

# HTS Middle School Courses



## 8th Grade ELA

**Teacher: Mrs. Tracy Johnson**

**Email: [tjohnson@htslenexa.org](mailto:tjohnson@htslenexa.org)**

I am so excited to have your child in 8th grade ELA! Throughout the year we will focus on reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. Even more than that, we will dive deep into literature and connect our reading to our own lives. We will discover different types of characters and people, investigate problems and solutions, and use literature to learn about how our dreams and the past can affect our future. Our interactive notebooks and Google Classroom house much of our notes, learning, and daily agenda, so have your child show you those. Please contact me at [tjohnson@htslenexa.org](mailto:tjohnson@htslenexa.org) if you have any questions. I'm looking forward to a great year!

## 7th and 8th Grade Social Studies

**Teacher: Mrs. Megan Gilbert**

**Email: [mgilbert@htslenexa.org](mailto:mgilbert@htslenexa.org)**

I am so grateful that I was able to make the move to middle school this year, as I am able to spend another year with both the 7th and 8th grade classes! I am excited to be teaching social studies for both grade levels. The seventh grade class will be covering both Kansas history and geography throughout the course of the year, while eighth grade will be focusing on American history. Both classes will use an online textbook for their respective course, we have practiced logging in during class time but their individual login information can be found on their google classroom page as well. Students can usually expect to have a short homework assignment for each day that they attend my class - they will usually get some class time to start on the assignment and can always come to me during study hall to ask questions. We will be using different resources to cover a wide range of topics. My goal is to get every student interested in something new and further their interest in social studies.

# 7th Grade ELA

**Teacher: Mrs. Melissa Hornback**

**Email: [mhornback@htslenexa.org](mailto:mhornback@htslenexa.org)**

Students have enjoyed mostly narrative writing in elementary school and will transition to expository writing this year. This will help prepare them for the academic type writing that is required in upper middle and high school. By the end of the year, students will have a portfolio of 10+ essays. One online resource that will help them grow as writers is No Red Ink so each student has an account provided by the school. Additionally, students will enjoy reading short stories, poems, scripture, and novels emphasizing both reading skills and the joy of reading. Our online reading resource will be Commonlit, a platform that is a digital library of leveled texts. Some books we will read this year include *ReStart*, *Esperanza Rising*, *Refugee*, and *The Diary of a Young Girl* (Anne Frank). All assignments are posted on the ELA Google C lassroom and I encourage students to check their grades at least once a week in Sycamore. Please encourage your student to talk to me during class or study hall when they have questions or concerns.

# 7th and 8th Grade Mathematics

**Teacher: Mrs. Claire Irsik**

**Email: [cirsik@htslenexa.org](mailto:cirsik@htslenexa.org)**

This is my 6th year at Holy Trinity and 18th in education! I truly enjoy teaching middle school students and math. My goal for any math course that I am teaching is that the students develop confidence in their abilities, which requires GRIT (Give it your all, Redo if necessary, Ignore giving up, Take time to do it right). I do utilize a flipped classroom for many lessons. A flipped classroom is a classroom where students are introduced to content at home via a video of me guiding them through notes and practicing working through concepts at school. This allows most class time to be reserved for collaboration, discussion, and guided practice - all performed under the guidance of the teacher(me). Delta Math is utilized in the middle school math classes as an additional practice opportunity. Students will have a Delta Math assignment that goes along with each unit that they should be working on. Students occasionally have time to work on it in class, but they will need to invest some time outside of class to complete it. My goal for all students is to leave my class with more developed logical, analytical problem solving skills and to be well prepared for their next math class.

# 7th and 8th Grade Mathematics

**Teacher: Mr. Jake Klausner**

**Email: [jklausner@htslenexa.org](mailto:jklausner@htslenexa.org)**

I am so excited about the start of this school year! I am really looking forward to getting to know all of the 7th graders and to work with all of the 8th graders for another year! This year, I will be teaching 8th Grade Honors Geometry, 8th Grade Honors Algebra, 7th Grade Honors Algebra, and 7th Grade Pre-Algebra. Mrs. Irsik will be teaching the other two math classes, but we are both excited to work with all of the middle school students this year. My goal for this year is to provide the students with mathematical knowledge, as well as valuable problem solving and critical thinking skills. Over the course of the year, we will be using a variety of resources in class. Students in Honors Algebra or Honors Geometry will be expected to have a graphing calculator. A letter was emailed out to parents of students in these classes with more information. In middle school we will also be using Delta Math as an online resource. This is a replacement for ALEKS, which is used by the younger grades. More information about the class can be found in the Math Handbook, which is linked in Sycamore. I am also always happy to answer questions, so please feel free to reach out if there is ever anything that I can help with!

# 7th and 8th Grade Science

**Teacher: Mrs. Ron Occhiogrosso**

**Email: [rocchiogrosso@htslenexa.org](mailto:rocchiogrosso@htslenexa.org)**

Course Outline - Provides a wealth of information about your child's Science class.

Effort is paramount to me. I view it very highly, as do all teachers. Your child's effort can translate into a higher grade, but more importantly as greater comprehension of the material. And that greater comprehension translated into a more solid understanding of the material for high school too.

Meet My Kid Parent Survey - Thanks parents for completing this survey for your child. I have read them carefully, and am learning something new about all my students - - even those in 8th grade, despite the fact I taught them last year.

SHED - Your child should definitely know by now what SHED stands for, so speak to them for more details. Here's the key about the SHED: it's in GC and it's what took place in class and what's for homework.

Would you like to come speak to our science classes? I have two parents scheduled for this year, but I am always open to adding on a 3rd speaker. There is such a wealth of information and knowledge in our parents, and I love to tap into it.

Back to school night joke - Oh my goodness, I went to the Doctor the other day and after a while of deliberation with several of his colleagues, he came back in and said, 'I'm afraid I've got some bad news. As unbelievable as it sounds, your DNA is backwards!!' I caught my breath and after a couple of seconds I said, AND. . .

## 7th and 8th Grade Religion

**Teacher: Mrs. Margi Petersen**

**Email: [mpetersen@htslenexa.org](mailto:mpetersen@htslenexa.org)**

I am so excited to be a part of the middle school team this year. I taught many of your children when they were in first grade as some of the youngest students in the school and it has been fun for me to reconnect with them now as the oldest students in the school.

In 7th grade Religion we will be focusing primarily on the New Testament and what it means to live as Disciples of Jesus. In 8th grade we will be focusing on being members of the Catholic Church, Church history and celebrating the Sacrament of Confirmation. Both 7th and 8th graders will be expected to participate in service leadership projects in their families, at school, in our parish and in the greater community each quarter. In preparation not only for Confirmation but for high school and a lifetime of virtuous decision making, we will be using the book "Decision Point" published by Dynamic Catholic. We will also be learning more about the Theology of the Body and will use the materials created by Ascension Press designed specifically for middle school. Some of the material we will cover can be viewed online at:

<https://ascensionpress.com/pages/theology-of-the-body-for-teens-middle-school-edition-downloadable-resources>