MIDDLE SCHOOL
AT A GLANCE

St. Francis
EPISCOPAL SCHOOL

Middle School builds upon the academic, social, physical, and spiritual foundations laid in our Primary and Lower Schools to ensure development of the whole child. As Middle School is a time of significant personal and academic growth for students, our faculty is committed to working alongside students in their quest for independence and agency. By encouraging increased responsibility, setting high expectations in a supportive environment, and cultivating curiosity and creativity, our teachers support students' growth into lifelong learners and citizens of the world.

2026–27 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

WOLVES
ST. FRANCIS

ADVISORY

The advisory program is an essential element of the Middle School experience. In addition to being a point-person for students and their families, the advisor plays an important role in building community, explicitly teaching social-emotional and executive functioning skills, and supporting his/her advisees as they navigate the middle school experience. Students gather throughout the week with their advisory in meetings designed to encourage self-reflection, cooperation, empathy, and service to others.

HONORS COURSES

The Honors program is designed to meet the needs of our most advanced learners in the areas of math and English, grades five through eight. The scope and sequence of the courses are similar to the on-level courses, but the accelerated pace benefits students who are able to grasp new concepts quickly and on a deeper level. Time is spent digging deep into concepts through inquiry-based explorations. Students are required to meet certain academic expectations in order to remain in the program.

MIDDLE SCHOOL CHAPEL AND RELIGION

Educating a child's spirit is as important to us as challenging the mind, and we strongly value our Episcopal identity. We are privileged to worship together as an entire Middle School community twice a week in an inclusive, student-friendly chapel service. Students are invited to participate in the scripture and prayer readings, and scripture is tied to our community virtues. Students also attend a religion class as part of the elective cycle. This class explores key people, stories, and historical events of both the Old and New Testaments with special emphasis on how the teachings of the Bible relate to our daily lives.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND ATHLETICS

Students attend regular physical education classes which build foundational skills in many team and individual sports while also emphasizing the values of health-related fitness. In addition, sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students are eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics. Our Middle School teams have a no-cut policy, allowing students of all experience levels to build their athletic skills and be part of a team.

FINE ARTS AND TECHNOLOGY

Throughout their Middle School years, students are offered many paths to explore their creative talents. Art, music, and drama are offered throughout the elective cycle, and students in sixth through eighth grades are also invited to audition for annual dramatic and musical productions. All St. Francis Middle School students also participate in an in-class partnership with the Alley Theater each year to build upon their storytelling, writing, and performance skills. Students can also choose to sharpen their technology skills through elective classes focused on computer programming, robotics, Design Thinking, and yearbook design.

2026–27 CORE CURRICULUM HIGHLIGHTS

Through engaging and relevant instructional opportunities, our Middle School faculty encourages students to inquire deeply and think creatively as they solve real-world problems and answer meaningful questions.

FIFTH GRADE

ENGLISH 5

- Reading deeply across genres to understand character motivation, theme, perspective, and author's purpose, while also developing a genuine love of reading
- Writing to empower, entertain, explain, and create connections with others in our world
- Exploring more sophisticated language and language structures through integrated spelling, vocabulary, and grammar
- Sharing ideas through collaborative book clubs and celebrations of learning

EARLY AMERICAN HISTORY

- Examining the past through investigations of primary and secondary sources focused on early American history
- Understanding world and U.S. geography and its role in shaping historical events
- Learning about key figures in American history and their lasting impact on our nation
- Understanding the Constitution and the branches of the federal government
- Engaging in inquiry-based research to explore historical events from multiple perspectives
- Integrating non-fiction reading, writing, research, and oral language skills to build and share historical understandings with others

MATH 5

- Understanding decimals by comparing and ordering, estimating powers of 10, and working equations using the four basic operations
- Mastering fraction concepts through prime factorization, finding greatest common factor and least common multiple, converting mixed and improper fractions, and solving problems using the four basic operations
- Understanding numerical expressions and equations by reading and writing expressions and utilizing the order of operations to solve equations
- Examining percent and proportion using basic and equivalent ratios while converting fractions, decimals, and percents and finding percent of a number
- Exploring Geometry by classifying and measuring figures, finding perimeter and surface area of figures and area and volume of 3D figures, and graphing coordinates of the first quadrant
- Applying mathematical concepts to authentic problems and situations through project and group work
- Advanced coursework is offered also, which covers similar topics at a more challenging level.

SCIENCE 5

- Focusing on a survey of the studies of life, physical, Earth and space sciences
- Integrating science and math skills through the scientific method, measurement, and technology
- Designing, creating, and revising prototypes through the engineering process
- Connecting science, technology, engineering, art, and math to solve problems and understand concepts

SPANISH 5

- Building basic conversation skills and essential vocabulary in Spanish through frequent interactive projects and presentations
- Learning simple present-tense verb conjugations and applying them in reading, writing, and speaking
- Integrating music, literature, drama, and art from Spanish-speaking countries

SIXTH GRADE

ENGLISH 6

- Reading fiction deeply to understand underlying issues that affect a main character, such as historical context, societal issues, internal and external pressures, and secondary characters
- Reading nonfiction to explore influential people and social movements as well as real-life problems that often have more than one viable solution or stance, thus broadening students' understanding that reading has the power to transform how we see others
- Writing across various genres and formats, with increased emphasis on literary analysis
- Exploring increasingly more sophisticated language and language structures through integrated spelling, vocabulary, and grammar
- Sharing ideas through collaborative book clubs and celebrations of learning

TEXAS HISTORY

- Examining the past through investigations of primary and secondary sources focused on Texas history
- Understanding the distinct regions of Texas and the role geography played and continues to play in the use of natural resources, development of industry and transportation, and a people's way of life
- Understanding the national and international contexts in which Texas changed from a colony, to a Republic, and then to a state
- Engaging in inquiry-based research to more fully understand important people and events in Texas history
- Comparing the government at state and federal levels
- Integrating non-fiction reading, writing, research, and oral language skills to build and share historical understandings with others

MATH 6

- Using all 4 mathematical operations to calculate and estimate fractions, decimals, integers and percentages
- Applying percentage concepts to compute percentage increases and decreases
- Describing ratios and proportional relationships between quantities
- Solving single variable equations, involving one-step, with whole numbers, fractions, decimals, and integers
- Using tables, graphs, and equations to describe relationships between quantities
- Deriving and using formulas for area and surface area for polygons and circles
- Exploring basic probability concepts
- Describing data sets using measures of central tendency
- Advanced coursework is offered also, which covers similar topics at a more challenging level.

EARTH AND SPACE SCIENCE

- Engaging in study of geology, meteorology, oceanography, and astronomy
- Incorporating science-related math skills, including basic dimensional analysis, data collection and organization, and graph and table development and analysis
- Collaborating during lab experiments to use scientific equipment and technology, problem solve, and draw conclusions based on scientific evidence
- Connecting science concepts to real-world problems via project-based learning and sponsorship in global partnerships

¡HOLA!

SPANISH IA

- Building conversation skills and essential vocabulary in Spanish through frequent interactive projects and presentations
- Learning regular and irregular present- and future-tense verb conjugations and applying them in reading, writing, and speaking
- Integrating music, literature, drama, and art from Spanish-speaking countries

SEVENTH GRADE

ENGLISH 7

- Deepening comprehension by investigating power dynamics, power systems, and sources of power through theoretical lenses in literature
- Considering transactional reading practices, identifying the ways that readers bring their own identities to a text and the ways that these identities shape their responses
- Innovating in their writing about reading, annotating and taking longer-form notes in reading notebooks to engage more deeply with texts and other readers
- Writing critically and providing evidence from multiple texts to support their argument or analysis
- Communicating ideas, understandings, and opinions with classmates through book clubs, literary discussion, and socratic seminars
- Becoming literacy activists, learning to speak seriously and passionately about books they choose to read and recommend to book club peers
- Fine-tuning grammar skills and word choice, particularly in the context of the writing process

WORLD HISTORY

- Examining the past through investigations of primary and secondary sources focused on world history
- Comparing the development and achievement of world civilizations across influences of geography, religion, politics, societal structure, economics, and culture
- Exploring the causal relationships between historical events and the multiple perspectives on their impacts
- Engaging in hands-on and collaborative projects to make history come alive
- Making connections between historical and current world events
- Expanding non-fiction reading, writing, research, and oral language skills to write research papers and produce multimedia presentations

MATH 7

- This class will review fraction, decimal and integer computation before proceeding into PreAlgebra topics.
- Topics, such as equation solving, will be discussed at a slower pace than regular PreAlgebra.

PRE-ALGEBRA

- Exploring rigid transformations and congruence in polygons
- Creating scaled drawings and understanding similarity
- Writing and solving single variable equations
- Solving inequalities and graphing on a number line
- Describing and graphing linear relationships, in slope-intercept form
- Computing volume and surface area of 3-D figures
- Mastering exponent concepts and scientific notation
- Applying the Pythagorean Theorem and simplifying irrational numbers
- Exploring basic probability concepts

ALGEBRA I — GRADE 7

- Students who are extremely successful in Honors Math 6 are invited to apply for an Algebra I course in seventh grade. Curriculum for this course is similar to the eighth-grade Algebra I course, with the addition of topics from Pre-Algebra, such as computing the volume and surface area of three-dimensional figures. Additional curriculum details can be found under the Algebra I heading in the Eighth Grade section.

LIFE SCIENCE

- Increasing students' knowledge of the interconnectedness of humans and other living things
- Studying human body systems and how health concerns can affect them
- Using compound microscopes to examine prokaryotic and eukaryotic cells
- Making connections between microscopic and macroscopic life
- Collaborating during lab experiments to use scientific equipment and technology, problem solve, and draw conclusions based on scientific evidence
- Creating spreadsheets to organize data and present it using graphs and tables
- Using online simulations and models to understand scientific concepts

SPANISH IB

- Practicing more advanced conversation skills and vocabulary in Spanish through frequent interactive classroom activities, projects, and presentations
- Learning regular and irregular present-, past-, and future-tense verb conjugations and applying them in reading, writing, and speaking
- Comprehending longer written passages
- Integrating music, literature, drama, and art from Spanish-speaking countries

EIGHTH GRADE

ENGLISH 8

- Exploring, through both classic and modern literature, how authors create multifaceted characters filled with weakness and strengths, complex relationships with others, and life lessons they learn and teach
- Understanding how authors use perspective, point of view, and the management of time across a story to control readers' sympathy and experience of epiphanies
- Learning to think and talk like readers who are also writers, with their own checklists of authorial techniques
- Developing the ability to reread and rethink as they examine stories through multiple lenses and engage in book club discussions and socratic seminars
- Focusing on analytical reading, writing, and thinking with emphasis on the literary and argumentative essay
- Crafting research-based position papers, using principled arguments, drawing on evidence, and addressing multiple perspectives, including the counterargument.
- Applying grammar and vocabulary study to their reading and writing, with emphasis on figurative language, complex sentence structure, and precise word choice

AMERICAN HISTORY

- Examining the past through investigations of primary and secondary sources focused on American history from Colonial times into the 20th century
- Studying the origins and importance of the US Constitution as a governing document as well as understanding the historical contexts of the amendments that have been made to it over time
- Exploring the intersection of geography, economy, society, achievements, and culture as demonstrated in different eras of American history
- Understanding the causal relationships between historical events in the US
- Investigating multiple perspectives of historical events
- Engaging in hands-on and collaborative projects to make history come alive
- Making connections between historical and current US and world events
- Expanding non-fiction reading, writing, research, and oral language skills to write comprehensive research papers and produce multimedia presentations

ALGEBRA I

- Exploring linear relationships through slope, slope-intercept form and graphing in slope-intercept form
- Solving multi-step inequalities with one variable, graphing the inequalities in 2 variables, and investigating real-world problems with more than one solution to a problem.
- Solving systems of linear equations and Inequalities
- Representing, writing, and graphing of functions and understanding function notation
- Applying the laws of exponents and multi-step exponents and computing polynomials
- Factoring quadratic equations
- Learning and graphing quadratic functions
- Exploring radical expressions and irrational numbers and their solutions
- Comparing linear, quadratic, and exponential functions

MATH 8

- This course will begin by reviewing essential concepts and skills from pre-Algebra before moving into algebraic concepts. This class will prepare students to take Algebra I as freshmen.

GEOMETRY

- Using various reasoning techniques to construct algebraic, segment, and angle proofs.
- Exploring relationships between the sides and angles of various triangles and quadrilaterals to determine missing measurements.
- Applying the Pythagorean Theorem and additional triangle theorems to determine missing side lengths and angle measures.
- Computing area, circumference, surface area, and volume.
- Performing transformations of figures on a coordinate plane.

PHYSICAL SCIENCE

- Exploring physical science with a focus on physics and chemistry
- Applying quantitative reasoning, mathematical concepts, and measurements to scientific study and reasoning
- Studying properties of and changes in matter
- Understanding and relating the atom, periodic table, and chemical reactions
- Learning about mechanics, including force, energy, work, power, and electromagnetism, and their relationships to one another
- Examining sound, the electromagnetic spectrum, and optics using electronic probes and basic engineering equipment

¡HOLA! INTRODUCTION TO SPANISH II / SPANISH II*

- Developing and strengthening essential skills in language learning, including listening and reading comprehension, writing and speaking, grammatical concepts, and vocabulary building
- Reviewing and applying regular and irregular present-, past-, and future-tense verb conjugations across all reading, writing, and speaking
- Reading and comprehending beginning- to intermediate-level literature
- Integrating history, geography, music, literature, drama, and art from Spanish-speaking countries

Placement in this course requires a qualifying score on placement assessment and teacher recommendation

**Course offered as needed.*

CONTACT INFORMATION

BYRON WILLIAMS, EDD
Head of Middle School
713-458-6145
BRWilliams@StFrancisHouston.org

JULIE DOWNS
Assistant Head of Middle School
713-458-6148
JDowns@StFrancisHouston.org

SHANNON SHRADER
Middle School Academic Dean
713-458-6433
SShrader@StFrancisHouston.org

SARAH FLORES LONG
Middle School Office Manager
713-458-6140
SFlores@StFrancisHouston.org

JENNIFER GLOVER
Head of Enrollment Management
713-458-6112
JGlover@StFrancisHouston.org

KATHRYN SPINELLI
Assistant Head of Admissions
713-458-6117
KSpinelli@StFrancisHouston.org

St. Francis
EPISCOPAL SCHOOL

PINEY POINT CAMPUS + MAILING
335 Piney Point Road
Houston, TX 77024

COUPER CAMPUS
2300 South Piney Point Road
Houston, TX 77063

www.StFrancisHouston.org

P: 713-458-6100