

MARET

2020–2021 MIDDLE SCHOOL
CURRICULUM GUIDE

MARET

NOSCERE VIVERE EST  TO LEARN IS TO LIVE

MISSION

Maret is a vibrant, K–12, coeducational, independent school in Washington, DC. We ignite our students’ potential; foster their academic, artistic, and athletic talents; and promote their well-being. We develop the mind, nurture curiosity, welcome challenge, embrace joy, and build community that is equitable and inclusive.

PHILOSOPHY

Maret provides a vigorous and dynamic curriculum, created by a skilled faculty of lifelong learners. We instill a devotion to academic excellence and a love for discovery and exploration. From our inception in 1911, Maret has adopted proven educational tenets while pursuing innovative approaches to learning. At every grade level, our students receive a broad and deep educational experience that allows them to cultivate individual strengths and interests.

Maret believes that social and emotional development is central to students’ well-being and success. We encourage our students to tackle challenges in a culture of nurtured risk taking. We want them to push beyond their comfort zone so they can build resilience, character, and robust problem-solving skills. We understand the need for balance in our lives and seek opportunities to infuse our school day with moments of laughter and surprise.

Maret is an inclusive community that embraces diversity of perspective, experience, identity, circumstance, and talent. Our size and single campus foster meaningful connections among students, faculty, and parents. Our historic campus and its location in the nation’s capital are integral to our program. We engage in service opportunities that enhance students’ sense of civic responsibility and leadership. Students graduate from Maret well equipped to excel in future academic endeavors and to lead confident and fulfilling lives in an ever-changing world.

CORE VALUES

Maret’s core values are respect, integrity, excellence, creativity, the individual, connectedness, and joy.

Maret School stands firmly behind the principle that the admission of students, the employment of faculty, the operation of programs, and the governance of the School be open to all who are qualified regardless of race, creed, color, national origin, ethnic origin, or sexual orientation. We believe that this principle is both firmly grounded in the spirit of American democracy and in keeping with the civil responsibilities of an independent school.

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MARET | ESSENTIAL SKILLS

Understanding that change is inevitable and fast-paced, we recognize that it is important to move beyond the traditional canon of content to concentrate on the cultivation of essential skills. These skills are carefully woven throughout the entire K–12 program with the goal that our students will become good stewards of the world.

Collaboration

- Explore, understand, and grapple with multiple perspectives across difference and practice effective listening and responsible cooperation.

Communication

- Effectively express, receive, and engage with a range of ideas and information, develop the ability and confidence to advocate for oneself and others, and master multiple languages and forms of expression.

Creativity & Innovation

- Construct knowledge and original solutions through the iterative process and experimentation, both independently and in partnership with others.

Cultural & Global Competence

- Study and experience global cultures and histories in order to understand, empathize, and constructively engage in our immediate and broader world.

Leadership

- Act courageously and honestly, set and achieve goals, engage with others, and positively impact our community and the world.

Problem-Solving

- Gain the capacity and confidence to engage critically and analytically with open-ended, complex questions, using diverse research methods.

Technology, Information & Media Literacy

- Engage competently with our rapidly evolving technological world, participate respectfully online, and exercise the ability to analyze, interpret, and leverage quantitative and qualitative data.

Wellness

- Learn how to best take care of one's emotional, social, and physical well-being in order to promote a healthy sense of identity and thoughtful decision-making.

MARET | STUDENT SUPPORT

Guidelines for Academic Accommodations

At Maret, both our Mission Statement and our Core Values emphasize the individual and respect for different cultures, talents, and interests. We strive to nurture and encourage the intellect, creativity, love of learning, and pursuit of individual excellence in each of our students. We recognize that this may take different forms in different students, and we embrace and celebrate those variations within our school community.

Our appreciation of individual styles helps shape the way we guide the education of our students with learning differences. The Maret faculty understands that all of our children approach learning in their own unique ways, and that some of our children have specific and special needs. We address those needs within small class settings and a flexible curriculum, with the guidance of our student support team. While we are successful with many of our students with specific needs, we also realize that these supports are limited. Maret works to ensure that efforts to serve particular students are balanced between other students' opportunities to learn and realistic expectations for teachers.

Parents are expected to share any existing assessments or educational support plans which will allow us to determine if the School can successfully meet the needs of the student. This information will allow us to meet the child's needs from the beginning of his/her Maret career. During a child's attendance, parents are responsible for obtaining any services, assessments, or therapies that are recommended by a team of teachers, advisors, administrators, and student support team representatives. The School has designated funds to support those families on financial aid who need to obtain such outside services. Suggested accommodations that result from professional evaluations will be reviewed by the Maret team to determine the feasibility of their use in the classroom. The use and benefit of these accommodations will be reviewed periodically.

Targeting Success

Some of the hallmarks of Maret's educational program include:

- Faculty who initiate close and trusting relationships with students
- Small class sizes
- A curriculum that offers breadth and affords considerable choice
- Classroom strategies that acknowledge multiple intelligences and different learning styles
- Possibilities for communication between teachers/advisors and parents beyond routine parent-teacher conferences
- Opportunities for extra help, such as the supervised study hall in Middle School or appointments with teachers
- Limited allocation of space in school for work with tutors, hired by parents
- Parent-teacher conferences and narrative evaluations that address the student as a whole person, honoring effort and improvement as well as achievement

Addressing Student Needs

Parents who expect that accommodations may be necessary for a student to work successfully at Maret are advised to begin conversations with the division director, learning specialist, teachers and advisors as early as possible. Accommodations will be considered on an individual basis, as recommended by Maret faculty and/or professional evaluations, in the context of existing resources.

In the Lower School, accommodations could include, but are not limited to:

- Preferential seating
- Verbal prompts
- Previewing material
- Supportive technology

In the Middle and/or Upper School, accommodations could include, but are not limited to:

- Opportunity to use another student’s notes or teacher’s notes when available
- Note-taking on a laptop, provided by the parent
- Alternative test/assignment formats to demonstrate competence
- Enlarged font, to increase readability
- Extended time on quizzes, tests, exams
- Use of computer/laptop to take tests and exams
- Testing in an isolated environment for reduced distractions
- Modified schedule

The College Counseling Office

The US Learning Specialist will assist parents and students with the College Board and ACT process to request accommodations. Students applying for accommodations on the College Board and/or ACT exams must have documentation on file that meets their respective guidelines. Students must be using the requested accommodations on school-based tests for at least four months prior to submitting the application to the College Board or ACT.

Maret does not provide

- Individualized Educational Programs
- Constant monitoring or one-on-one instruction/attention
- Extensive attention to drill or emphasis on rote learning
- Written description of all class activities

Learning Specialists

There are three Learning Specialists who support lower, middle, and upper school students, faculty and parents. They help interpret and summarize professional evaluations for teachers, attend parent conferences, and help plan how to best support students based on identified recommendations. The Learning Specialists act as a resource for parents and teachers by making connections to outside educational professionals when appropriate.

Counseling Department

The Counseling Department serves as a resource to all members of the Maret community, including students, faculty, staff, and parents. The school counselors offer counsel to individuals and groups of students on a short-term basis, act as consultants to faculty, and maintain an extensive network of referrals and resources based in the Washington metropolitan area. Students may receive these, or other, services offered by the school counselors as part of our regular academic program. All services are confidential as appropriate. Under certain circumstances, confidential information may be shared with people who have a legitimate need to know. The department is also actively involved with diversity programs, substance abuse education programs for students and parents, advisor/advisee groups, the assembly program, the Wellness program, and student activity groups.

Early Release for Students

The Maret community understands that our children have diverse talents and that some of our children may have specific and special needs in relation to those talents. These needs may require modifications in our academic schedule, including early release. We will work in partnership with families to determine if the school can successfully meet the needs of these students. However, this may not always be possible given other curricular demands. We will review annually schedule adjustments to assess their continuing benefits and feasibility.

MARET | MIDDLE SCHOOL CURRICULUM

BUILDING COMMUNITY

Cultivating friendships; establishing cross-grade connections; collaborating with adults; and becoming engaged on campus, in the neighborhood, and across the world: the emphasis in Middle School is on building the students' sense of community.

Maret capitalizes on the spirit, energy, and curiosity of students in grades five through eight to create confident thinkers, innovative artists, healthy athletes, thoughtful social navigators, and proactive citizens. As students progress through the middle school program, they acquire the tools and skills they need to assume increased responsibility and to become independent young adults.

Middle school students study English, history, human development, Latin, library/research skills, mathematics, music, physical education, community engagement and partnerships, science, Spanish or French, technology, and visual art. The curriculum emphasizes broad exposure to each subject while systematically providing the basic skills for forthcoming upper school study. Teachers use a variety of approaches in the classroom that encourage creativity, collaborative work, and problem solving.

Each grade features curricular highlights: the American Experience Fair (history) and Science Fair in fifth and sixth grades, Global Issues Day (world cultures and geography) in seventh grade, and the Climate Change Conference (science) in eighth grade. Assemblies, advisor meetings, middle school houses, and extracurricular activities such as Jazz Band, Chess Club, Geography Bee, Art Club, MathCounts, Bridge Club, Debate, and the Middle School Play offer opportunities for students to pursue their interests while building meaningful relationships. In addition, community engagement projects and partnership activities give students a broader understanding of local, national, and international communities.

The middle school curriculum incorporates activities that foster a positive social and emotional growth in students and Maret's core values: Respect, Integrity, the Individual, Creativity, Excellence, Connectedness, and Joy. Grade-level meetings and smaller advisor group gatherings help students gain a greater understanding of these values and how to live them authentically. In addition, classes and group discussions on human development and social issues are interwoven throughout the middle school program to

help adolescents deal with concerns facing them in today's society.

CONVOCATION

The entire middle school community gathers together for a weekly convocation, during which eighth grade students share announcements for the week. Each advising group leads one convocation a year and is responsible for guiding students in Grades 5–8 through activities based on one of Maret's core values.

MIDDLE SCHOOL HOUSES

Every student is assigned to one of four houses for the duration of their middle school years. Comprised of students from all four grades, houses are named after the four streets that surround Maret: Cleveland, Garfield, Klinge, and Woodley. A house dean leads the members through various congenial competitions during the school year, such as a four-way tug of war, a gingerbread house decorating challenge, charades, karaoke, scavenger hunts, and other team-building competitions.

COMMUNITY-BUILDING EXCURSIONS

Among the highlights of Middle School are grade-specific overnight trips. These excursions foster independence and give students the opportunity to build deeper connections with their classmates and teachers. Overnight trips include Williamsburg (Grade 5), New York City (Grade 6), Mountainside Outdoor Adventures (Grade 7), and Philadelphia (Grade 8).

COMMITTEES AND CIRCLES

In addition to after school clubs and extracurricular activities, every student joins a committee or circle. Committees are action-oriented; students acquire leadership experience while working on initiatives that benefit the school community. These student-initiated, small group gatherings meet once a month, during the middle school assembly period. With the help of middle school advisors, students work together to set the group's goals. Circles are interest-based, providing the chance to pursue a passion or discover a new one. Recent committees and circles have included:

- Environmental Service Committee
- Hospitality Committee
- Itty Bitty Committee
- Technology Committee

- Arts Circle
- Anime/Manga Circle
- Cooking Circle
- Dance Circle
- Frisbee Circle
- Knitting Circle
- Outdoor Games Circle
- Strategy Board Games Circle
- Strings and Drumming Circle
- Theatre Games Circle
- Yoga Circle

INTENSIVE STUDY WEEK

Every February, middle school students and faculty embark on a week of “out of class” projects and trips during Intensive Study Week (ISW). All eighth grade students take “Adventures in the City of Brotherly Love,” an out of town excursion to Philadelphia. Additional ISW offerings vary each year; students in Grades 5, 6, and 7 have recently enjoyed:

- American Sign Language
- The DC Experience
- #DC Foodie
- Exploring the Fort Circle Trail
- Going Global with the Lower School
- Mosaic Mirrors
- Smithsonian Expedition
- STEM Art
- Weird and Wonderful DC

ADVISORS

Each middle school student is assigned an advisor. In daily meetings, advisors discuss social concerns, monitor academic progress, and provide a supportive environment focused on the individual needs of the student. Advisors also lead activities based on Maret’s core values, with an emphasis on personal and intellectual growth. Each grade level has a dean who works with the advisors to ensure class unity and cohesion.

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

Communication between teachers, faculty advisors, and parents provides a strong support system for students. Parents meet with their student’s advisor at the beginning of each school year and may also meet periodically to discuss the student’s academic and social challenges. Twice a year, on designated conference days, parents meet with each of their student’s teachers. These in-person get-togethers build connections that facilitate open communication. In addition, student progress reports and official report cards are sent home two times a year.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIPS

Community Engagement and Partnerships 5

The fifth grade community engagement and partnership program centers around the Earth science curriculum. Students learn about the chemical properties of water, indoor and outdoor water consumption, and methods to conserve and purify water. They spend time examining their own role in water usage and reflect on how to be responsible global citizens. Working with a global partnering school, fifth-graders communicate through videos on a shared project about water purification. Maret students collaborate with their global partners to create aquifers and filters to be used in the partnering school’s community.

Community Engagement and Partnerships 6

In sixth grade, advisory groups are paired together with a focus on homelessness and poverty. Each student travels off campus six times throughout the year. A Wider Circle, the primary service location, is an organization which, among other things, organizes and prepares household goods in dignity-condition for individuals and families transitioning out of homelessness. There, students help check donated items and prepare them for the showroom floor, where clients can choose items for their new homes. The rotations are capped by introduction and reflection classes, where students discuss the structural conditions which create the need for these organizations in our city.

Community Engagement and Partnerships 7

The seventh grade program, taught in partnership with the National Park Service (NPS) and Rock Creek Conservancy (RCC), combines hands-on work with classroom content. This “Creek to Bay” class teaches how caring for Rock Creek can have wide-reaching effects on the health of the local watershed and the Chesapeake Bay. Each week, students are divided into four different pods, taught by a different teacher and focused on a unique but related topic. Students rotate through the pods, experiencing all four pods every four weeks. The three on-campus pods are Chesapeake Choices: Watersheds and Keystone Species, Power of Words: Using Writing to Inform and Advocate, and In the Lab: Water Quality and Creek Ecology. The Stream Team pod takes students off campus to pick up trash in Rock Creek or remove invasive species from the surrounding area. Students also hear from guest speakers, attend related field trips.

Community Engagement and Partnerships 8

Maret students collaborate with preschoolers at the Edward C. Mazique Parent Child Center in the eighth grade Community Engagement and Partnerships Program. Eighth graders participate in eight to 10 visits to Mazique to work with their younger “buddies.” The sessions at Mazique begin with a group introduction before buddies pair off for one-on-one work. Each Maret student partners with the same Mazique student each week to foster strong relationships as they work together on literacy, English, and developmental skills. On campus, students explore the dimensions of educational inequality in DC and nationally, examining school types, racial and class segregation, and the educational outcomes.

HUMANITIES

Humanities 5

Fifth grade combines language arts and social studies in one interdisciplinary humanities period. The program uses *Readers’ Workshop*, *Writers’ Workshop*, and a range of history lessons as the basis for instruction. Students study the political and social diversity of American history, and broaden their understanding of issues by exploring historical texts and primary sources. The writing program includes creative work as well as written analysis and synthesis of key topics. “Identity” is the overarching theme. Students develop their sense of identity, family, community, and nation as they explore fictional characters, biographies of Americans, and the social and historical development of the United States. They also consider the theme of “freedom,” studying key moments in Colonial and Revolutionary American history: the writing of the Constitution; and the stories of Native Americans, African Americans, and others who contributed to the developing nation.

Texts include:

Social Studies Alive! America’s Past
 Carbone, *Blood on the River*
 Fleischman, *Seedfolks*
 Philbrick, *Freak the Mighty*
 Schmidt, *Lizzie Bright and the Buckminster Boy*
 St. George, *The Duel*
 Woods, *My Name Is Sally Little Song*

English 6

Students expand their writing abilities by composing historical fiction, memoirs, short speeches, poetry, vignettes, and scenes for plays. They hone their research, note taking, paragraphing, punctuation, and revising skills for analytical writing. Students read, discuss, and debate challenging works of literature.

Texts include:

Creech, *Walk Two Moons*
 Gibson, *The Miracle Worker*
 Goodrich and Hackett, *The Diary of Anne Frank* (play)
 Lowry, *The Giver*
 Salisbury, Graham, *Under the Blood Red Sun*
 Taylor, *Roll of Thunder, Hear my Cry*

History 6

Sixth graders continue to explore the theme of “identity” as well as the theme of “the journey.” They read fiction and biographies about migrating/traveling characters, set against the backdrop of America’s complex journey from the pre-Civil War era to the present. Students study the nation’s evolution from an agrarian society to an industrialized world power, and its ongoing growth from an imbalanced democracy to a more inclusive one. They go on field trips to national landmarks and historical sites as well as to local DC neighborhoods and community centers. They explore the role their city has played in American history and learn how DC’s diverse population has striven to achieve freedom, autonomy, and identity. In the spring, the class travels to New York City to visit Ellis Island and other pertinent sites. They also participate with the fifth grade in an American Experience festival that incorporates historical research and oral history.

Texts include:

Fleischman, *Bull Run*

English 7

Students consider empathy, integrity, and the politics of belonging. Students read novels centered on the themes of belonging and inclusion, nonconformity and justice, and individuality and identity. They make connections between the novels’ characters and their own lives. Students practice proper writing mechanics while developing their voices as writers. They write formal essays and explore informal free writing and creative writing. Students learn to express themselves orally through debates, formal and informal presentations, dramatic recitation, and reading aloud. They use textual evidence to craft and support their written and oral arguments. Students explore abstract thinking and make thematic connections between their ideas and evidence from texts.

Texts include:

Jimenez, *The Circuit*
 Lee, *To Kill a Mockingbird*
 Lai, *Inside Out and Back Again*
 Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*
 Woodson, *Brown Girl Dreaming*

Summer Reading:

Ryan, *Esperanza Rising*

History 7

Students take a regional approach to the world's physical and cultural geography. They examine the diverse geography, history, cultures, and economies of Latin America, Africa, Asia, and the Middle East, while building reading, writing, and research skills. Students discover how the physical environment shapes human cultures, and vice-versa. They seek to understand contemporary global challenges, such as overpopulation, poverty, political oppression and revolutions, and water shortages. Students hone their skills through essays, formal reports, debates, and collaborative projects. They engage in a Prezi project on the Arab Spring. They also research water issues and potential solutions for a country of their choice and present their work at the seventh grade Global Issues Day.

8th Grade Humanities

The content of English 8 and History 8 is contextually aligned, providing multiple entry points for students to understand the thematic material of each course. The essential questions of each course present a platform for students to consider many different aspects of the cultures they study. Reading and writing skills taught in these courses complement one another as students engage in a variety of assessments that prepare them for Upper School.

English 8

Eighth grade students examine the hero's journey in a variety of social, historical and political contexts. They focus on the concept of heroism and how this idea evolved based on geography, race, gender, sexuality, religion, and social constructs. Students improve their annotation skills and develop a more nuanced approach to paragraph development and sentence structure in their analytical writing. They engage in creative projects such as writing a short story, creating a podcast, and crafting and performing a segment of an oral history.

Texts include:

Arni, *Sita's Ramayana*
 Bendis, *Miles Morales*
 Euripides, *Medea*
 Homer, *The Iliad* (excerpts)
 Kang, *Hong Gildong*

Malcom X, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*
 Miller, *The Song of Achilles*
 Okorafor-Mbachu, *Binti*
 Wilson, Ms. *Marvel*
 Yang and Liew, *The Shadow Hero*

Film:

Princess Mononoke

History 8

Eighth grade students survey the development of civilization from Paleolithic times through the High Middle Ages. They focus on the complex and evolving relationships between humans and the environment, humans and other humans, and humans and ideas. They question how we know what we know, where historical information originates, and how we determine if it is reliable. Students study Egypt, Mesopotamia, India, China, Greece, Rome, medieval Europe, and Africa. They focus on the interconnection of ancient civilizations through the Uluburun Shipwreck project, a VoiceThread project on African cultures, the Pixton project about creation myths, and a project on the Silk Road. Students study world religions and philosophies from a historical perspective, including Hinduism, Judaism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Daoism, Christianity, and Islam.

LIBRARY STUDIES**Library 5**

Fifth graders develop a lifelong love of reading and build upon their information-literacy skills. They read an array of book genres, themes, and formats, sharing their opinions in weekly theme-based meetings. Using print as well as digital resources, students study the research process: how to find different types of library resources, extract information from those resources, ask good research questions, find answers to those questions, and organize and present findings.

Library 6

Students focus on digital information literacy, building upon work in their core academic classes to practice using, selecting, and differentiating between different types of information sources; asking and answering research questions, and organizing and presenting their findings. They explore various genres and discuss books through reading aloud, student book recommendations, and book talks.

Grades 7 and 8

In seventh and eighth grades, library studies are taught using an interdisciplinary approach; content and skills are integrated into students' academic subjects in humanities, math, science, and world languages.

MATHEMATICS

Math and Science 5

Fifth grade combines mathematics and science in one interdisciplinary period. Students conduct hands-on experiments and numerous project-based activities. They take measurements, collect data, find ways to display that data effectively, and examine patterns in order to draw conclusions about real-world phenomena. Students study patterns, puzzles, and problems that encourage creativity. They learn Earth science, including geology, water cycles, weather, and astronomy. Fifth grade students keep observations, write solutions, and document their understanding of concepts and problem-solving strategies in personal math/science journals. They conduct and report on an original scientific experiment as part of the annual Science Fair.

Math 6

Students become confident, competent problem solvers, exploring new ideas and strengthening their fundamental mathematical skills while addressing interesting problems. Students work independently and within groups and present their work not only on paper, but also formally before their peers. Communication and presentation skills are developed. They study numbers and operations, measurement, geometry, data analysis, and introductory algebra skills. Unit projects let students delve deeply into various topics, using technology as an investigative tool.

Math 7 and Advanced Math 7

Placement is made in consultation with sixth grade mathematics teachers and/or the chair of the Math Department.

Math 7

Students in Math 7 develop problem-solving strategies and prepare for algebra. They address thought-provoking challenges and apply their mathematics skills and strategies in novel, interesting contexts. Seventh graders continue their study of operations with fractions, decimals, and percentages; probability; algebraic expressions, equations, and inequalities; functions and graphs; and two- and three-dimensional geometry.

Modeling algebraic functions with data and the use of those models are also learned.

Advanced Math 7

Students in Advanced Math 7 work through the standard Math 7 core curriculum at a faster pace. They engage in enrichment activities and are challenged with more sophisticated and complex problems. When appropriate, the advanced course will cover a significant portion of the Algebra 1 curriculum.

Math 8: Algebra 1, Advanced Algebra 1, Advanced Math Topics

Placement is made in consultation with seventh grade mathematics teachers and/or the chair of the Math Department.

Algebra 1

Students explore the general concept of a function, a fundamental concept in advanced mathematics. Linear and quadratic functions, in particular, are studied in depth. They work through robust exercises that require them to apply their knowledge to various situations without a preconceived notion of outcome. Topics are spiraled; students build upon their knowledge to address problems that increase in complexity and difficulty. Students use graphing calculators to visualize problems and enhance understanding.

Advanced Algebra 1

Advanced students focus on the same Algebra 1 concepts but grapple with complex problems that require them to synthesize ideas and incorporate a variety of problem-solving strategies. Teachers may introduce additional topics to continue to challenge students and foster an enthusiasm for mathematics.

Advanced Math Topics 8

Students in this course have completed the conventional Algebra 1 curriculum prior to eighth grade. They continue to study algebra and concurrently explore complex geometric principles and relationships. Students develop creative and analytical problem-solving skills and are challenged to apply those skills to interesting problems that help them grow as mathematical thinkers.

PERFORMING ARTS

Performing Arts 5

Fifth graders choose to participate in either an instrumental or choral ensemble. Skills are introduced through sequential development in technique, music theory, and performance practices. Both ensembles build upon these skills and techniques while acquiring broad musical experiences through a challenging and varied repertoire. Both fifth grade music ensembles perform in two concerts a year.

Performing Arts 6

Students explore the elements of music by participating in either an instrumental or choral ensemble. Their skills improve through sequential development in technique, music theory, and performance practices. Both ensembles build upon these skills and techniques while acquiring broad musical experiences through a challenging and varied repertoire. The two sixth grade music ensembles perform in two concerts a year.

Performing Arts 7 and 8

All seventh graders take Drama 7, a semester-long course. They also choose a full-year, mixed-grade performing arts course: Middle School Chorus, or Middle School Band. Eighth graders choose between these three options and Drama 8 and Technical Theatre 8. Students may opt to try one course in seventh grade and a different course in eighth grade, or they may continue to pursue the same course of study for both years.

Drama 7: Students learn the basics of stagecraft. They play improvisational games, perform monologues, and develop acting skills.

Drama 8: Students build upon acting skills learned in the seventh grade. They write original monologues and scenes, study improvisation, and stage an improv show for a middle school assembly.

Middle School Chorus: Students in this three- and four-part mixed ensemble perform music chosen from the standard choral repertory combined with pieces arranged specifically for them.

Middle School Band: Music for this ensemble, featuring wind, percussion, and string instruments, is selected from the standard instrumental repertory, combined with additional compositions arranged especially for the group.

Repertoire selected for both chorus and orchestra spans many different cultures, historical periods, and styles of musical compositions. Students increase their knowledge of musical notation, form, and stylistic interpretation. Both ensembles perform in two concerts as well as an adjudicated music festival.

Technical Theatre 8: Students learn the fundamentals of lighting, sound, and other technical features of the stage.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION/ ATHLETICS

P.E. 5

While learning the fundamentals of major and minor games, students develop physical and social skills. Fifth graders are encouraged to maintain a positive attitude toward health and fitness.

P.E. 6

Sixth graders continue to learn and participate in a variety of games, focusing on skill building and team work. Small side team competitions are incorporated into many units allowing students to deal with winning, losing, and the importance of exhibiting superb sportsmanship regardless of the intensity of a game. Most activities are self-officiated by the students.

Athletics 7 and 8

Students in Maret's interscholastic physical education/athletics program develop physical, emotional, and cognitive skills that enable them to become effective team members.

Participation is emphasized and all team members are guaranteed playing time. Some sports field an A and a B team, which are divided by skill level. Cuts may be made on some teams depending on the number of students trying out and the skill level. The A teams play 8–10 games per season; B teams play 4–8 games per season. Middle school sports are practiced during the school day; game time extends beyond the end of the school day.

A noncompetitive activity is offered if enough students choose not to compete on a team. This general physical education class offers a variety of team and individual activities that allow students to develop a wide range of physical, emotional, and cognitive skills. By learning the principles of health and fitness, students develop a positive attitude for lifetime physical activity.

SCIENCE

Math and Science 5

Fifth grade combines mathematics and science in one interdisciplinary period. Students engage in hands-on experiments and numerous project-based activities. They take measurements, collect data, find ways to display that data effectively, and examine patterns in order to draw conclusions about real-world phenomena. Students study patterns, puzzles, and problems that encourage creativity. They learn Earth science, including geology, water cycles, weather and astronomy. Fifth grade students keep observations, write solutions, and document their understanding of concepts and problem-solving strategies in personal math/science journals. They conduct and report on an original scientific experiment as part of the annual Science Fair.

Life Science 6

Students delve into the major themes of life science: ecological interactions, structural and functional relationships within plants and animals, and genetics. The variety of activities and projects requires both individual effort and cooperative group skills. Role-playing, laboratory investigations, lab reports, modeling, and oral, visual, and written presentations provide a framework for development of understanding about concepts. Students learn basic microscope skills to connect the visible features of organisms to the basic structures and functions of cells from plants, animals, and fungi. Exploration of experimental design begins with experiments on yeast and continues with data-collection activities, including baking, growing plants, and classifying animals. Students also study the workings of their organ systems and their genetic make-up. Sixth graders develop a Science Fair project that involves research, data collection, and analysis.

Physical Science 7

Students explore conceptual physics with an emphasis on problem solving through controlled experimentation and practical engineering. Using basic physics concepts, students build musical instruments, roller coasters, electronic quiz boards, and more. They learn proper documentation of the experimental process: identifying variables, creating graphs to analyze data, and supporting statements with evidence. Students build Lego robots and program them to perform a set of tasks for the Robotics Challenge and also apply their engineering skills to build a Rube Goldberg machine.

Chemistry 8

Students study the fundamentals of chemistry, including physical and chemical properties, chemical bonding, the periodic table, and chemical equations. They also explore connections between chemistry and the environment. Students build upon their skills of investigation by keeping a lab notebook of the collection, organization, and analysis of their own data. They complete an extensive climate change project in which they act as representatives of a variety of countries, NGOs, and businesses. At the conference, students publicly present their research and build consensus on climate change proposals.

TECHNOLOGY

Technology 5

This class meets once a week, all year. Fifth grade students continue to use Google Docs for creating documents and presentations and are assigned school email accounts. They learn more about being good digital citizens, the responsible use of technology, and the guidelines for technology use as a member of the Maret community. Other class topics include coding and design thinking, as well as making-focused projects that utilize materials and equipment in Maret's MakerSpace.

Technology 6

The sixth grade technology class meets once a week all year. The main areas of focus are promoting positive behaviors online in terms of internet safety, awareness of one's digital footprint, and cyber bullying. Students also learn coding and problem solving while using design thinking, robotics, and various pieces of coding software.

Grades 7 and 8

In seventh and eighth grades, technology is taught using an interdisciplinary approach; content and skills are integrated into students' academic subjects in humanities, math, science, and world languages.

Design Thinking 7

Students who opt out of Latin in seventh grade take Design Thinking 7; it meets twice a week all year. Students apply the iterative design-thinking process of exploring and empathizing, defining problems, ideating, prototyping, and testing to projects that are connected to content and concepts taught in other seventh grade courses. Through these projects, students develop and deepen their technological and fabrication skills.

Design Thinking 8

Prerequisite: Design Thinking 7

Students who complete Design Thinking 7 may continue their work to identify and address different problems through the use of the design thinking process in Design Thinking 8. It meets twice a week all year.

VISUAL ART

Visual Art 5

Fifth graders experiment with various materials and techniques commonly found in visual art. They explore the elements of art using two- and three-dimensional projects that utilize the formal properties of line, shape, value, texture, and color. Students are encouraged to find imaginative solutions to visual problems. They also develop critical thinking skills by asking—and answering—*Does it work and why?* Activities include drawing, painting, printmaking, and clay modeling.

Visual Art 6

Students build on their understanding of the elements of visual problem solving. Through hands on projects, they explore a variety of materials used in both two-dimensional and three-dimensional formats. They use line, shape, color, value, and texture to develop imagery in a systematic manner, while remaining open to creative possibilities. Students plan and execute projects in a logical sequence as they work toward completing their own unique art pieces.

Visual Art 7

Seventh grade art is divided into three segments: two-dimensional art, three-dimensional art, and public art within the Maret setting.

In the two-dimensional portion of the course, students use the reduction method of printmaking to create an edition of multicolor block prints. They discuss design, composition, and color theory.

In the three-dimensional segment, students explore the language of architecture as it applies to form and space. Through sculpture projects, students investigate figure and ground relationships. They acknowledge and establish scale determinations along with other formal considerations of mass, volume, and composition. Shop techniques in wood construction guide students through their projects.

For the public art segment, seventh graders plan and execute a site-specific public art installation that becomes a permanent addition to the campus. Students examine the role of public art and explore how location affects design, subject matter, and the selection of materials. They choose from a variety of media and resources and work as a group to develop and produce their own design.

Visual Art 8

Eighth grade art is divided into three segments: drawing, three-dimensional art, and painting.

In the drawing segment, contour and value studies facilitate the understanding of form and volume. Students create a self-portrait done in the manner of artist Chuck Close, using graphing as a means of image enlargement. They develop observational skills, eye-hand coordination, and the use of value.

The three-dimensional segment focuses on language—lyrical and poetic—and its physical form. Working in the style of graphic designer Martin Venezky and using his hands-on methods of working with letters and words, students sculpt concrete poems. They employ a variety of materials and experiments so that the shapes of the words and phrases in space become integral to the meaning of the language in their sculptures.

In the third portion of the class, students explore the fundamentals of drawing and painting techniques. They examine formal concepts of composition and color, and conceptualize and produce an image that engages and informs the viewer.

WELLNESS

Wellness 5

Fifth grade Wellness focuses on friendships, self-awareness, and decision making. The first semester gives fifth graders a chance to learn and practice mindfulness skills. Students learn how to form healthy friendships, be an upstander, and a responsible online citizen. The second semester is spent teaching students about puberty, reproductive anatomy, and pregnancy, as well as gender identity and gender expression. Classes start with a “check-in,” giving students the opportunity to practice recognizing their own feelings and gain understanding as to how those feelings influence behavior. Check-in also allows students to practice empathizing with their peers. Through reflective activities, students explore and articulate their boundaries

with regard to personal space, emotions, language, and behavior.

Wellness 6

In sixth grade, students concentrate on friendships, peer dilemmas, self-awareness, peer pressure, and decision-making. Students spend most of the year exploring their identity based on the “Big 8” social identifiers: race, ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, religion, and ability. Additional lessons on body image and family structure are added to the lessons on the “Big 8.” Students end the year learning about mental health and effective mindfulness practices.

Wellness 7

Students meet in gender-specific groups to discuss the effects of emotional and physical changes occurring in their lives. They explore human development, reproductive anatomy and physiology, sexually transmitted infections, and the importance of consent and boundaries. Students also learn about nutrition, diet and exercise, body image, eating disorders, and mental health. They learn to make decisions that show respect for themselves and others and take into account the possible consequences of their actions.

Wellness 8

As they prepare to transition to Upper School, eighth graders explore sophisticated themes associated with human development and relationships. Small and large group work, class assignments, and videos are used as the basis to discuss consent, identity, racism and prejudice and digital citizenship. These themes are reinforced and integrated across the middle school curriculum, and advising as well.

WORLD LANGUAGES

CLASSICS

Latin 7

Students who demonstrate interest in Latin begin an accelerated classics sequence. They study the material in the *Cambridge Latin Course, Unit 1*, which focuses on vocabulary, grammar, and culture through a single narrative about a Roman family living in Pompeii. Students begin their study of Latin vocabulary, noun case endings, verb endings for three tenses, and basic Latin sentence structure. They continue to study English language derivatives and the history and culture of the

ancient world. Learning occurs through games, projects, plays, dialogues, digital activities, and internet research.

Latin 8

Eighth graders continue their study of Latin language and culture by completing the *Cambridge Latin Course, Unit 2*. Students read stories set in Roman Britain and ancient Alexandria; they learn about the relationships between first-century Rome and its provinces, including the shared and dissimilar aspects of their cultures. Students further develop their knowledge of indicative verb forms. They expand their mastery of noun cases, adding the genitive and ablative cases. Games, projects, plays, dialogues, internet research, and audiovisual resources enhance the students’ familiarity with linguistic and cultural material.

MODERN LANGUAGES

Spanish 5

All fifth grade students take Spanish.

Students expand their understanding of Spanish with a thorough look at the language’s structures. They also work on the aural and oral aspects of Spanish. Students explore how to interact in the language on a daily basis through exercises such as role-playing. They study several Hispanic cultures through the use of audiovisual materials, special projects, and games. Students participate in a reading program using authentic Spanish-language texts and magazines.

French 6

Returning Maret students may choose to continue with Spanish or begin French. Students new to Maret take French in sixth grade. (New students who have had previous Spanish language study may continue to take Spanish with the approval of the department chair.)

Students learn basic concepts of French grammar and vocabulary and develop basic communication skills. Students develop their oral and aural skills through projects that highlight the geographic and cultural aspects of the language, comparing French and American daily life. In addition to a textbook, students use workbooks, and audiovisual materials to supplement in-class activities.

Spanish 6

Returning Maret students may choose to continue with Spanish or begin French. (New students who have had previous Spanish language study may continue to take Spanish with the approval of the department chair, or begin French.)

Students continue to build on the material presented in the fifth grade. They engage in projects that highlight the geographic and cultural aspects of the language. Games and role-playing reinforce the material. Students read authentic Spanish texts, building their vocabulary and understanding of Spanish grammar. Students also write storybooks and short stories.

French 7 and Spanish 7

Students new to Maret begin their study of a modern language. (If the student has studied French or Spanish before coming to Maret, they continue to study that language.)

In French and Spanish classes, students expand their communication skills while continuing to learn formal grammar. They review and consolidate concepts previously studied, learn complex features of Spanish and French grammar, expand their vocabulary and speaking skills, and learn the complete set of simple tenses of regular and irregular verbs. They develop more complex notions of syntax.

French 8

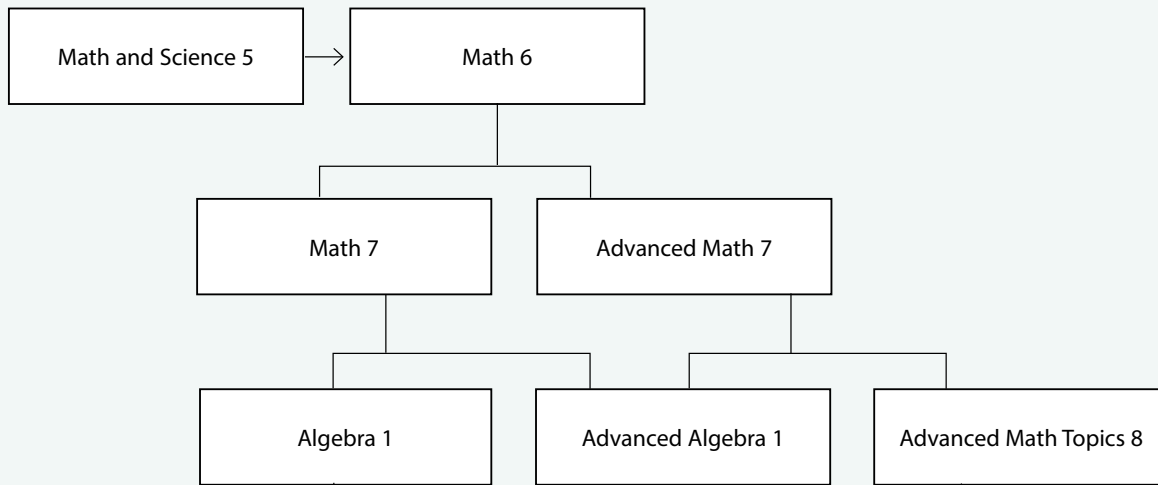
Students learn all the verb tenses, including conditional and subjunctive, gaining skills that enable them to express themselves clearly and confidently. They speak and write about choosing clothes, exercising, staying fit, traveling, the environment, and making plans.

Spanish 8

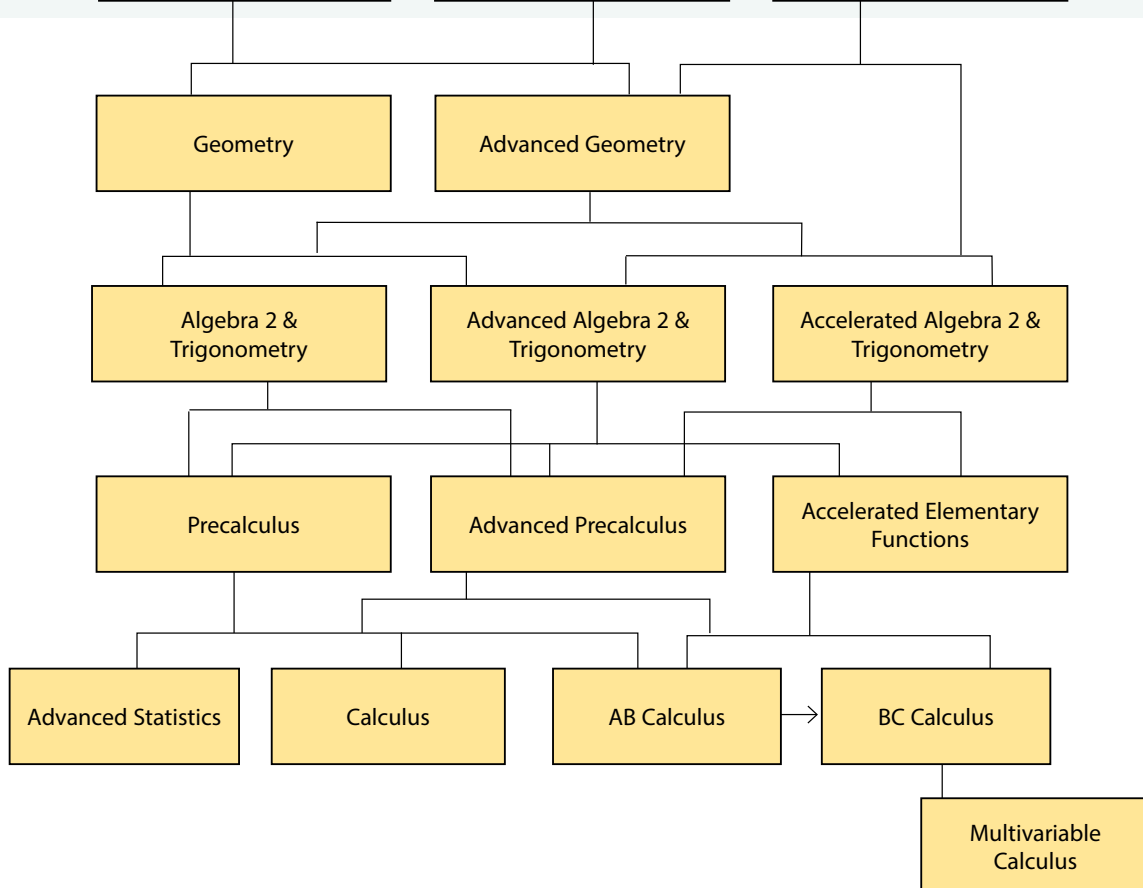
Students review and consolidate concepts previously studied, learn complex features of Spanish grammar, expand their vocabulary, and develop their speaking skills. Students develop mastery of the complete set of simple and perfect tenses of regular and irregular verbs. They develop complex notions of syntax and an expanded vocabulary base.

MIDDLE SCHOOL AND UPPER SCHOOL MATHEMATICS SEQUENCE

Middle School



Upper School

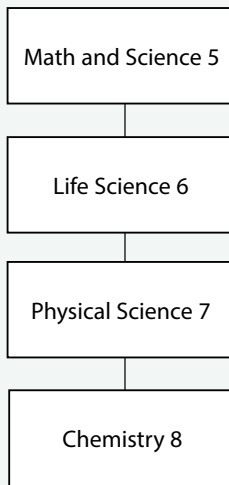


MSON Offerings:
 A Mathematical Modeling Approach to Social Justice, Multivariable Calculus, Advanced Applied Math Through Finance

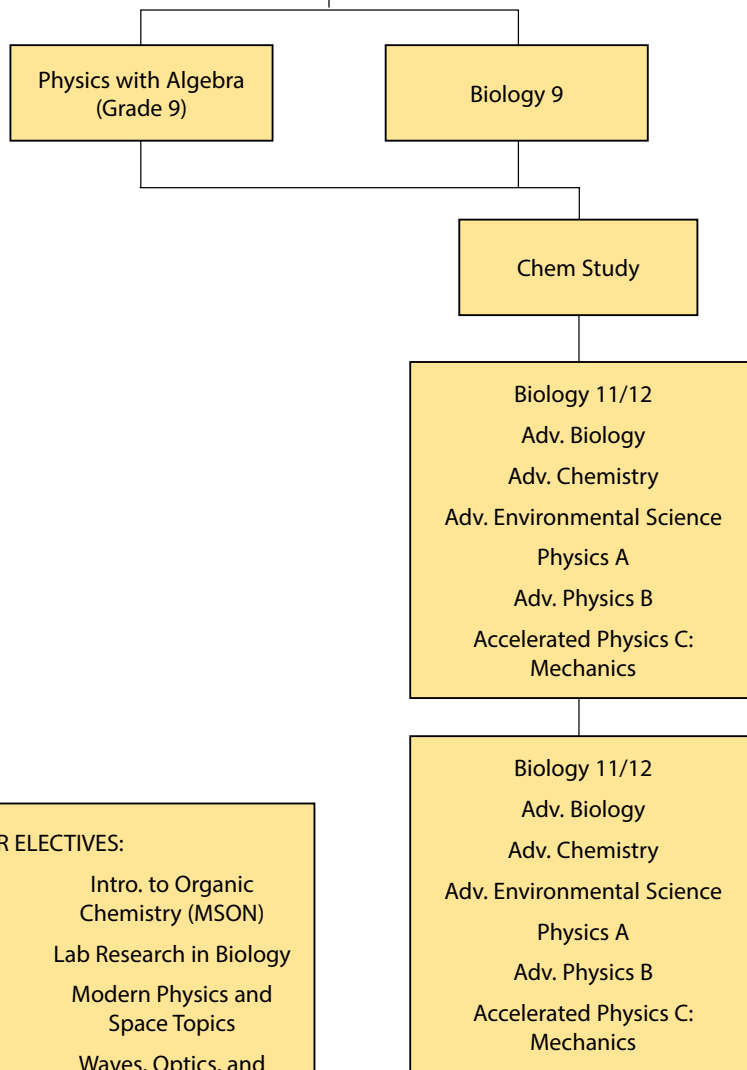
MIDDLE SCHOOL AND UPPER SCHOOL SCIENCE SEQUENCES

Three upper school science credits are required for graduation. One course each in biology, chemistry, and physics is required. Most Maret students take four years of upper school science, and some juniors and seniors take two science courses concurrently.

Middle School



Upper School



SEMESTER ELECTIVES:

Adv. Topics in Chemistry (MSON)	Intro. to Organic Chemistry (MSON)
Biotechnology	Lab Research in Biology
Einstein's Relativity and the Evolution of the Quantum Model (MSON)	Modern Physics and Space Topics
Forensic Science (MSON)	Waves, Optics, and Musical Physics
Genetics and Genomics (MSON)	

Summer program (grades 10–12):
Subtropical Zone Ecology—Puerto Rico

WORLD LANGUAGES CLASSICS SEQUENCE

Language placement for students is reassessed at the end of each academic year.

Middle School

Latin 7

Latin 8

Upper School

Intermediate Latin:
Heroes and History

Advanced Latin:
Rhetoric and Epic Literature

Lovers, Warriors, Poets, &
Thinkers of the Ancient
Mediterranean

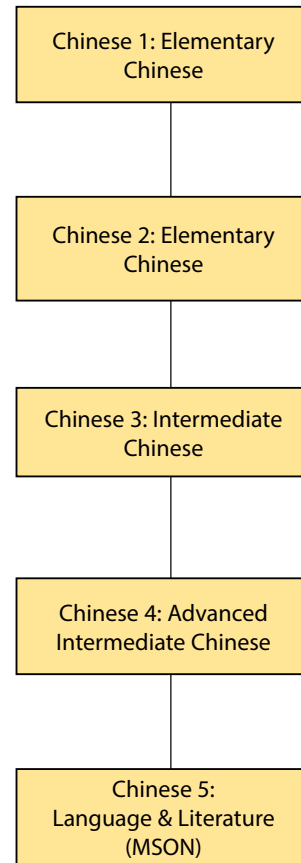
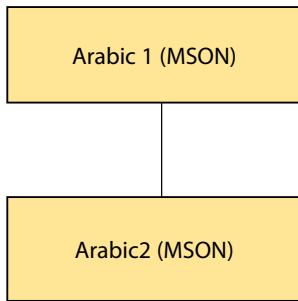
Ancient Greek I (Language
and Literature) (MSON)

**WORLD LANGUAGES
ARABIC SEQUENCE**

Language placement for students is reassessed at the end of each academic year.

**WORLD LANGUAGES
CHINESE SEQUENCE**

Upper School



**WORLD LANGUAGES
FRENCH SEQUENCE**

Language placement for students is reassessed at the end of each academic year.

Middle School

Sixth Grade French

Seventh Grade French

Eighth Grade French

Upper School

French 3

French 4

Advanced French Grammar

Francophone Culture

The Question of Evil from
Voltaire to Camus

Summer program:
Maret in France
Typically students participate after
ninth or tenth grade.

**WORLD LANGUAGES
SPANISH SEQUENCE**

Language placement for students is reassessed at the end of each academic year.

Middle School

Fifth Grade Spanish

Sixth Grade Spanish

Seventh Grade Spanish Beginner

Seventh Grade Spanish

Eighth Grade Spanish Beginner

Eighth Grade Spanish

Upper School

Spanish 1

Intensive Spanish

Spanish 2

Spanish 3

Spanish 4

Topics in Latino Culture

Spanish in Film

Survey of Hispanic Literature

Hispanic Literature

Hispanic Cultures

MSON Courses
(Prerequisite: Spanish 4)

Advanced Spanish Linguistics

Advanced Spanish Through Film and Literature

Comparative Literature

Summer program:
Maret in Spain
Typically students participate after ninth or tenth grade.

