

Saint John the
Baptist Middle
School

Eighth-Grade Eagle News

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**Your source for information & updates
from the 8th grade classrooms of SJBMS!**

Calling All Shutterbugs!

Did you get a great shot of your son's touchdown-scoring dive over the middle? How about your daughter's perfect "kill" in Saturday's big volleyball tournament? Maybe you took some great pictures of the dance concert or the school play.

If so, the Saint John the Baptist Middle School newspaper and yearbook staffs need you (and those photos)!

Whatever the event, we are *always* looking for action shots of your student(s) participating in the wide variety of sports and activities available at SJBMS, including our new HomeBase service projects.

Please send us your photos on a CD or e-mail them to us, care of Mr. Bentz, at:

jimbentz@sjb-middle.org

Art Class:

Perhaps the most intimidating subject in art is the one we all know best: the human face.

As humans, we know the face better than any other subject, probably because it's the one thing we see the most during the day. When drawing the face, getting even one feature wrong throws the entire piece off and we know something's not quite right.

The students taking art are learning the basic breakdown of the face. This is when math meets art! The face can be broken down into thirds; each third can be further broken down into thirds, and even more divisions can be made from there.

For instance, did you know that the human face is

about five eye-widths wide?

We are also working on drawing facial features, which can be broken down into simple shapes that make up a form. Your student can draw a simple and realistic looking nose by using just three circles and a few lines.

The students are looking at how their own faces break down in the grid, and how they can use simple shapes and formulas to draw their own facial features. They will apply these new skills when they draw self-portraits this month.

"Hey, when's the next test?"



Organized eighth graders check for upcoming tests or project due-dates using the eighth-grade team calendar. This new, regularly updated planning tool stands at the head of A-wing on the second floor.

Science:

We just completed our second test of the year, and I'm happy to say the grades were much better! Hopefully this trend will continue.

We are beginning to work on chemical reactions and how to speed them up or slow them down. This is a fun unit, but get ready to get your hands dirty. Your kids will be manipulating the rate of a chemical reaction at home. (Don't worry: they will only be using "kitchen chemistry," so the messes shouldn't be too bad.

This year's **Teton Science School** trip is scheduled for March 23-26. Look for applications to come home before the Thanksgiving break.

I'm hoping for a big snow year as we will be focusing on snow science and snowshoeing into the Teton National Park to study the relationships between snow layers and avalanches.

I haven't locked down the transportation yet, but I expect the price of the trip to be around \$350.

Religion:

October is the month of the Rosary. The eighth grade has memorized the Apostle's Creed and Hail, Holy Queen so we may pray the Rosary together.

Pope Benedict has declared this year The Year of Paul. Students have been studying a Pauline timeline and learning about his conversion experience, missionary journeys, and letters from the Bible. We have completed our first unit from Church History and will be taking a unit exam this week.

Finally, we have spent some time watching the original documentary of the Invisible Children in Uganda. When they watch this film, students feel the pain of the African children and want to create change.

We are called to service. Mother Teresa said, "God will not force you to do good, you must choose to do it."

Social Studies:

The eighth grade is learning about the American Revolution and the Declaration of Independence ...and they are loving the fight for freedom!

The students just started doing their first major project of the year: research papers about the important figures of the American Revolution.

Students will write their papers in social studies, where we will focus on research and content, as well as in their language arts classes, where they will concentrate on the writing process, mechanics, and MLA formatting.

Our honors students are still reading *April Morning*. They will be writing a paper on this novel later in the month. All papers will be due before Thanksgiving, so keep an eye out for deadlines.

Math:

The algebra classes just finished a difficult unit on story problems. Please encourage your student to get help when necessary. Story problems are very important in SAT and ACT college testing. We will review story problems periodically throughout the year.

We just began a new unit on polynomials, one which marks the beginning of learning concepts entirely new to our students. With extra homework and practice on these new concepts, you should see their books at home more frequently.

Pre-algebra classes just finished a unit on integers. We are now using the rules for operations with integers to transfer to fractions and decimals. We will be reviewing decimals and fractions for the next few weeks. Around mid-quarter, we should be doing our unit on solving equations with integers, decimals and fractions.

Language Arts & Lit/Comp:

We took some time off from our regular readings and writing work to spend a little quality time with that Halloween mad-man, Edgar Allen Poe!

Both classes learned a little about Poe himself, and explored some of the things that made him tick. Turns out, he had "trouble with the ladies"—that is, all the ones he truly loved kept dying on him...who wouldn't be morose under those circumstances!

In November, we will introduce "Conditional Imagery" in writing and continue learning about how great literature connects us to universal truths about freedom, equality, justice, and individual responsibility.

Literature and Composition students will be meeting the "Tick-Tock Man" as well as some *real pigs*...who says school is boring?