

# ROSARIAN ACADEMY

— Est. 1925 —



## LOWER SCHOOL COURSE OF STUDY 2017-2018

Wonder and joy in learning characterizes Rosarian Academy's Lower School, where hands-on, open-ended activities develop our children's curiosity and problem-solving skills. Instruction is carefully sequenced to encourage skill consolidation and cross-curricular connections. Throughout the program, students reflect upon and explain their thought processes and gain confidence in oral and written expression. Small-class sizes are conducive to diverse learning styles coupled with dynamic and authentic inquiry and understanding. Traditional Dominican values of community, prayer, study, service, empathy, and grace permeate our culture. Reference to national standards of best practice in teaching and learning afford us the opportunity to consistently monitor, analyze, and refine all aspects of our students' experiences within the Lower School community.

## Religion

Elements of Catholic faith, prayers, and religion are practiced daily in Lower School. Religion classes throughout the grade levels provide spiritual enrichment, as well as age-appropriate sacramental preparation. Second-grade students participate in the sacraments of Reconciliation and First Communion. Third- and fourth-grade students prepare, conduct readings and lead school liturgies throughout the year. Kindergarten-through-fourth-grade students attend and participate in all school liturgies, school family events and guidance lessons. Parents are welcome to attend our school liturgies which are celebrated monthly in the Theatre or Rosary Chapel. To complement our Lower School religion instruction, students follow a grade-specific Sadlier Religion textbook and students in kindergarten through third grade utilize a Catholic Faith Scriptures manuscript and cursive formation textbook.

## Language Arts

Lower School Language Arts instruction includes: small-group guided reading which targets learning at each child's individual reading level; shared inquiry and novel study to strengthen reading comprehension and students' connections with quality literature; phonics, phonetics and vocabulary study; spelling, grammar and writing. This balanced approach to fiction and nonfiction literacy instruction moves students from learning to read to reading to learn. Students are provided individual [Fountas and Pinnell](#) leveled readers, *Junior Great Books* anthologies for shared inquiry lessons and a subscription to *IXL English*, an online grammar and vocabulary support program. Additionally, selected novels, *Saxon Phonics and Spelling* and *Voyages Grammar* workbooks are used to support our Lower School Language Arts Curriculum.

## Writing

The Rosarian Lower School writing curriculum follows the *Empowering Writers* methodology. This foundational writing framework teaches students the skills they need to produce good writing. During writing lessons, students are introduced to writing concepts and skills through published examples. Techniques are modeled for the students with numerous opportunities for guided writing practice. The students are taught to apply writing skills to develop written works which demonstrate: organization, great beginnings, supporting details, suspense, fully elaborated main events and satisfying endings. Additionally, our Rosarian writers display their writing in school-wide theme displays to showcase their progress as young authors.

## Social Studies

The Lower School Social Studies program correlates to the themes of the [National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies](#). Lessons are designed around the following themes: culture, time, continuity and change, people, places and environments, individual identity and development, groups and institutions, power and governance, production, distribution and consumption, science, technology and society, global connections, and civic ideals and practices. Our goal is to help students make sense of information about the world they live in and then act on it. Students are introduced to *essential questions* which connect them to the content of the lessons. Students utilize the *Pearson My World Interactive Write- in Textbook* and complete small group activities which range from mapping, graphing, role playing, interactive read-alouds and analyzing primary sources. Our Social Studies program is literacy based and includes classroom-leveled libraries to support the concepts, content and skills presented in the themed lessons. Targeted reading and writing skills include: cause and effect, sequence, summarize, fact and opinion, draw conclusions, main idea, supporting details, and compare and contrast.

## Mathematics

Kindergarten and first-grade students learn math following the *Primary Mathematics* curriculum and will continue this methodology through subsequent school years. *Primary Mathematics* is based on Singapore Math methods. Singapore Math is a base ten system focusing on teaching mental math, computation and problem solving first concretely, next pictorially and then abstractly. Students develop metacognition and an array of computational strategies to solve complex mathematical problems accurately and confidently. Beginning the second half of first grade, students learn to solve complex word problems using model drawing. Throughout the year, students utilize and follow grade specific *Primary Mathematics* textbooks, activity books and tests.

Second-through-fourth-grade math instruction utilizes the Saxon Math curriculum. Saxon Math follows an incremental teaching method which involves teaching a new mathematical concept every day and frequently reviewing previously taught concepts. Students are provided consumable daily worksheets to

complete assorted mental math problems, practice a new mathematical concept and practice problems related to the daily lesson, and review problems from previous math lessons. In addition to Saxon Math, IXL Math is provided to our Lower School students as an online math support program used to practice the automaticity of math facts and strengthen students' use and practice of computational strategies. Additionally, our second-through-fourth grade students use a *Motivational Math* workbook which focuses on critical thinking and mathematical problem solving. The support workbook exposes students to quantitative thinking problems similar to those they will experience on the ERB CTP 4 standardized test (administered in second through eighth grades).

## **Science and Science Lab**

Guided by Next Generation Science Standards, Lower School science is taught through reading, inquiry and digital pathways. Units of study include: Earth Science, with in-depth lessons about our Earth's resources, weather and solar system; Physical Science, with in-depth lessons about matter, energy, motion, force, magnetism and electricity; Life Science, with in-depth lessons about living things, plants, animals, gardening and ecosystems. Each Lower School classroom is equipped with a science library featuring a selection of leveled science readers which support the science concepts and vocabulary being taught within the lessons. In addition to classroom science instruction, all kindergarten-through-fourth-grade students attend weekly visits to our Lower School Science Lab. The Science Lab teacher guides students' participation in lab experiments which support the classroom science lessons and teach the Scientific Method. All K-4th students utilize a grade specific *Pearson Interactive Science Write-in Textbook* and Rosarian Academy provides lab materials to support our inquiry-based methodology for teaching science to our Lower School children. In the spring, students celebrate their scientific accomplishments for the year during Science Mania Day. This fun day is devoted to science project displays, experimentation, demonstrations and hands-on STEM exploration.

## **Health**

The purpose of Rosarian Academy's health education curriculum is to provide students with the opportunity to acquire knowledge, attitudes, and skills for making decisions that promote health, to adopt behaviors that enhance health, and to promote the health of others. Following national standards and objectives, the curriculum includes a progression of developmentally appropriate lessons and learning experiences that guide students to practice health-enhancing behaviors. Topics include nutrition and diet, hygiene, exercise, safety, and disease prevention.

## **Guidance**

The goal of the Guidance program at Rosarian Academy is to address the social, emotional, and behavioral needs of all students. Developmentally sensitive guidance activities introduce students to the concepts and processes that are involved in making effective behavior choices. Children will define and identify thoughts, emotions, sensations, behaviors, and consequences that influence their choices. They will participate in mindfulness activities to assist in the identification of these concepts and start to identify how the choices they make impact their relationships with others.

## **CO-CURRICULAR CLASSES**

Co-curricular classes enrich our students physically, artistically, musically and culturally. They enhance the skills of technology and open the doors to cyber research tools, as well as physical mediums in our library system. These classes include Spanish, Physical Education, Visual Art, Library, Performing Arts Wheel, and STEM Wheel. The Performing Arts Wheel includes Choral Music, Music Theory, and Drama. The STEM Wheel includes Computer Science, Tinker Lab and Technology.

## **Spanish**

Lower School students receive Spanish instruction twice per week. Spanish classes engage students in lessons, songs, games, foods and activities designed to immerse them both in the language and the traditions and culture of Spanish-speaking countries.

## **Physical Education**

Lower School students participate in Physical Education three times per week. Physical fitness, individualized skills, and coordination are emphasized, while children enjoy a broad range of games and team activities.

## **Visual Arts**

Lower School children attend visual arts classes once per week to study art history and receive instruction in drawing, painting, and ceramics. An appreciation of the visual arts not only inspires, but also enables students to better communicate their ideas and feelings.

## **Library**

Weekly visits to the Rosarian Media Center provide opportunities for students to develop the Library skills necessary to conduct and locate books for basic research

and to explore titles and authors for personal reading pleasure. Younger students enjoy library 'story time' which fosters a love of reading and spending quality time in the Rosarian library.

## **Lower School Performing Arts Wheel**

### **Choral Music**

Lower School students are taught choral music to perform at the Rosarian Academy Christmas Pageant. Showmanship, enunciation, memorization, unison and harmony are showcased during this annual celebration of the birth of Jesus.

### **Music Theory**

Following the Orff method, elements of music are taught for a basic understanding of notation, rhythm, melody, harmony, etc. An introduction to Orff instruments, recorders and instruments from various cultures, composers and great masterpieces helps students appreciate music. The annual Rosarian Academy Grandparents' Day Performance celebrates all that the children have learned through their Music Theory classes.

### **Drama**

Drama teaches students creative expression and public speaking. Students develop skills using body, voice, and imagination. First-through-fourth-grade students may elect to participate in the Lower School Musical production held each fall.

## **Lower School STEM Wheel**

### **Computer Science**

Computer Science offers students the opportunity to learn the principles of engineering, coding and robotics. Engaging computer science lessons teach students to write code, create games and animation, write programs with Scratch and Scratch Junior, and command the movements of Kebos and Spheros.

### **Tinker Lab**

The Lower School Tinker Lab is a place to create, build and learn the design process. Students collaborate, solve problems and think about solutions by exploring a variety of materials and ideas. The Tinker Lab is a place for students to extend their academic learning by putting their learning into motion, action and authentic designs through trial, error and critical thinking.

## **Technology**

Students are taught the necessary grade-level skills needed to understand and use the computer, iPads and chrome books for assignments. All students are introduced to the five basic components of the computer and their functions, key boarding, various programs, apps and internet safety.

## **Cultural Experiences / Field Trips**

Our community is rich with cultural and educational opportunities for our students. Educational study trips are encouraged through the grade levels. Visits to the Kravis Center for the Performing Arts enhance our study of language and fine arts through classic plays, musicals, and cultural dance troupes. Ongoing field experiences include visits to the Norton Museum of Art, the Flagler Museum, the Little Red School House, the Florida History Museum, the Palm Beach Zoo and the Busch Wildlife Sanctuary. The Fourth Grade travels to St. Augustine for a day as a culmination trip of a yearlong study of Florida History. Additionally, Rosarian hosts in-school visits from the Kravis Center traveling theater troupes, the South Florida Science Center and Aquarium, and the Chamber Music Society of Palm Beach Young Concert Artists Series.