



# Eighth Grade

Learning with a  
Higher  
purpose

## Holy Cross Lutheran School

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### About the Teacher: Mr. Gregg Wolgast



I was born and raised in Alta Vista Kansas and am a graduate of Council Grove HS. I graduated from Kansas State University with BA degree in Social Studies Education.

My teaching career began in St. John, KS, where I served as a social studies teacher for grades 7-12 and a coach, for six years. I completed 25 years of teaching high school social studies and being a coach at Mulvane High School. I earned a Master's Degree in Sports Administration from Wichita State University. I completed the Colloquy program through Concordia University, Seward, NE.

I am married to Marcia and we have three children who are Holy Cross graduates. Anna attends Trinity Academy, Matthew attends Kansas State University, and Katie teaches first grade at Iseley Elementary School.

### SUMMARY OF OUR EDUCATIONAL GOALS

#### In relationship to God

- ◊ The student grows in the grace and knowledge of the Triune God,
- ◊ The student is taught to live a Christian life through the power of the Holy Spirit, and that he/she has the assurance of eternal salvation through faith in Jesus Christ, and
- ◊ The student gains knowledge of the Bible and its contents.

#### In relationship to self, others, and community

- ◊ The student will develop a positive self-image, and
- ◊ The student will develop knowledge, skills, and attitudes required for living a productive Christian life as a responsible member of his/her church, community, and world.

#### In relationship to intellectual development

- ◊ The student will develop academic talents and skills to the fullest extent of his/her ability,
- ◊ The student will develop positive attitudes toward learning, and
- ◊ The student shall be exposed to cultural activities, fine arts, and various types of music through classroom study, exhibits, direct participation, and field trips.

### Eighth Grade Curriculum Overview

#### Biblical Studies

In this course students learn the teachings on which the Lutheran Church is founded and the meaning of the Lutheran worship services. During the year students also discuss Christian morals and values as they prepare themselves for the life of a Christian teenager. Memory work is assigned weekly. **The texts used are:** *Enduring Faith, and Contemporary Issues*.

#### Language Arts

Eighth-grade Language Arts refines students' mastery of reading, writing, and communication in preparation for high school. Students read across genres including nonfiction, novels, poetry, and drama, with emphasis on deeper interpretation and evaluation. Major units include nonfiction response and analysis, Animal Farm as an allegory, a study of war poetry, and a culminating Shakespeare performance (Much Ado About Nothing). Students explore how authors use language, symbolism, and structure to convey meaning and critique society. Writing instruction centers on applying the writing process to a range of academic and creative forms: literary analysis, persuasive essays, research reports, personal narratives, and short fiction. Students revise their work for clarity, coherence, and sophistication in word choice and sentence structure. Grammar study continues with focused lessons on complex sentences, punctuation, and stylistic devices. Vocabulary study combines weekly Membean sessions with literature-based word learning. Students maintain journals and reflective pieces that connect reading to personal and global themes. By the end of eighth grade, students demonstrate strong critical thinking, effective written communication, and the confidence to analyze and discuss literature at a high level.

#### Mathematics

Students are divided into two math groups for eighth grade, Pre-algebra and Algebra 1. Assessment testing in math, seventh grade grades on the report card, parental conferencing and teacher recommendation determine which math level is appropriate for the incoming eighth graders.

##### Pre-Algebra

In this course of introduction to algebra students review many of the basic skills and concepts necessary to carry forward into next year's algebra course. **The text used is:** *Reveal Math, Course 3*

##### Algebra 1

In this algebra course students discover absolute values, they will evaluate algebraic expressions, graphing inequalities, and other algebraic topics. **The text used is:** *Reveal, Algebra 1*

#### Social Studies

Eighth grade social studies looks at U.S. History from the American Revolution up through Reconstruction and the beginnings of the Industrial Revolution of the 1800's. Emphasis is placed on students not just knowing the "what" of history but also the "why". In addition to the text, many primary sources and videos are used to help students see history through the eyes of the people who lived it and / or were influenced by it.

Text: Discovering our Past: A History of the United States by McGraw Hill

#### Science

**Eighth grade science is divided into three major units.** Students begin the year by studying God's creation of the universe, focusing on the relationships between the sun, moon, Earth, and other planets. They explore space science concepts such as gravity, orbits, and the patterns that shape our solar system. The second unit turns to Earth science, where students investigate the Rock Cycle, the Theory of Plate Tectonics, and the forces that cause earthquakes and volcanoes. This unit culminates with the construction and eruption of their own model volcano, giving students a memorable hands-on experience. The final unit introduces the study of chemistry, with many laboratory investigations highlighting the characteristics of matter, both physical and chemical. Students also begin exploring chemical reactions and learning to balance chemical equations, providing a strong foundation for success in high school science. Throughout the year, students develop critical thinking skills while deepening their appreciation for God's design in both the Earth and the universe.