

# Saint Peter School



## Grades 6-8

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## About our Upper School Program...



At St. Peter School, the total integration of religious faith and values in the academic and learning process helps bring

about the character of our faith community. Our religion program permeates all learning experiences for our children. The school is one part of a vital Catholic community dedicated to creating an environment that fosters the spiritual, mental, and social growth of each child. The clergy, administration, faculty, staff, and students nurture a loving community inspired by Gospel teaching and the example of Jesus Christ. Through a diversity of curriculum and culture, the students discover their unique talents and recognize them as gifts from God to be joyfully shared in the service of the Church and society.

Our Upper School, which consists of grades of six through eight, continues the warm, encouraging atmosphere and a strong program established in K-5. This environment ensures that each child achieves academic success and educational happiness during these critical years. Our low teacher-student ratio allows teachers to meet the needs of the class and the individual child. Vital student support is the hallmark of our program.

Our academic program is designed to stimulate curiosity and enhance problem-solving abilities. It continues to develop higher order learning proficiency in reading, writing, thinking, and speaking and builds study aptitude through the acquisition of basic research and note-taking skills. Programs are designed to encourage individual and personal growth while simultaneously maximizing student success. The academic atmosphere promotes caring and cooperative relationships and helps children grow in confidence and trust. Children are encouraged to become risk-takers and lifelong learners in an environment where doing the right thing and leading a Christian life are valued.

Students who began switching classes on a limited basis in grades 3-5 now attend class on a schedule basis. This exposes them to different



teaching styles and continues to foster independence and organizational skills. They engage in Spanish Cultural study with a foreign language

teacher and travel to art, music, library, technology and physical education classes as well. Please see our pamphlet on Co-curricular studies for details about these weekly classes. Students in grades six through eight have the opportunity to attend science class in our science lab. Teachers in all of these specialty areas work closely with the classroom teachers to provide a rich, diverse educational experience.

**...Holding the keys to a brighter future!**

**Join us for our Open House  
January 31, 2010 10a-1p  
to see today's  
Catholic education in action!**



Saint Peter School

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## Language Arts

Designed to foster students' individual growth as readers and writers, the Language Arts and Literature program develops students' abilities to read and write for a variety of purposes, in a variety of genres. Careful attention to all stages of the writing process allows students to focus on revising and refining their writing and honing their craft in targeted creative and expository genres each year. As students move up in grade levels, they write increasingly complex pieces; in their analytical writing, they work toward independently developing a thesis, supported by several well-developed examples. Students have learned word processing and keyboarding skills and, by the sixth grade, are expected to word process their major papers. Students participate in a formal Writing Challenges, benchmarking analytical writing abilities using an established rubric that provides clear criteria and a means of communicating students' performance. Students collaborate with their teachers to set individual writing goals as the result of their performance.



Reading a range of works, including core works such as Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird*, provides a basis for students to stretch themselves as readers and to hone their literary response skills. Students select their own appropriately challenging books to practice reading strategies during reading workshop periods. Required independent reading helps students to develop and maintain a habit of reading. Grammar, spelling and vocabulary study are taught explicitly and are woven into lessons on reading strategies and writing craft. All English classes require students to participate in small group and class discussions and to clearly articulate ideas for more formal class presentations.

## Math and Science

Upper School mathematics study continues to focus on students' development of mathematical reasoning and problem-solving skills at the same time that it reinforces students' basic computational skills and introduces new mathematical concepts. Teachers require students to demonstrate their understanding of mathematics through solving real-life problems. The organizing principle for the Saxon Math approach is mathematical thinking. Skills, concepts, and problem solving are bridged by consistent mathematical language. Instruction ensures practice related to basic fact combinations and the execution of standard algorithms. In addition, this practice is distributed over each grade resulting in greater proficiency in the foundational skills. Beginning in seventh grade, students may be accelerated in mathematics. At the recommendation of their teacher, some students move directly into Prealgebra where they work with variables to develop key mathematical skills, including order of operations, powers, and square roots. This enables them to complete Algebra by the end of eighth grade. Students who continue on in the traditional math course will complete Prealgebra by the end of eighth grade. Throughout the Upper School science program, students investigate how science works, the scientific method, and what science is and is not. Students become increasingly proficient in the scientific process: developing questions, measuring, making accurate observations, and recording quantitative and qualitative data. Hands-on lab experiences and cooperative learning groups play an integral part in the course of study. Throughout their middle school years, students write in science class to develop organizational skills,

summarize discussions, and clarify thinking. Technology is also an integral part of students' learning experiences, both in class and in the lab. As students develop their laboratory skills, they become increasingly proficient with organizing and analyzing the data they collect to come to their own scientific conclusions. The goal of Health instruction is to give students the foundation to live a healthy life. Health instruction informs students about topics such as nutrition and substance abuse, and gives them the foundation to make healthy life choices.

## Social Studies

Social Studies provides a forum for students to explore human civilization through many lenses, including history, culture, geography and economics. With foci ranging from ancient civilizations to modern money management, studies often cross disciplines to foster student understanding. The study of Civics, Geography, and Economics through seventh grade mini-courses provides the foundation for an exciting cross-disciplinary study and student participation in various project-based units. Each year, students further develop their research skills through one or more in-depth research projects. Frequent sessions with the librarian and research in class help students learn to use a wide range of reference materials well. Students are exposed to the use of both primary and secondary source documents as they prepare to synthesize their findings and to present their results, through a focused research paper or a PowerPoint presentation, for example. Study skills, particularly organizational and note-taking strategies, are emphasized throughout the Upper School years.



**Before and AfterCare  
available 6am to 6 pm for a school  
day with continuity.**

**Our low student-teacher ratio provides good individual interaction with teaching staff and a more personalized academic structure to help ensure a child's scholastic success. Children are provided with individualized learning activities that build on existing knowledge to develop intellectual ability and cognitive awareness. Please see our pamphlet on learning support for more information. St. Peter School's small classes create an engaging place for students to foster a more personal connection with teachers, thus providing excellent educational opportunity.**