

# St. Paul Technology Courses

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Technology department courses are designed to develop problem-solving skills; to address how technology hardware and software interact; and to facilitate an understanding of how users interact with technology.

Middle School students receive a tablet PC netbook as part of the St. Paul School one-to-one laptop program. The netbook provides instant access to information from a variety of sources. In addition, all students are given a GoggleApps account which allows them to better communicate with teachers and peers regarding the course of studies and school-related activities and events. All 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade students are required to participate in a laptop orientation. Please see the Student Handbook for more information about our Laptop Program.

The Middle School computer curriculum builds skills and confidence using computer technology through the completion of increasingly complex and sophisticated projects. All three grades participate in a 1:1 Netbook program which provides access to a multitude of software programs. Using high-speed access to the Internet students learn how to browse, search and evaluate the World Wide Web to locate valid websites for research projects. In addition students utilize their Netbooks to enhance classroom instructions in all contents areas.

Students are offered a dual platform environment as they use the computer lab consisting of Lenovo PCs with built-in CD and DVD drives, laser printer, digital video camera and scanner.

## Documentary

Grade 7 students will research, direct and produce their own documentary examining a local, national or global issue. Taught in conjunction with the librarian and middle school teachers, the students gain experience in defining their research task, evaluating online and offline sources, and using an online tool to cite their sources and organize their notes. The students then create a storyboard for their video, interview various experts using a digital video camera, narrate and edit their documentary using Windows Live Movie Maker or similar software.

## Grade 6

The Grade 6 Technology class begins the year with an intense introduction to the Netbook. We review basic skills and troubleshooting, as well as best practices and care and handling of the Netbook. We identify how to use St. Paul technology including the GoggleApps communication system, and how to back-up files to our GoggleApps account. A focus on understanding and using software is taught as these applications are utilized throughout the disciplines. Programs used include, the OpenOffice suite; GoggleApps suite: Document, Spreadsheet, Presentation

and Forms; as well as DyKnow Vision. Students begin an introduction to graphic arts and multimedia using the Aviary Suite.

## **Grade 7**

In Grade 7 Technology students are introduced to advanced skills of various software programs and investigate the different features of each in order to determine which tool is best for the job. They expand their knowledge of troubleshooting and problem solving with the Netbook. Students collaborate through the use of Google Applications, including Google Docs and Google Sites, and identify how technology enhances collaboration and communication of people across the planet. We will investigate the concept of “Web 2.0” technology, and the impact technology has had on our world. Students will complete a unit on digital citizenship where they identify how to act as a digital citizen, and how to respect the norms and appropriate behaviors in order to stay safe online. Students create their own rules and discuss this with a family member.

## **Grade 8**

In Grade 8 students become facilitators as well investigators of new tools and ways to use technology for communication, collaboration and creation. Eighth graders increase their leadership role by troubleshooting and problem solving as they assist fellow students and faculty. Throughout the year students participate in blogs, create podcasts and videos and design their own website using Google Applications. We further investigate the concept of digital citizenship including the norms, staying safe online and cyberbullying. Through research we identify how “Web 2.0” technology impacts the world. At the end of the year students create a content-based lesson to teach a class using various forms of media they have learned during their time in Middle School. Working along with a subject area teacher, students plan an interactive and engaging activity to review content.

## **Technology Skills for New Students**

This is a one-trimester course designed to introduce seventh and eighth grade students new to St. Paul to the various software programs and equipment used in the classrooms. The students learn about the network and how to log in and save their work. They are trained on the use of our GoogleApps e-mail system so that they can communicate electronically with teachers and students and transfer documents between home and school. Students review the basics of software packages such as OpenOffice suite and the creative Aviary suite. In addition, they are introduced to St. Paul’s library and the online catalog and databases to which every student has access.