

Academic Programs at MSAP

Literacy

Wit & Wisdom Literacy Program

The Wit & Wisdom Literacy program is an innovative resource designed to transform the way students develop essential language arts skills. Middle School for Art and Philosophy (MSAP) implements this program to inspire a love for learning and to cultivate critical thinking in students from grades 6 through 8.

What Makes Wit & Wisdom Unique?

Wit & Wisdom takes a comprehensive approach to literacy education, combining knowledge-building with the use of diverse, meaningful texts. Students are guided through rich content that opens their minds to new ideas while strengthening foundational skills in reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

Core Features and Benefits:

- **Knowledge-Building Through Rich Content**

Each module is centered around thought-provoking topics that expand students' understanding of the world. By exploring history, science, art, and culture, students build the core knowledge they need to excel academically.

- **Engaging Texts**

Students engage with a wide variety of literature—both classic and contemporary—that challenges and inspires them. This diversity ensures that students are exposed to different perspectives and ideas, fostering both empathy and curiosity.

- **Integrated Skills Development**

Reading, writing, speaking, and listening are seamlessly integrated into every lesson, helping students communicate effectively and think critically. Students learn to analyze texts deeply, articulate their ideas clearly, and engage in meaningful discussions.

- **Essential Questions**

Lessons are anchored by questions that encourage deep reflection and critical thinking. These questions not only promote student engagement but also strengthen their ability to connect ideas across disciplines.

Supporting Academic Growth at MSAP

The Wit & Wisdom curriculum is a perfect match for MSAP's philosophy of nurturing well-rounded, thoughtful leaders. It promotes academic excellence by empowering students to articulate their ideas, address complex challenges, and contribute thoughtfully to their communities. This approach supports both their immediate academic success and their long-term personal and intellectual growth.

Why It Matters for Families

For current and prospective families, Wit & Wisdom offers assurance that your child will benefit from a curriculum that is both rigorous and meaningful. By focusing on critical thinking and communication skills, the program prepares students not only for the demands of higher education but also for a lifetime of learning and discovery.

Mathematics

iReady Math Program Overview

iReady Math accelerates growth for grades 6–8 with standards-aligned, personalized instruction and engaging practice, helping students master key math concepts for success.

Key Features

- **Adaptive Diagnostic:** Pinpoints student strengths and gaps across math domains.
- **Personalized Learning:** Tailored lessons with immediate feedback and built-in supports.
- **Engaging Lessons:** Interactive activities, real-world problems, and gamified elements keep students motivated.
- **Progress Monitoring:** Quizzes and dashboards track growth and mastery in real time.

Tools for Teachers

- **Data-Driven Insights:** Dashboards show proficiency, growth, and lesson performance.
- **Differentiated Instruction:** Small-group recommendations and standards-aligned lesson plans.
- **RTI/MTSS Support:** Formative data enables timely interventions and enrichment opportunities.
- **Family Reports:** Easy-to-read summaries help families support learning at home.

Classroom Integration

- **Weekly Rotation:** 1–2 iReady sessions (30–45 min) + teacher-led small groups.
- **Unit-Aligned Checks:** Standards Mastery assessments refine instruction and confirm student progress.

Social Studies

Passport to Social Studies Program

Passport to Social Studies is a standards-aligned curriculum for grades 6–8, designed to build historical thinking, civic understanding, and global awareness through inquiry-based learning.

Key Features

- **Inquiry-Driven:** Explore big questions with authentic sources.
- **Skills-Focused:** Critical thinking, argument writing, and debates.
- **Culturally Responsive:** Diverse voices and local connections.
- **Civics in Action:** Hands-on projects and service learning.

Curriculum Highlights

- **Grade 6:** Ancient civilizations, world religions, and global trade.
- **Grade 7:** U.S. history from colonization to Reconstruction.
- **Grade 8:** Industrialization, civil rights, and global issues.

Learning Objectives

Students will:

- Analyze sources and construct evidence-based arguments.
- Understand cause and effect, continuity, and change.
- Make connections between history and present-day civic issues.

How It Works

1. **Launch Inquiry:** Start with big questions.
2. **Explore Sources:** Analyze primary and secondary materials.
3. **Build Knowledge:** Discuss, compare, and synthesize ideas.
4. **Apply Skills:** Write, present, and debate.
5. **Take Action:** Connect learning to civic projects.

Estimated Time

- Units: 3–6 weeks each.
- Daily lessons: 45–60 minutes.

Science

Scale Science Program

Scale Science is a NGSS-aligned, project-based program that integrates science with art and philosophy to deepen inquiry, creativity, and critical thinking in grades 6–8.

Students

- Students investigate real-world phenomena through two multidimensional curricula: Learning Through Performance (year-long, project-based units with embedded performance assessments) and the Stanford NGSS Integrated Curriculum (phenomena-driven, 5E model, language supports, and social justice “pop-out” lessons).
- With collaborative groupwork norms, modeling, and argumentation from evidence, learners create, reflect, and connect scientific concepts to human-centered questions.

Teachers

- Teachers gain actionable data from short performance assessments (SPAs) and instructionally embedded assessments (IEAs) to track progress, adjust instruction, and elevate student voice.
- Educators can use dashboards, rubrics, and design tools to differentiate and plan targeted small-group instruction.

Intervention

Literacy Intervention Programs

Our goal is to help students in grades 6–8 strengthen their reading skills and build confidence. Below are the proven literacy programs we use to support students who could benefit from extra help in reading:

REWARDS Intervention (Voyager Sopris)

- **Who it helps:** Students in grades 4–12, especially middle schoolers who struggle with reading.
- **What it does:** Teaches students how to decode longer words, improving fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.
- **How it works:** Short, teacher-led lessons (20–25 minutes) with options for different levels, including writing and subject-area reading like science or social studies.
- **Why it works:** Research-backed and highly effective—students show improvement in reading fluency and confidence.

Phonics for Reading (Curriculum Associates)

- **Who it helps:** Students in grades 3–12, including older readers, Multilingual Learners, and students with dyslexia.
- **What it does:** Builds foundational reading skills like phonics and word recognition in a way that respects students' maturity.
- **How it works:** Quick, engaging lessons with decodable texts, progress tracking, and digital support, tailored to each student's needs.
- **Why it works:** Students make noticeable progress, and teachers often see a boost in their confidence and stamina.

STARI (SERP Institute)

- **Who it helps:** Middle and high school students reading two or more years below grade level.
- **What it does:** Improves decoding, fluency, and comprehension through high-interest stories and engaging discussions.
- **How it works:** Daily sessions (45–60 minutes) where students read exciting literature, debate, and build critical thinking skills.
- **Why it works:** Students feel more confident and engaged, while teachers report significant growth in reading ability.