



# Part Two: Curriculum

2010-2011

Valley Catholic Middle School is a college preparatory school with high academic standards. Students in the sixth, seventh, and eighth grades participate in a specialized program designed to provide them with an age-appropriate transition through the middle school years and to prepare them for the academic challenges they will face in high school and college.

The program's curriculum follows the requirements outlined in the content standards for the Archdiocese of Portland and the State of Oregon. Curriculum and policies were developed after thorough study of the Valley Catholic High School program and consultation with area public and parochial middle and high schools. In addition, Valley Catholic Middle School has several capstone projects that follow the standards of the *IB Middle Years Programme*.

Students learn the content outlined in this curriculum guide as part of the school's program. Individual classroom teachers may add additional units in an effort to enhance the core curriculum. This information, along with any specific classroom procedures, grading policies, or class requirements will be listed on each individual teacher's class syllabus distributed at the beginning of the academic year.

## Curriculum Review Process

Valley Catholic Middle School's curriculum is reviewed and updated on a yearly basis with an in-depth study of individual subjects occurring at least every four years, as determined by the Archdiocese of Portland. In addition, Valley Catholic Middle School's staff and administration, in conjunction with the Valley Catholic High School's department heads, review curriculum as follows:

### Curriculum Review Committees

#### Departments

Departments are based on the subject (math department, fine arts department, etc.) and all Valley Catholic teachers in grades six to twelve attend department meetings. These meetings happen each quarter (more often for some subjects). If a teacher has classes in more than one subject area (math and religion, for example), then the teacher attends BOTH department meetings.

#### Middle School Staff/Program

There are eight staff members, plus the principal and counselor, identified as the middle school CORE staff. These teachers specialize in needs of the middle school students for everything from day-to-day classroom procedures to school environment (social, extra-curricular, transitional/age appropriate adjustments from HS program, etc.) Middle School CORE meetings address everything from middle school specific curriculum to individual student needs.

## **Tools for Review**

### **Middle School Test Results**

- Archdiocesan standardized tests (IOWA, previously Stanford) for our current sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students. The results are compared to students throughout the Archdiocese of Portland as well as to the National average.
- STS High School Placement Test Results for our current eighth grade students. The results are compared to students throughout the Archdiocese who have applied as a freshman to a Catholic high school (This includes public and private school applicants.) Please note: All of the local Catholic high schools give the exact same entrance test to all freshman applicants.

### **High School Materials/High School Follow-Up**

The review process includes, but is not limited to the following feedback:

- PSAT and SAT scores of our middle school alumni
- AP (advanced placement) test scores for our MS alumni
- High school GPAs
- College acceptances and placement for our MS alumni (As well as honors and awards received)
- Personal check-in end at feeder high schools (admission directors, department heads, teachers) to see how our MS alumni are performing on a day-to-day basis.

## **Other**

### **Content Review and Textbook Adoption Cycle**

The Archdiocese and the State of Oregon review a core content area, such as science, math, etc. on a yearly basis. This review process is a key component in Valley Catholic's text book adoption cycle so that as the state and Archdiocese make changes, we can address the changes in our textbook adoptions, as appropriate. Typically, Valley Catholic Middle School adopts two textbooks a year, making every subject go through an in-depth review every four years in addition to the yearly review.

### **Trends in Education and Department Meetings**

All curriculum updates are considered, as well as any trends in education, on a yearly basis within the department meetings. All of this information is used to review, adjust, or confirm our current curriculum and leads to updates on our VCMS Curriculum Guide that is published each January - for admission purposes - and goes into affect the following school year.



# Table of Contents

## Part Two: Curriculum Guide 2010-2011

### Sixth Grade

#### **All Departments**

- Sixth Grade Outdoor School

#### **Computer Science Department**

- Sixth Grade Computers

#### **English Department**

- Sixth Grade Language Arts
- Sixth Grade Speech

#### **Fine Arts Department**

- Sixth Grade Art
- Sixth Grade Band
- Sixth Grade Choir
- Sixth Grade Music Appreciation
- Sixth Grade Orchestra

#### **Health/PE Department**

- Sixth Grade Health and P.E.

#### **Math Department**

- Sixth Grade Math
- Sixth Advanced Math

#### **Religion Department**

- Seventh Grade Religion: Old Testament

#### **Science Department**

- Sixth Grade Science: Earth and Environmental

#### **Social Science Department**

- Sixth Grade Social Science: Ancient World

#### **Study Skills**

- Sixth Grade Study Skills



# Table of Contents

## Part Two: Curriculum Guide 2010-2011

### Seventh Grade

#### **Computer Science Department**

- Seventh Grade Computers

#### **English Department**

- Seventh Grade Language Arts
- Seventh Grade Latin
- Seventh Grade Speech

#### **Fine Arts Department**

- Seventh Grade Art
- Seventh Grade Band
- Seventh Grade Choir
- Seventh Grade Music Appreciation
- Seventh Grade Orchestra

#### **Foreign Language Department**

- Latin

#### **Health/PE Department**

- Seventh Grade Health and P.E.

#### **Math Department**

- Seventh Grade Math
- Seventh Advanced Math

#### **Religion Department**

- Seventh Grade Religion: Life of Christ/ New Testament

#### **Science Department**

- Seventh Grade Science: Physical and Chemical

#### **Social Science Department**

- Seventh Grade Social Science: Medieval World

#### **Study Skills**

- Seventh Grade Social Science: Ancient Civilizations



# Table of Contents

## Part Two: Curriculum Guide 2010-2011

### Eighth Grade

#### **Computer Science Department**

- Eighth Grade Computers

#### **English Department**

- Eighth Grade Language Arts
- Eighth Grade Speech

#### **Fine Arts Department**

- Eighth Grade Band
- Eighth Grade Choir
- Eighth Grade Music Appreciation
- Eighth Grade Orchestra

#### **Foreign Language Department**

- French I
- Japanese I
- Spanish I

#### **Health/PE Department**

- Eighth Grade Health and P.E.

#### **Math Department**

- Eighth Grade Math
- Eighth Advanced Math: Accelerated Algebra

#### **Religion Department**

- Eighth Grade Religion: Church History

#### **Science Department**

- Eighth Grade Science: Life Science

#### **Social Science Department**

- Eighth Grade Social Science: United States History