

St. Cecilia Academic Team

Academic Team allows 5th through 8th graders to collaborate with peers, compete in multiple and varied competitions, and participate in high-interest activities. There are three major components for Academic Team participation.

- **Future Problem Solving (FPS):** FPS is an internationally recognized, award winning program that encourages critical thinking. FPS fosters investigation, ingenuity, creativity and cooperative learning. FPS coaches train team members to compete at District and Regional Governor's Cup* competitions that are usually held in January and February. Although several students prepare for competition, the official team sent to Governor's Cup is comprised of only 4 students. The students are given a future scenario in which there is a problem that needs to be solved. They use a specific writing process to communicate their detailed plan for solving that specific problem.

- **Quick Recall:** Quick recall is the only academic team event open to the public. In Quick Recall, a team of four students listens to questions read by a moderator and tries to beat the clock, and the opposing team, with a correct response. Quick recall team can have as many as 12 members, but 8 is the optimum number. During competitions, 4 team members play at a time, but can be substituted up to 3 times per match.

- **Written Assessments:** Students represent the school by taking written tests in Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Language Arts and Arts/Humanities. There is also a composition test that includes on-demand writing when given a specific writing prompt. Each school can have up to three competitors in each testing area.

Kathy Wuestefeld, our 5th grade teacher, is the St. Cecilia Academic Team middle school head coach. She coaches the three middle school quick recall teams: 6th grade, Junior Varsity, and Varsity.

- The 6th grade team practices on Thursday afternoons from 2:15 – 3:15 beginning in the fall and has 10 weekly league matches sponsored by the Northern Kentucky Academic League (NKAL) that run from September through December. Approximately half the matches are home matches that we host, and for the other half we travel to area schools to compete. Most matches begin about 3:30.
- The Junior Varsity and Varsity teams practice together on Monday afternoons from 2:15- 3:15 and also participate in the 10 week league matches.

Mrs. Wuestefeld is also in charge of selecting the students who will compete in the written testing portion of three major academic competitions: 6th Grade Showcase (described below), Governor's Cup Districts, and Governor's Cup Regionals. There are also sometimes additional competitions sponsored by area schools, such as Beechwood, in which we will also send a team to represent St. Cecilia. Middle School students try out for these tests (math, science, social studies, language arts, composition, and arts and humanities) in the fall. Our team members are chosen using those results along with additional teacher recommendations.

The 6th Grade Showcase Competition, held the first Saturday of December, allows 6th graders to compete in both the quick recall and written subject testing, and the best part is that they only compete against other 6th graders.

Barb Mackison, our Middle School language arts teacher, is the St. Cecilia middle school Future Problem Solving coach. FPS practices begin in the fall and take place after school on Mondays.

*Governor's Cup was founded in 1986 as a way to promote, reward and recognize outstanding academic achievement. Since then, over a quarter of a million students have taken part in the event. Governor's Cup has become the state's premier academic event, involving over 20,000 students, nearly 1200 schools, and thousands of coaches, administrators, parents and community leaders who see the rewards gained from encouraging academic performance through properly structured and professionally administered academic competition.

**Certain sections of this information were taken from the <http://www.kaac.com/>.