



Siena Catholic Academy - FAQs re 6th Grade

What is the Curriculum? Do you follow the Common Core?

We are excited to offer our sixth graders an innovative curriculum that engages students in active learning in interdisciplinary courses. These courses draw upon the richness of our cultural heritage while incorporating the discoveries and advances of our modern world.

While we are conscious of the need to prepare students for state tests and, ultimately, for SATs and Advanced Placement exams, all of which are geared toward the Common Core Standards, we do not let such standards limit our vision of what a well-educated citizen ought to know or how a teacher ought to instruct. And, of course, Faith and the life of the Spirit is part of our Catholic Core. For a more detailed description of our sixth grade curricular program, go to our website and look under the Admissions tab.

Do sixth grade students move from class to class for each subject as the seventh and eighth grades do?

Our sixth grade program serves as a transition between elementary school and the high school model of discipline-based courses that our grades seven and eight experience. Grade six students transition between six courses a day. The courses are interdisciplinary in nature, focusing on STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics), the humanities, the arts, technology, and language arts/physical education. The first two courses meet for 83 minute periods to ensure that students can immerse themselves in research and projects that draw upon the theories and practices, knowledge and skills of multiple subjects.

Do you offer extracurriculars and clubs?

We offer a range of clubs that meet during a twenty-five minute flex period at the beginning of the day in addition to after school enrichment opportunities.

Are there sports teams for sixth grade? Are they competitive? Will there be try-outs?

We offer our 7th and 8th grade students competitive sports under the auspices of Section V and CYO that, for the most part, do not involve tryouts. We usually field as many teams as we can to meet student interest and coaching availability. We offer fun sports clubs for sixth graders. The New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSSPHA), of which Section V sports are a part, does not permit any school affiliated with it to offer formal competitive sports program for sixth graders. This fall we had a cross country and soccer club. We offer similar activities throughout the year geared toward developing bonds of friendship among our students. Sixth graders who want to participate competitively in sports are encouraged to continue with their travel teams or parish CYO leagues.

Are the sixth grade teachers certified?

We hire highly qualified teachers who know their fields, are passionate about teaching, and create engaging lessons. As a middle school which requires more subject-matter specialization than elementary schools do, we seek to hire faculty with high school certification, though a well-qualified teacher with elementary school certification can present themselves as a strong candidate.