ST. CECILIA ACADEMY

St. Cecilia Academy Junior High Update: November 5, 2021

STUDENT LIFE AND LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

As we plan for the addition of the 7th and 8th grade for the 2022-2023 school year, it is important to us to involve the pioneer members of these classes in the planning process. In the early months of 2022, the incoming inaugural classes of the 7th and 8th grade at St. Cecilia Academy Junior High will be invited to a Spring Leadership Summit to discuss and choose several of the new traditions. This summit will finalize special rite-of-passage moments for the 8th graders, as well as other Junior High specific programming.

Since 1860, the girls of St. Cecilia Academy have created traditions that remain dear to alumnae long after they graduate. As the inaugural classes at St. Cecilia Academy Junior High, these students will have the opportunity to create, innovate and lead the next exciting chapter in the dynamic 162-year legacy of St. Cecilia Academy.

THE ART OF LIVING

A new Art of Living two-year course spanning both 7th and 8th grades will be a signature feature of the St. Cecilia Academy Junior High curriculum. The title for this course is inspired by the words of Pope Benedict XVI in an address to catechists. The Art of Living class is aimed at providing a holistic human, emotional, and intellectual formation so that junior high girls can flourish in the fullness of their potential and find the path toward true happiness. Students will be taught social skills, an understanding of the emotions and how to work with them, life skills and strategies for balancing the demands of life, organizational and study skills, how to grow in virtue and in friendship with others, healthy habits, and true happiness – all tailored for a girl in junior high.

These themes will be woven into the heart of the Junior High academic and student life curriculum to create an integrated student experience that prepares girls to go forward in life with faith, resilience, and confidence.

Travel and cultural experiences play an important role in a young woman’s life, building friendships, aiding learning development and helping young women understand the role of beauty in our society. Travel with peers is also an important rite of passage moment. As such, a special 8th grade travel experience will be planned within the context of this course.
LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT

The St. Cecilia Academy Junior High will require Latin for all 7th and 8th graders, a feature shared with other top Nashville private schools. Taking Latin in junior high trains students in logic and orderly habits of mind. It affords them a solid understanding of grammar and the structure of language and word roots. It makes them stronger readers and writers and provides a great foundation for the study of modern languages. Study of Latin has also been proven to increase SAT scores and other standardized test scores for all students. Finally, Latin is part of the cultural and liturgical heritage of the Catholic Church. Learning prayers and Mass parts in Latin gives students a window into the Church’s beauty and a participation in the Church as universal.

Incoming eighth graders in 2022-2023 who have taken Spanish as seventh graders and who test into the Spanish program will have the option to take either Spanish or Latin. This will be a special exception for the first eighth grade class.

LOCATION

Because the developmental needs of junior high and high school students are different, the St. Cecilia Academy Junior High will have its own home in newly renovated space separate from the 9th – 12th grade students. Junior High classrooms and facilities will be located adjacent to the current school library, with an exclusive outdoor courtyard and gathering space as well as a private entrance that is separate from the High School. We are currently working with an architect and contractor on the details of this renovation plan.

While the majority of junior high classes will take place in this renovated section of St. Cecilia Academy, 7th and 8th students will have access to the High School’s academic and athletic facilities at specified times, including the new art, choir, and dance studios, science labs, and dining hall.

UNIFORM SKIRTS

All students attending St. Cecilia Academy grades 7-12 will wear the current green, yellow and red SCA plaid skirts. At the Spring Leadership Summit, inaugural members of the 7th and 8th grades will decide on a distinctive piece of the uniform that will be special just for St. Cecilia Academy Junior High students.

TUITION

The enhanced program at St. Cecilia Academy Junior High will cost $17,900 for all families. Financial aid opportunities will be available to any family who qualifies. A new scholarship, the Mother Frances Walsh Scholarship, has recently been established to provide assistance to a young woman and her family for all six years that she attends SCA.

Seventh and eighth grade students will benefit from the resources available at the high school level. They will receive the same superior instruction and individualized attention for which St.
Cecilia Academy has long distinguished itself. Students will have expanded opportunities to challenge themselves in advanced academic courses and will also benefit from access to high school lab space and state-of-the-art fine arts studios. Our program will allow our students who are academically talented to take advanced courses, as outlined in our course preview published November 1, 2021. They will discover many options for engagement in a full range of athletics and other clubs and co-curricular activities. Just as with the 9-12 High School program, students in grades 7 and 8 will receive the support of a full-time learning specialist and personal and academic counselors, as well as a full-time activities director and athletic director.

8th GRADE COMMENCEMENT

All students who successfully complete their 8th grade year at St. Cecilia Academy Junior High will be celebrated at the Commencement Ceremony each Spring. This ceremony will be a momentous event to recognize the milestone achievement of each girl and their Junior High completion.

Some details will be finalized in the coming months with the input of our inaugural junior high classes at the Leadership Summit, such as attire. Commencement will include an honors event and an opportunity to celebrate each girl by name, as well as a formal bridging ceremony where the eighth graders are officially welcomed into the High School of St. Cecilia Academy.