and palatable way to make a point and learn while having fun. It is an excellent vehicle in developing the student's ability to sequence, study movement, and tell a story. This may be strictly visual and/or combine word and image in a book, flipbook, comic strip, storyboard, or a single cell.

Art History

Art history is studied through the work and lives of master artists. Artist's work is shown and discussed in relationship to the current projects on which the students are working.

Painting

Painting is best explored after the drawing and composition foundations are laid. The elements of art are applied through various painting techniques and media. Color theory is taught through the use and mixing of tempera, acrylic, and watercolor paints. Final paintings use combined learned techniques. Also, various papers and painting surfaces are presented. A group project may include a mural.

Graphic Design

Graphic design best exemplifies the combination of image and word and its application to modern society. The effectiveness and importance of visual communication is evident in the (commercial) world of any printed commercial material; from ads, posters, signs, and logos to packaging and publication design, to name a few. Basic principles of design (art) lay a solid foundation for applying to any visual problem solving, and clear, visual thinking and communication to any discipline. Tools of the profession to career choices are presented.

Printmaking

Printmaking can bridge 2D to 3D. The design (2D) and production (3D) of art for reproduction is explored through various materials and techniques. They may include linoleum cut blocks, woodcut, potatoes to erasers, or screen-printing. Fundamental art principles used are positive and negative shapes, space (cutting the design), repeated pattern (multiple images from the palate), and color (inks, paints), with attention to quality craftsmanship.

Sculpture

Sculpture is best explored through a hands-on, tactile process. Shape, space, texture, and form are emphasized. Clay, plaster of Paris, wood, paper, and other nontraditional materials or mixed media are used to create three-dimensional forms. Mold making and castings may be explored. Basic hand building techniques using clay are taught; finished pieces may be decorated or glazed. Method, safety, care of materials, and good craftsmanship are stressed.

Calligraphy

Calligraphy, which means beautiful writing, is a very structured study. Chancery Cursive is the style most often taught. However, Copperplate, Italic, Spenserian Script, and other forms of calligraphy may be explored. A basic knowledge and appreciation of the handwritten document is stressed. Calligraphic tools and vocabulary are introduced and used during this course. All the art elements are applied to every assignment.

Crafts

Crafts involve using various materials and imagination. Emphasis is placed upon creativity in the use and combination of found or non-traditional art materials: recycled cans, twigs, feathers, cotton, etc., generally yielding a mixed-media product. A few of the applied arts are producing jewelry, stitchery, collages and assemblages, paper marbling, and fabric decoration.

Mock Trial/Speech and Debate

Pre-Requisite: Minimum 3.5 cumulative GPA, Teacher Recommendation, and Instructor Approval

Students will have the opportunity to take the roles of attorneys, witnesses, bailiff, and court clerk as members of the Chaminade Mock Trial Team. Students will learn how to prepare a real court case and will compete the month of November against other middle schools from Los Angeles County during the Constitutional Rights Foundation Mock competition. In addition to class, there will be some required Saturday morning practices as the team prepares for the competition.

During the second part of the course, students will learn debate skills and participate in the Middle School Public Debate Program. Students will have the opportunity to attend between 2 – 3 debate tournaments throughout the year. Other competitive opportunities will also be offered through the Camino Real Speech League in a variety of public speaking and interpretation events.

Foreign Language Department

Philosophy

The Foreign Language Department of Chaminade College Preparatory Middle School is committed to preparing students for continuing their foreign language experience successfully in high school. Additionally, through the study of foreign languages and culture, students increase their global awareness and develop an appreciation for the cultures and contributions of others.

Sixth Grade – One Quarter

The purpose of this course is to start students on the road to speaking reading and writing Spanish or French using current techniques in language acquisition. The students will also develop an understanding and appreciation of the culture, contributions and customs of the Spanish and French people. The scope of the course includes an introduction to the Romance Languages covering their connections to Latin, to each other and to English. The fundamentals of Spanish and French grammar are explained through the use of concepts and vocabulary in specific situations. Application of the material is provided through group work on cross-curricular integrated units. The classroom has a computer lab available to the students on a daily basis.

Seventh Grade 1A – Yearlong

The purpose of this course is to achieve mastery of grammatical concepts and vocabulary through current techniques in language acquisition. Students will achieve proficiency in conversation, writing and reading based on the scope of level 1a of either Spanish or French. There is a computer lab available to the students on a daily basis, and technology is in place to provide audio/visual reinforcement in the target language.

Eighth Grade 1B – Yearlong

The purpose of this course is to continue and build upon the course work of level 1a. The curriculum includes additional vocabulary and more advance grammatical concepts in preparation for a successful transition into the high school foreign language experience. The material will be mastered through a variety of assignments and assessments designed to address the learning styles of the students. There is a computer lab available to the students on a daily basis, and technology is in place to provide audio/visual reinforcement in the target language.

Mathematics Department

Philosophy

The Mathematics Department at Chaminade Middle School is committed to the belief that students should learn to appreciate and enjoy both the importance and the beauty of mathematics. Through instruction and practice, students should understand the relationship and patterns of arithmetical operations. Skills in computation, problem solving, and abstract thinking, coupled with an exposure to real life situations are of the utmost importance in order to develop a positive productive attitude about mathematics. When all these criteria are met, Chaminade students will be well prepared to further their study of mathematics in high school and beyond.

Mathematics – Sixth Grade, Two Semesters

Sixth grade mathematics is an extension of the basic operations of whole numbers, fractions, decimals, and integers. The curriculum also includes ratios, proportions, percents, and solving one-step algebraic equations. Basic geometric figures and measurements are explored and reviewed. Critical thinking skills and problem solving skills are developed through real-life applications to reinforce mathematical concepts.

Honors Mathematics - Sixth Grade, Two Semesters

Honors sixth grade mathematics reinforces the basic operations of decimals, fractions, integers, and rational numbers. It also covers ratios, proportions, percents, statistics, and solving two-step and multi-step algebraic equations and inequalities. Geometry concepts in the course introduce the measurement and formula processes of geometry. Other geometric concepts include identifying and classifying triangles and quadrilaterals, and graphing linear equations. Consumer mathematics and statistics are touched on briefly.

Pre-Algebra – Seventh Grade, Two Semesters

Pre-Algebra introduces the principles of algebra using integers and rational numbers in solving one-step and two-step equations. Areas covered include equations of proportions and percentages, inequalities, graphs and functions, radicals, and polynomials. Foundations in geometry are reviewed and three-dimensional geometric figures and measurements are explored. Verbal problems using real life scenarios are used in each of these areas.

Honors Pre-Algebra – Seventh, Two Semesters

Honors Pre-Algebra introduces algebraic concepts. Specific areas include but are not limited to solving number equations and inequalities, graphs, radicals, polynomials, and geometry. Continued development of problem-solving skills plays a pivotal role in this curriculum. The idea of “doing and undoing” is developed and students are taught to see the relationships between the math they are learning and real-world scenarios. Current Chaminade students are admitted to honors pre-algebra by earning the grade of “B” or higher in sixth grade honors math.

Algebra - Eighth Grade, Two Semesters

Algebra exposes 8th grade students to a variety of algebraic topics such as exponents, functions, solutions of linear equations, systems of linear equations, graphing, factoring polynomials, rational expressions, and an introduction to quadratics. Verbal problems and relevant applications are used in each of these areas to enhance mastery of these algebraic concepts.

Honors Algebra – Seventh or Eighth Grade, Two Semesters

Honors Algebra develops the students’ conceptual knowledge, skills, and strategies essential to understanding sophisticated mathematics. This class builds the background of knowledge crucial for ensuring that students are able to understand and solve increasingly complex problems. Some of the topics covered are properties of real numbers, solutions of linear equations, graphing, factoring, polynomial computation, rational and irrational expressions, and quadratics.

Current Chaminade students are admitted to honors algebra by earning the grade of “B” or higher in honors pre-algebra. Incoming students are admitted to honors algebra based on their entrance exam and an additional placement test.

Geometry - Eighth Grade, Two Semesters

Honors Geometry begins with a rigorous curriculum of proofs based on various theorems and postulates. Second semester focuses on using the theorems and postulates to solve problems based on two and three dimensional geometric figures. Throughout this course, algebraic skills are reviewed and strengthened.

Physical Education Department

The Physical Education curriculum has a scope and sequence based on goals and objectives that are appropriate for all students. It includes a balance of skills, concepts, games, rhythms, and dance experiences designed to enhance the cognitive, motor, affective, and physical fitness development of every student.

Class Activities

Each unit offered is one quarter long. Four activities are offered yearly. The quarter unit allows the instructors adequate instructional time to structure the learning environment for success.

The chart below shows the activity units currently being offered. All students are pretested in a battery of fitness tests at the beginning of the year, and then are retested throughout the year. The pretest results are used by students to create individual fitness contracts. Post-test results are used to determine individual achievement.

During the year, boys and girls participate in the same units, however, not at the same time. This allows for more efficient use of equipment and available facilities. The only units that are structured for co-ed participation are the dance units.

Class Activities

6th, 7th and 8th grades

SPORTS FOR PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Boys	Girls
Football	Modern Dance
Whiffelball	Resistance training
Racket sports	Volleyball
Team Building games	Basketball 1
Track and Field	Racket sports
Team handball	Circus Arts (Juggling, Diablo)
Circus Arts (Juggling, Diablo)	Team Building games
Table tennis	Table tennis

Religion Department

Philosophy

Chaminade College Preparatory Middle School believes that parents have the primary responsibility for the religious education of their children. The Religion Department provides religious education in the Catholic Christian tradition, which nurtures, supports, and compliments the parental training which students receive. Students are taught the importance of self-discipline, respect for themselves and others, integrity, and service to others. Students are also encouraged to develop their individual talents and to recognize their own self worth. The Religion Department, while embracing the mission “to teach as Jesus did”, respects and celebrates the religious diversity of its student body.

Religion - Sixth Grade, Two Semester

In the sixth grade, students study Old Testament scriptures with an emphasis on the biblical roots of their faith. God is presented as the Creator, who cares deeply for His people and interacts in their lives. Special focus is placed on the importance of prayer, the celebration of liturgy, and an understanding of the events in the liturgical calendar. Students also explore Catholic values concerning family life and morality. Through these studies and by applying Biblical lessons to their daily lives, students learn to appreciate their God-given talents as well as the gifts and talents of those around them.

Religion - Seventh Grade, Two Semesters

In the seventh grade, students focus on the life, values, and person of Jesus as well as liturgy and the sacraments of the Catholic Church. Students are challenged to live a life-style that involves trust, the ability to handle temptation and the knowledge to make moral decisions. Students are guided towards an understanding of the importance of faith, and establishing a personal relationship with God through a study of the life of Christ, prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Beatitudes.

Religion - Eighth Grade, Two Semesters

In the eighth grade, students identify individual beliefs and value systems, and students are encouraged to make decisions based on what is responsible and what is moral. Through the study of the history of the Catholic Church, students are given a religious foundation, which teaches that the life of Jesus is an example of total commitment to God. Using the example of Christ, students come to an understanding of their individual self-worth and the need for them to make faith-filled commitments to themselves, their community, and their God.

Sacramental Preparation in the Catholic Faith

For Students Desirous of Preparing for Sacraments of Baptism and/or Holy Eucharist

The Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults/Children (RCIA/RCIC) is a process by which young people are initiated into the Catholic faith. It is open to sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students, both baptized and non-baptized, who have not yet received the sacraments of Baptism, Penance, and Eucharist.

Chaminade, in partnership with St. John Eudes Parish, offers this preparation process for students and families who are interested. Students meet once a week on campus during their regular religion classes for special instruction, and on Sunday mornings during the 9:00 a.m. Mass at St. John Eudes Parish, located in Chatsworth.

Science Department

Philosophy

The Science Department is devoted to the concept of enhancing a student's continued growth in the understanding of scientific concepts and the development of both cognitive and effective scientific thinking skills. In-depth reasoning is encouraged through the performance and write-up of in-class, hands-on science laboratory assignments. Additional reasoning skills are provided through the integration of mathematics, English grammar concepts, library information retrieval literacy, and computer technology.

Students are guided to value their role as a part of a complex environment, encompassing the solar system, earth itself, the science of all life, and the physical universe. Student enthusiasm is generated and utilized through hands-on investigation and activities.

A special aspect of effective thinking skills at this Catholic institution is the blending of scientific knowledge with the Universal Truth of God's existence.

The overall philosophy of the department is to develop in students a sense of wonder and responsibility as guardians of God's creation as they study the universe using a controlled and systematic approach.

Earth Science- Sixth Grade, Two Semesters

Earth science is designed to provide the students with an understanding of the Earth as it relates to life, physical, and environmental science. The program focuses attention on the general characteristics of the earth and also the constantly changing dynamics of our planet. Through meaningful, scientifically conducted laboratory activities, the student gains an appreciation of what is happening within, on, and above our planet and its place in the universe. Recognition and appreciation of how earth science is vital to our everyday life is stressed throughout the curriculum.

Life Science - Seventh Grade, Two Semesters

The seventh grade science curriculum is devoted to the study of the major branches of life science: cell physiology, microbiology, botany, zoology, human anatomy, physiology, and genetics. Throughout the year, the students investigate the features, functions, and relationships among representative organisms in the six kingdoms. The program is further enhanced by involving the students in hands-on laboratory investigations or activities that follow scientific methods and are specifically designed for the material being studied. Laboratory safety is constantly stressed.

Physical Science - Eighth Grade, Two Semesters

Physical science is a course which explores elementary concepts and principles of chemistry and physics with emphasis placed on the process and activities of the physical sciences as we experience them in our lives. Areas of study and activities include scientific measurement, properties of matter, basic atomic theory, periodic table relationships, chemical reactions, force, motion, energy, and principles of chemistry and physics. Emphasis is on use of the scientific method, critical thinking, process and problem solving skills, math and graphing skills, basic computer technology skills, and laboratory skills necessary to become successful in other science courses.

Social Studies Department

Philosophy

The goal of the Social Studies Department is to develop literate citizens with both an active global awareness and respect for the cultures that have enriched and affected our society. The department, accepting the mandates of the State Framework and National Standards, seeks to educate future citizens who will take responsibility for their world. The program weaves together essential knowledge and skills that will enable students to understand the complexities of our world. Additionally, the department seeks to motivate students to become actively involved in our pluralistic society and develop a recognition of and respect for human rights.

Ancient World History - Sixth Grade, Two Semesters

Students explore the periods of the time from prehistory through the rise of Rome. The course links our modern society to the events, inventions, and ideals of past civilizations. Specific civilizations that are examined in depth include Mesopotamia, Egypt, India, China, Greece, and Rome. In conjunction with this, students explore ancient and modern world geography. Course work seeks to develop each student's critical thinking skills, geographic literacy, and research skills.

World History - Seventh Grade, Two Semesters

Seventh grade world history is an overview of the social, political, economic, and geographic factors that have influenced the history of western civilization from the fall of Rome to the Age of Exploration. The course focuses on many major topics of European history including the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, the Reformation, and the rise of the Modern State. The course also examines the civilizations that developed in Africa and Asia during the same period. Course work stresses the development and improvement of critical thinking skills, historical research techniques, geographic literacy, and interpretation of edited primary source material.

United States History to 1877 - Eighth Grade, Two Semesters

United States history examines the main features of the American experience from colonial times to the beginnings of the twentieth century. Major topics studied include Colonial America, the Revolutionary War, the Early National Period, Jacksonian Democracy, the Westward Movement, Civil War, Reconstruction, Industrialization, and Immigration. Course work emphasizes the development and refinement of critical thinking skills, geographic literacy, recognizing cause and effect relationships, the historical writing process, historical research techniques, and the interpretation of edited primary source material.