



Notre Dame
de Sion School

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Full **STEAM** Ahead at Sion! Middle School Electives

2016 - 2017

Full **STEAM** Ahead at Sion!

Dear Middle School Families,

The following elective courses are available for the 2016-2017 school year. Please read their descriptions carefully and discuss with your students. Each 6th grade student will need to select *one* elective. This can be either a yearlong elective or two semester electives. In addition, 6th grade students will also have three study hall sessions per schedule rotation. Students in 7th and 8th grade will need to select *two* electives. These can be two yearlong electives, one yearlong elective and two semester electives, or four semester electives. 7th and 8th grade students will also have at least one study hall session per schedule rotation.

Students will receive an elective enrollment form on the first day of school, which must be completed, signed, and returned by Friday, August 19, 2016 to their Homeroom teacher. Given that top elective choices may not be guaranteed, each student will rank all electives in order of preference. Detailed instructions will be available on the sign up form. Electives will begin on Monday, August 22, 2016. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Warm regards,



Paola V. Clark, Ed.D.
Middle School Division Head

Science & Service Learning

- ***Science Olympiad (Year)***

Science Olympiad competitions are like academic track meets, consisting of a series of 23 team events in each division . Each year, a portion of the events are rotated to reflect the ever-changing nature of genetics, earth science,

chemistry, anatomy, physics, geology, mechanical engineering, and technology. Each event is attempted by a pair of students collaborating together to submit one final test, project or score. This elective is for students with a strong work ethic, who embrace challenges, and possesses a love of science and learning. This class is for a grade and assessments are made from log journals submitted and require students to show effort and progress each month. All members are encouraged to participate in at least 2 of the 3 invitational events which are held once a month starting in November. They usually include traveling to California Trails, Pembroke Hill and Kearney Middle Schools. A final team of 15 members will be chosen to represent the school at regional and state competitions in February and March. This elective will be co-taught by Mr. Eikermann and Mr. Flournoy.

- ***Leading Through Service (Fall/Spring)***

This elective offered by Mrs. Klaus is designed to prepare students to become school, community, and global leaders by making a difference in the life of others. Rooted in our mission's commitment to social justice and service, this project-based learning class will allow students to learn and acquire leadership skills while devising, developing, and managing student-driven service projects such as “Knots of Love” and other student-inspired service initiatives.

Technology & Engineering

- ***Innovation, Design and Modeling (Fall/Spring)***

This elective offered by Mr. Kaspzyk aims to introduce seventh and eighth grade students to a wide range of technological applications. The course will have an emphasis on design and modeling, where students will apply the design process to solve problems and understand the influence of creativity and innovation in their lives. They work in teams to design a playground and furniture, capturing research and ideas in their engineering notebooks. Using Autodesk® design software, students create a virtual image of their designs and produce a portfolio to showcase their innovative solutions.¹

¹ PLTW Gateway – Curriculum. Project Lead The Way, 2014. Web. 10 Aug. 2016

Arts (Literary, Oratory, Performing and Visual)

Literary

- ***Adventures in Poetry (Fall/Spring)***

Are you ready to explore your creative side? Then this class is for you!

Here are some things you'll do with Mrs. Pearson:

- read selections from famous writers
- learn how to handle metaphors, similes, free verse, and rhyming patterns
- experiment with various styles of poetry
- edit and rewrite
- publish in various forms - including journals and homemade picture books

And most of all: share and learn from each other!

- ***Sion Scoop (Literary Magazine) (Fall/Spring)***

Students will create an online magazine that highlights Sion Middle School's arts, writing, projects, and class events. Students will become reporters, editors, photographers, and videographers while exploring the creative side of Sion's Middle School. Students will work collaboratively to use and learn new skills and technology to produce an engaging and vibrant Middle School publication. This elective will be taught by Mrs. Dasenbrock.

Oratory

- ***Sion Debate Team (Year)***

This elective aims to introduce students to policy debate and student congress debate. Students will research multiple topics throughout the semester including the 2016-2017 policy debate topic concerning relations between the United States and China. By the end of the elective, students will be able to develop claims for both the pros and cons of a set topic, effectively use evidence to support their claims, actively "flow" an opponent's argument, and exploit critical flaws in the logic of an opponent's argument. We will use a simplified policy debate format and a standard student congress debate format as we participate in competitions. This elective will be taught by Mr. Kaspzyk.

Performing

- ***Jazz Ensemble***

Do you like the sounds of Duke Ellington, Charlie Parker, Louis Armstrong, or John Coltrane? Then come enhance your playing skills with Jazz Ensemble! You will have the opportunity to play some fun songs with new and exciting rhythms, as well as to improvise with our newly acquired instruments. All skill levels are welcome! This elective will be taught by Mrs. Stafford.

- ***Sion Singers (Choral Ensemble) (Fall/Spring)***

Attention all singers! During the semester, vocal techniques and music reading will be stressed. Students will explore various musical sources and styles, both individually and as an ensemble. If you like to sing a variety of music, go on field trips, and perform, then Choir is for you. We will be learning popular songs as well as classical songs. Girls and Boys are welcome! Last year, choir performed at an event with the Mayor, and had an honor choir workshop day. Many more events to come this year! Mrs. Stafford would love to have you.

- ***Musical Theater Production (Spring)***

More information will be available before the Spring semester. This elective is currently not eligible for registration. At this time, please select any of the other electives offered.

Visual

- ***The Art of Play (Fall)***

Artists *play*. This highly interactive, performative, and collaborative studio art elective investigates the power and purpose of play in art. During the first quarter, students will study recent work by contemporary artist, Oliver Herring, and will collectively plan and organize their own TASK party. Students will also develop their own improvisatory art. In the second quarter, students will explore the role of play in the arts as well as the role of art in play. Students will build collaborative and communicative skills as they broaden their understanding of play as an essential ingredient to creative productivity. This elective will be taught by Mrs. Teasley.

- ***The Art of Care (Spring)***

Artists *care*. Students will explore ways in which artists use care in their work and will apply new discoveries to how they approach artwork. The third quarter will focus on care of concept. Students will be challenged to practice the studio habit, Stretch and Explore, to create deeper meaning in their work and to carefully interpret the work of others. Care in craft is the focus for the fourth quarter. Building upon the concepts they developed in the third quarter, students will practice and refine art making techniques in their choice of media. This elective will be taught by Mrs. Teasley.

Mathematics & Business

- ***MOEMS: Math Olympiads (Year)***

The Math Olympiads are math problem solving contests for teams of students with the aim of fostering mathematical creativity and ingenuity, learn and apply major strategies for solving problems, introduce and study important mathematical concepts in-depth, strengthen mathematical intuition, and to stimulate enthusiasm or love for mathematics, among others. This elective will be taught by Mr. Weems.²

- **Personal Finance and the Stock Market Game (Fall/Spring)**

The elective is designed to demonstrate the importance of financial responsibility (the good and bad features of compound interest) and to begin to "save" for retirement. Students will research companies and create a stock portfolio, and track and monitor each portfolio, measuring it against industry standards- the S&P 500. Industry representatives will also share their expertise with the class, as well as explain their day-to-day jobs responsibilities and how their industry actually works. This elective will be taught by Mr. Ray.

² Math Olympiads - The program. Mathematical Olympiads for Elementary and Middle Schools, 2014. Web. 14 Aug. 2016

Health & Wellness

- **Yoga (Fall/Spring)**

Yoga is a mind and body practice that is accessible to everyone. The goal of this elective is to safely introduce students to the basic postures or asanas, breathing techniques, and relaxation methods of yoga. Students will begin to experience the benefits of yoga and mindfulness as they relieve tension and anxiety, learn to relax, develop inner awareness, and ultimately get more out of day- to-day life³.

Directed Study (Fall/Spring)

Supervised study is offered to 7th and 8th grade students who desire time during the school day to study, review, and work on school assignments. Opportunities for tutorial help will be available. Students receive grades of Satisfactory (S) or Unsatisfactory (U), but not that this course provides no credit.

³ Yoga - Benefits beyond the mat. Harvard Health Publications., 2015. Web. 14 Aug, 2016.