



Alcuin Montessori School

324 North Oak Park Avenue  
Oak Park, IL 60302  
PH 708.366.1882  
FX 708.386.1892

## Alcuin Middle School Program

### Our Curriculum:

Our curriculum has been carefully designed to meet or exceed state standards in all fundamental areas of study, as well as to align with the benchmark outcomes of local public schools, ensuring full preparation for a smooth transition into high school. Our units of study are theme-based and center around several essential questions. Please see the attached document for a breakdown of specific themes and units of study.

**Math** strives to build a growth mindset for mathematical learning where students view math not as a series of procedures and fixed steps to memorize, but as a creative and multi-dimensional process used to solve real-world problems. Students alternate instruction from the sharing and analyzing of student work in a group setting to individualized instruction through Khan academy in order to develop their ability to think abstractly, construct arguments using numbers and logic, model mathematical concepts, and persevere through difficulties.

**Science** aims to instruct students through hands-on scientific inquiry, developing the ability to conduct experiments, collect and display data, and analyze results to form conclusions. Unit themes draw from various branches of science, from physics and chemistry to biology and earth science. By avoiding teaching a “mile wide and an inch deep,” students should have the opportunity to make deeper connections to the natural world and to have a true STEM experience.

**Social Studies** is designed to introduce students to key concepts and patterns of human behavior, both in the present and throughout history. Each unit is based upon answering several open-ended essential questions and includes lessons from the teacher, small group projects, homework, quizzes and/or tests, and an independent research project. As a supplement, students also work on independent geography and cultural literacy materials.

**Reading** is based on a book group format. Students alternate between reading books as a class and selecting independent books. Emphasis is placed on reading comprehension, critical analysis, literary concepts, writing techniques, and fluency in writing about reading. Students discuss books in a seminar format, which encourages dynamic and respectful communication.

**Writing** is done through a workshop model where students receive frequent skill-based lessons, engage in writing-partner relationships, and utilize in-class writing time to work on their process and conference with the teacher. Each unit ends with a celebration of student work and publication via various formats. The Language curriculum is further supplemented with a weekly word study for 7th graders and a writing mechanics study for 8th graders.

**Spanish** instruction guides students to acquire language in the most natural way -- beginning with listening, followed by comprehension and speech, then reading, and finally writing. Through the use of a multi-faceted curriculum, internalized vocabulary quickly evolves into a deeper understanding of the target language, leading to practical applications such as conversation, written communication, role-play exercises, visual representation, etc. Alcuin’s Spanish language program also includes the exploration of traditional and societal dimensions of the Hispanic culture through practical life experiences, such as writing culturally relevant research papers and taking field trips, both within the United States and abroad.