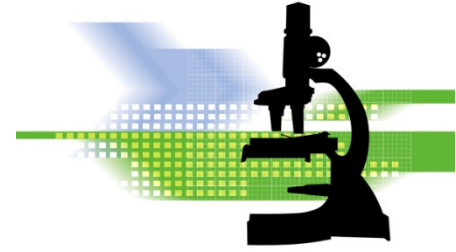


Mrs. Plawecki's Jr. High Class



I am thrilled to be teaching at St. Robert Bellarmine School. Six, seventh, and eighth grade are such fabulous grades in which to be! So many wonderful things are happening. As the science teacher I've created a year filled with fun lab activities: *The Flubber Lab*, *The Bubble Gum Lab*, *The Simple Machine Project* and *The Balancing Levers Lab* to name a few. Yes, I am a science geek, but it comes in very handy when teaching junior high students and when leading the Science Olympiad team to the State tournament.

As the students move on from grade to grade and are no longer the "new kids on the block" in the junior high, they know the ropes and are familiar with all the teachers. It is at this point at SRB that preparation for high school begins. All of our teachers are knowledgeable on the expectations of high school. We can direct their learning to achieve those goals in a relaxed atmosphere, not yet filled with the decision of choosing a high school.

I see personalities blossom from sixth to eighth grade. Students are beginning to come into their own, with traces of adult like maturity that absolutely delight me! I see what they can become with a lot of continued nurturing and development. Friendships become tight bonds at this age due to the small class sizes and the many opportunities to experience togetherness through activities and field trips at SRB. Science Olympiad, Quiz Bowl, Beta Club, Student Council, and the many sport teams in which they participate further cements those special bonds. The 7th and 8th graders also like being able to, finally, attend the dances at the surrounding parishes.

Religiously, I see preteens curiously asking questions about their faith and its history. They are developing the strong moral characters that will help them to live good Christian lives, always with an eye out for those in need. At Christmas we adopt a needy family from a downtown parish. Students donate gifts to give to their adopted family. Those unable to donate wrap gifts as their donation. Students learn through experience the teachings of Jesus to care for their fellow man. They also learn to care for their earth by recycling weekly.

My classroom is a mix of hard work, fun, and opportunities for students to express who they are and who they hope to become. St. Robert Bellarmine's Jr. High is like a close-knit family—loving, accepting, and always there for you. They lift me up daily when I see their faces. They are my *other* family!