

## New Science Curriculum Model, Grades 6-8

Starting this year the St. Joseph middle School Science department is making a significant change, but one that will be beneficial for our students. Starting this year and moving forward, St. Joseph School will be using a 3 year curriculum cycle in grades 6, 7, and 8. Mr. Leach has used this model at other private schools with great success!

Cycle Year 1 (2017-2018) will be Physical Science. Upon review of last year's middle school Science class content, Physical Science is the content area in the previous curriculum that was covered the least and was not fully aligned with the Minnesota State Science standards. All three grade levels 6-7-8 will study Physical Science this year. The following year, Cycle Year 2 (2018-2019) will be Life Science. Cycle Year 3 (2019-2020) will be Earth Science.

By focusing on a single curriculum each year, we will provide our students new opportunities not afforded to them with the previous setup. The 3-year cycle model ensures that the Minnesota State Science Standards are being met in all content areas--Physical Science, Earth Science, and Life Science. Our previous curriculum touched on all 3 topic areas in all three grade levels every year with not much rigor or depth. Students will now be exposed to a full year of the same content topic, instead of 8 weeks of each topic. This approach allows content areas to build on each other, increases student mastery, and facilitates more in-depth student recall and connections, which equals more meaningful learning!

The curriculum content, textbook (*McGraw Hill's iScience*), and online features are developed for middle school level students. Assignments, projects, and assessments will be differentiated for each grade level--with more rigor and high-school readiness as a focus for our 8th grade students. More class time will be dedicated to hands-on, interactive labs since set up and take down time will be limited. We will also introduce a modified flipped classroom approach with digitally-integrated curriculum resources. For example, a student may be asked to watch a video or take a quiz online at home that will correlate to the next day's class lesson.

In addition, we have been blessed with a technology grant from the Catholic School Center of Excellence to purchase a new interactive projection system for our Science Room. The grid below highlights the Science content area your middle school student will focus on each year. Please contact Nick Leach or Kelly Roche with questions.

<b>SJS Graduation Year</b>	2017-2018	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020
	Physical-Life-Earth Science	Physical-Life-Earth Science	Physical Science	Life Science	Earth Science
<b>2018</b>	X	X	X		
<b>2019</b>		X	X	X	
<b>2020</b>			X	X	X