



# **ST. JOHN'S**

EPISCOPAL SCHOOL

**Specialist Information**

**Back to School Night**

**Grades 1-4**

**August 27, 2019**

Students in first through fourth grades attend specialist classes to support our mission of providing a program of academic excellence.

Classes visit **library** once each week. **Art, music,** and **Spanish** classes occur twice during a 6-day rotation. **Physical Education** classes are four out of every 6 days. When not attending P.E., students visit our new Lab or do “Outside the Box” activities in their classroom. Lab and OTB curriculum includes design thinking, coding, robotics, engineering, and STEM activities.

All specialists use the St. John’s Code as the basis of their classroom expectations:

- I am St. John’s
- I am respectful.
- I am responsible.
- I am honest.
- I care.

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## Lab

*Pre-K – 4th: Ms. Debbie Carona                      dcarona@stjohnsschool.org                      x126*

The elementary students will experience the process of design thinking through discovering, empathizing, experimenting and producing results. This will reinforce creative thinking and reflection. While designing projects we will also be covering both offline and online coding and will be introducing the students to a variety of robotics. We’d love to have you come by and take a look at our new space!

## Physical Education

*Pre-K – 4th: Mr. Devin Darnell                      ddarnell@stjohnsschool.org                      x180*

*Pre-K – 4th: Ms. Lauren Loerch                      lloerch@stjohnsschool.org                      x261*

In P.E we strive to empower students by challenging them physically and athletically through game-based units. The students will learn correct technique for skills such as throwing and catching, dribbling/bouncing balls, being able to volley objects, using racquets, and kicking both stationary and moving objects. In addition to learning and improving their athletic and physical skills, students will learn how to respect themselves, others, and the space around them. We are very passionate about instilling confidence and building knowledge in what it means to be a good sport and a great leader.

# The St. John's Library and Lower School

Pre-K – 8<sup>th</sup>: Ms. Jennifer Powers

[jpowers@stjohnsschool.org](mailto:jpowers@stjohnsschool.org)

x 125

Welcome to a new St. John's school year! I am Jennifer Powers, the librarian. This is my 13<sup>th</sup> year in this position and I still feel so fortunate to be here. Now for the basics:

**Lower School's scheduled checkout day is Thursday and their book return day is Wednesday.**

**On Thursdays:**

**Kindergarten and First Grade:** May check out **one book** for **one week**. The book may be renewed once for an additional week. The librarian will check them out using their library card.

**Second Grade:** May check out **two books** for **two weeks each**. Each book may be renewed once for an additional two weeks. The librarian will check them out using their library card. Second graders start using the online catalog, Destiny Discover.

**Third Grade:** May check out **three items** for **two weeks each**. Each item may be renewed once for an additional two weeks. Magazines may be checked out starting in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. Once they are trained on the checkout system, they may check their own books out. The Bluebonnet Reading Program begins in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. If a child chooses to read 5 or more of this year's Bluebonnet books and fills out a blue slip for each book read, they will be invited to a voting party in the library in January.

**Fourth Grade:** May check out **four items** for **two weeks each**. Each item may be renewed once for an additional two weeks. Once they are trained on the checkout system, they may check their own books out. Fourth grade still participates in the Bluebonnet Reading Program.

Please inform me immediately if a book is lost or damaged, and please let me try to fix a damaged book. You are only charged for a book if it is lost or is damaged beyond repair (liquids and books don't mix. ☺).

In addition to purchasing and checking out library materials, I also work with the teachers to co-teach integrated lessons (for example, the *Number the Stars* unit in 4<sup>th</sup> grade), teach research and evaluation skills, provide readers' advisory, organize and host author visits, and organize (along with wonderful PA volunteers) the annual Book Fair, among other things. This year's Book Fair will be in the library November 4 – 7. Pastries with Parents, an annual part of Book Fair for Pre-K through 1<sup>st</sup> grade students and a parent or special friend, will be in the library at 7:00 a.m. on Wednesday, November 6.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to share my love of reading and literature with your children. I do my best to inspire and instruct them, help them determine fact from fiction, and embrace their inquisitive natures. Please don't hesitate to contact me through email at [jpowers@stjohnsschool.org](mailto:jpowers@stjohnsschool.org).

# Visual Arts

1<sup>st</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup>: Mrs. Denise M. A. Brown dbrown@stjohnsschool.org

x 218

## Teacher Statement

*The life and language of an artist provides the basis for my teaching. I teach art as a visual alphabet moving towards a more full visual language in order for my students to articulate larger ideas and to problem solve creatively.*

*I believe that learning to hone our observations both internally and externally, and to know the difference between our subjective and objective lenses, allows our students to grow and graduate from fledgling ideas to tangible, possibilities giving them a strong platform for navigating larger life lessons.*

## Grade Level Overview

- **First Grade** meets for 40 minutes every 3 days. The basic elements of art (line, color, two-dimensional shapes, texture, space, and form) are recognized. Students will be able to combine more than one shape to form an object, to understand that texture is tactile as well as visual, to recognize dark and light values in the concepts of background, middle ground, and foreground, and that forms can be real or implied.
- **Second Grade** meets for 40 minutes every 3 days. Basic elements of art (line, color, two and three dimensional shapes, texture, value, and form) are reintroduced and examined in further detail. At this level, students will be able to recognize that: 1. Line defines contours. 2. Colors in nature have value and intensity. 3. Shapes can be described as large and small, smooth and rough. 4. Tactile or real textures are imitated by the use of visual pattern. 5. Values of a color can be discovered and organized. 6. Objects, both natural and man made, are variations of basic geometric and free form shapes and forms.
- **Third Grade** meets for 40 minutes every 3 days. Basic elements of art (line, color, 3-D design, shape, form, texture, and space) are recognized. Students will be able to recognize that: 1. Line can be used to create tactile texture. 2. Color placement can be used to create symmetrical and asymmetrical balance 3. Shapes can be positive or negative. 4. The illusion of space in 2-D can be created through size, overlapping, and the position of shapes. 5. Color, when surrounded by black and white, is reinforced and brightened. 6. Forms can contain a variety of shapes, both geometric and free-form.
- **Fourth Grade** meets for 40 minutes every 3 days. The basic elements of art (line, color, 2-D and 3-D design, texture, space, and form) are recognized. The concepts addressed focus primarily on describing what is interpreted and seen. Students will be able to recognize and use: 1. Contour drawing to define form. 2. Cross-hatching to define space. 3. Physical and implied texture to enrich and describe. 4. Value as the differences between light and dark. 5. Composition as design, both conceptual and emotional. 6. Shape and color as a means of personal and universal expression.

**All students engage in hands-on projects encouraging them to understand that art is a record of personal experiences, emotions, thoughts, and ideas and that artists and their works reflect many cultures. Materials include but are not limited to digital photography, tempera, oil pastels, printmaking, paint, markers, watercolor, clay, and fibers. Self-portraits, portraits, still life, landscape, and abstract art are used as the platform to describe what they see internally and externally and, most importantly, ART IS GREAT FUN!**

# Music

1<sup>st</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup>: Mrs. Megan Nasser

[mnasser@stjohnsschool.org](mailto:mnasser@stjohnsschool.org)

x 234

In the lower school music department at SJES, one of the primary objectives is providing an environment in which students experience the joy of music by singing, dancing, and playing in a tuneful, “beat”-ful, and artful manner.

Through singing games, chants, choral singing, and classical listening exercises, first and second grade music classes practice steady beat, develop the singing voice, develop aural memory skills, begin reading and writing basic forms of standard music notation, and have experiences with classroom percussion instruments and barred instruments. First and second graders also study opera as an art form and enjoy a children’s opera performed by the Fort Worth Opera Company’s Apprentice Program in Clements Hall each January/February.

Third and fourth grade students build upon the skills acquired in previous years, develop their part-singing skills and ensemble skills, explore reading and writing melodies and rhythms on the staff, and learn to accompany their singing with barred instruments, hand drums, and recorders. The culmination of their fourth grade year involves writing a class-composed, original piece, generating the lyrics and melody in their music classes for their 4th grade PBL “Number the Stars” each spring. Third and fourth graders also study instrument families of the Orchestra and enjoy a presentation in Clements Hall by section leaders from the Dallas Symphony Orchestra each May.

Other highlights of our year include:

- 2<sup>nd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> grade students prepare a choral anthem in their music classes each fall. Volunteers serve as representatives of the school at **Episcopal School Sunday**, adding a musical offering of appreciation during St. John’s Church traditional worship service on **Sunday, September 29**.
- 1<sup>st</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> grade students prepare two sacred advent pieces per grade level and perform before parents as part of a special **Advent Carol service** in the Church each December. This year’s grade level carol services will happen on **Tuesday morning, December 10**. Guest soloists and pianists perform alongside the students, several students present readings, and a small group of second graders process into the Church and become part of a nativity crèche.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> grade students may choose to participate in an **after-school program choir**. The group will rehearse Mondays, 3:45-4:30 p.m., starting Monday, Sept. 30. We plan to meet through December 2, with a service-oriented concert tour on Friday, Dec. 6.
- 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> graders participate in a **Folk Dance Festival** in Owen Gym each spring.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> graders have **spring musical performances** as part of their PBL presentations for parents in the spring (Poetry and Number the Stars).

# Spanish

Pre-K – 2<sup>nd</sup>: Sra. Morgan Martinez      [mmartinez@stjohnsschool.org](mailto:mmartinez@stjohnsschool.org)      x 136  
3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>: Sr. Jessie Barajas      [jbarajas@stjohnsschool.org](mailto:jbarajas@stjohnsschool.org)      x 215

The objective of **first and second grade** Spanish is to build students' ability to speak and understand the language while exposing them to beginning reading and writing skills. Students use journaling to read and write, as well as group instruction and read-a-loud books for oral comprehension. Additionally, students further their language acquisition by answering warm-up questions, playing games, singing songs, participating in group projects, responding to listening activities, and performing skits. Woven into these skills is a study of various Spanish-speaking countries and an appreciation for other cultures. We do this by looking at food, clothing, customs, housing, toys, money, etc. found in these countries. Students will also experience project-based learning at each grade level. First graders will combine robotics with their study of community to give directions in the target language. Second graders will design, create, and execute a one-day restaurant utilizing their restaurant/ food vocabulary and ability to dialogue in Spanish.

**First grade will highlight the following countries:**

Honduras, Peru, Dominican Republic, Cuba, Spain

**First grade subject highlights:**

Vowel sound study, Family, Greetings, Describe people and places, Clothing, Community, School, Singular/Plural conjugation, Animals, Emotions, Identify masculine/feminine nouns

**Second grade will highlight the following countries:**

Honduras, Peru, Mexico, Guatemala, Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay, Panama

**Second grade subject highlights:** , Weather, Professions, and Celebrations

This year, **third and fourth grade** will begin a new Spanish program intended to be taught over two years. Since this will be the first year to utilize the program in third and fourth grade, both levels will begin the course at the same point. The program is focused on building conversational skills that will cover day-to-day vocabulary, practical phrases, and foundational grammar. This curriculum aligns and builds on material taught in previous years.

Along with the language component, students will explore various cultural aspects of the Spanish-speaking world. They will study the history of several countries, as well as important elements of their culture.

**Third grade will highlight the following countries:**

El Salvador, Costa Rica, Colombia, Venezuela

**Fourth grade will highlight the following countries:**

Mexico, Puerto Rico, Chile, Bolivia

