

## **Middle School Electives- Course Summaries**

This catalog of course summaries provides a brief overview of each class in the 2021-2022 school year. Please read through the course descriptions carefully and use the information to fill out the survey for your elective class preferences. For the 2021-2022 school year, 6-8th graders will take **5 elective classes**.

### **Art 101 - Mrs. Daly**

Do you love art but don't know where to start? If that sounds familiar, then this class is for you. Art 101 is a survey class that covers multiple modes of making art. Students in this elective will learn about the fundamentals of drawing, painting, mixed media, and sculpture just to name a few. Students will develop an understanding of both historical and contemporary art. Students will learn how to use both traditional (watercolor, graphite pencil, charcoal, acrylic) and nontraditional materials (found objects) to create art.



### **The Fearless Sketchbook - Mrs. Daly**



The sketchbook elective will focus on using a sketchbook journal as a form of visual documentation of students' artistic ideas. Students will use their sketchbook to experiment with different art materials and explore different art techniques. Students will learn the elements and principles of art and design, and will study various artists (historical and contemporary) to compare/contrast their different processes of creating. The class will culminate with a full sketchbook that will serve as a guide to students' future artwork.

### **Painting- Mrs. Daly**

The painting elective will explore different painting techniques and genres in art. Students will learn the fundamentals of painting and enjoy skill enhancing exercises to strengthen technique while using a variety of wet media (including watercolor, tempera, acrylics and inks). They will also experiment with a wide range of painting genres (still-life, portraits, and landscapes) and styles (abstraction, from observation, and from imagination). This class includes color theory and composition. Students will learn about both contemporary and historical painters. This class will also explore painting as a form of mindfulness through simple exercises.

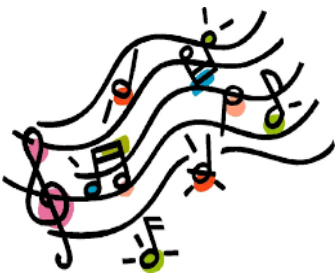


### **Drawing- Mrs. Daly**

The drawing elective will explore the vast and exciting world of drawing. Students will learn how to use different drawing tools (including graphite pencil, charcoal, pastels, markers, and color pencils). Students will learn how to draw from observation and imagination while experimenting with traditional and non-traditional materials and surfaces. Students will also examine both historical and contemporary artists whose work is based in drawing techniques. This class will furthermore explore drawing as a form of mindfulness through simple exercises.



### **NDA Power Choir- Mr. Tanksi**



So you know those cool videos of the Choir Girls Singing that you saw last school year. Do you want to be a part of that? It's hard work but the reward is AWESOME! Let's be totally honest, this year is gonna be weird and singing together in large groups is not a doable thing... BUT! You can still learn to train your voice, practice your craft as a singer and get your voice and your face out there for the world to hear and be amazed by! This year we'll work to develop your voice, your performance skills, your tech and recording skills and most importantly your confidence. We'll create music and videos for school Masses, Prayer Services and possibly some other cool events too. We might not be able to all gather around the piano and sing like before, but when corona-world is over you will be ready to sing out loud, join with the band and lead the school body in song at school functions throughout the school year! And that my friends, is way cool!

### **Musical Potpourri- Mr. Tanski**

You name it we're gonna try it. From making our own instruments, to listening to all kinds of different music, to learning Japanese Taiko Drumming, a little of this and a little of that is our goal. If you have something musical that you want to explore we'll dive in. But don't think this is just *me* giving you info. You'll also be asked to help lead the class and come up with musical things you're interested in as well. This class will truly be as cool as you want to make it!



### **Piano Lessons - Mr. Tanski**

Have you ever wanted to learn to play piano? It's really not that hard, but it does take practice. In this class you'll learn to play piano from the most basic beginner level. We'll start by first learning notes, the keys, fingering technique and ultimately simple songs. Class will be taught in a group format and is limited to the amount of available keyboard instruments. Ideally, you should have your own keyboard or piano at home to practice on. If you can only play at school on Fridays then you won't really learn to play. Practice is the key to learning piano. Students will be required to have their own simple, wired headphones (BlueTooth/wireless won't work).



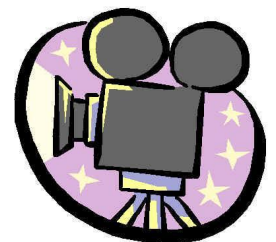
### **Song Writing and Digital Music Composition- Mr. Tanski**



Have you ever made up your own song? Whistled or hummed your own melody? Sung your own words to a song on the radio? Did you know that people get paid a LOT of money to do this? Would you like to learn how? I thought you'd say yes... Writing music is a practiced skill like everything else in this world. And more importantly it's something you can learn to do. In this class we'll learn the basics of Song Writing. Starting with simple melodies and simple lyrics all on our iPads using Garageband. We will be project based and work both individually and in groups depending on the task. Hopefully we'll create some really great music (and videos too) along the way! When possible, we'll also work with other Elective Classes to add our music to their projects as well. Students will need to have their own headphones when we return to school in person. Oh yeah... Want one more reason to sign up? Think about this: *Happy Birthday To You* is 6 words a simple melody and has made tens of millions of dollars.

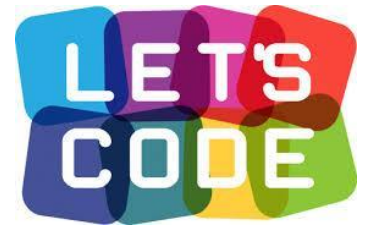
### **Filmmaking and Broadcasting - Ms. Timofte**

Looking to kick start your career as a professional Youtuber? Learning to amplify your voice through a variety of different media platforms has become a crucial part of interacting in the world today. This class offers students an opportunity to create different types of broadcasts that help them practice both communication and linguistic skills. Students will share audio podcasts that go onto iTunes, create their own vlogs like pro Youtubers, and create short films to share with the class. Time to let your voice be heard!



## **Coding Tier 1 - Ms. Timofte**

This class is focused on beginning coders getting into learning how coding languages work, no experience needed. You will learn the basic coding languages, study how technology affects the world, and leave with student-created projects, like your own coded website! In this class you will learn binary, block coding and level 1 JavaScript and HTML.



## **Coding Tier 2 - Ms. Timofte**



In this class, we will delve deeper into HTML and get into the design language of CSS to make your website a more creative representation of you and the new things you have learned. We will then be learning computer science principles, concepts, and history behind coding with fun activities.

*\*This class is only open to seventh and eighth graders who have taken Coding Tier 1 class.*

## **Robotics - Ms. Timofte and Mr. Guardado**

Dive into the world of robotics and artificial intelligence! This innovative course is designed to introduce students to basic robotics and computer coding. Using the VEX robotics program students will work collaboratively to design, build, and drive small robots. The robotis will be used to compete in the official VEX 2021-2022 game. Students will practice during class on a game field that measures 6 x 8 feet. The class will be limited to 15 students.



## **Spanish through the Arts - Ms. Barba**



In Spanish through the Arts, students will be exposed to the Spanish language, by exploring art, music, architecture, and cuisine of people in Spanish speaking countries. This course provides students with an opportunity to foster their love of the Spanish language, as well as the many cultures of the people who speak it. Students will learn about Frida Kahlo, the Galapagos Islands, Spanish castles and so many other wonderful Spanish influenced topics.



## **Game Theory and Design - Mr. Christman**

Do you want to develop 21st century skills and have fun too? Then this is the class for you! Playing games is proven to develop critical thinking, systems literacy, spatial reasoning, and communication skills. Games also promote collaboration and sharpen strategic reasoning. Recent studies even show that game-playing reduces stress and increases focus. In this class, students will learn about different genres of game design and the strategic thinking used to master them as they discuss and play different games. Then, students will put their learning and experience to the test as they develop a concept for their own game design and build a prototype to play with their friends and family.



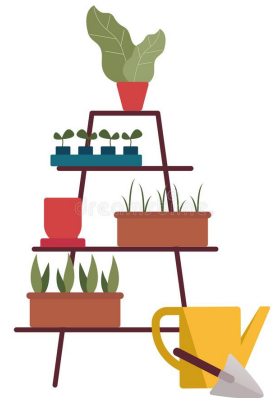
## **Environmental Science: School and Home Wildlife Habitats - Mr. Christman**



This student-initiated class will focus on the science of Wildlife Habitats. We will become more knowledgeable about what plants support local small wildlife: birds, pollinating insects (including, butterflies, moths and bees), as well as those small animals (worms, pillbugs, sowbugs) that help to create richer soil for wildlife. We will help design areas of the school property that include water sources, nesting sites and food for wildlife we would like to cultivate in a natural schoolyard environment. We will plant at the school and students will be able to plant also at home or in their neighborhoods. We will apply for the Certified Schoolyard Habitat through the National Wildlife Federation and investigate native plants in our neighborhood.

## **Gardening in Small Spaces - Mr. Christman**

You can garden anywhere! Buckets, pots, tubs, wall pockets, jars, planters and small plots of soil. Every week, we will focus on a skill and a type of small-space gardening. The largest place we will plant is a 3 x 6 foot plot at school. The smallest will be a tiny paper cup. We will learn to grow from seed, cuttings and transplants. We will grow vegetables, primarily, and flowers that are edible or help with insect management. We will document our work by creating a digital manual of what we learn, to help others discover their “green thumbs.”



## **Ukulele - Mr. Christman**

**Ukulele 1:** Learn to play the ukulele! This small instrument is loved world-wide by every age from the very young to the very old. It is portable, easy to learn to play and a perfect way to express yourself through strumming, singing and songwriting. It can sound sweet and soft, silly, or serious, depending on the chords you use. Participants will learn basic chords and complete songs from the very first class. As a class, we will form a “ukulele orchestra” and find ways to perform for each other and the wider community.



**Ukulele 2:** with permission, up to 3 advanced students may join the class focusing on Performance, Songwriting or Recording. We will use ukuleles provided by the school.

## **Baby Shark Tank: Growing a Business - Mr. Christman**



Are you interested in money? Would you enjoy creating and running your own business? This class will cover the basics of personal finance and the process of creating and financing your own (very) small business: from brainstorming, to the design process, to marketing (including a pitch for financing in a friendlier and much less expensive version of the television show Shark Tank)! In addition, we will create a practice business we can run at school. Middle school is the perfect time to master good monetary habits and build a knowledge base that will help you finance your dreams.

## **Drama - Mrs. Duerr**

Telling stories is what theatre is all about. This year-long class gives students a chance to tell stories through a variety of opportunities in rehearsal and performance through scripted material, improvisation and song. The Christmas Play and Concert, DTASC competitions, the High School Spring Musical plus a final showcase are all integrated experiences that allow students to explore acting, directing, designing and stage management. For the performer and non-performer, each student is guaranteed a way to express themselves through the art of theatre and grow!



***\*NOTE: This is very popular class with very limited enrollment. It is a double period class, so students in Drama take 4 elective classes instead of 5 (Drama plus 3 more).***

### **Dance Appreciation - Ms. Duronslet**



This course provides students the opportunity to explore the world of dance. We will cover ballet, jazz, modern, and some cultural dance. The students will learn the beginning skills of dance while improving their technique, poise, self-confidence, and creativity. They will have the opportunity to participate in performances in the fall and spring. (Students with prior dance experience can join the class and the movement will be adjusted for their level).

### **Strength and Fitness- Ms. Huessman**

Strength training offers many benefits to young students. In addition to being a great way to supplement athletes in training for their sport, strengthening the body can improve overall health through improving metabolism, bone health, and decreased chance of injury. In this class, students will focus on how to build and strengthen their bodies in a way that is healthy and appropriate for their age. Students will also learn about how to couple their workouts and routines with healthy food and life choices to improve overall fitness and wellness.



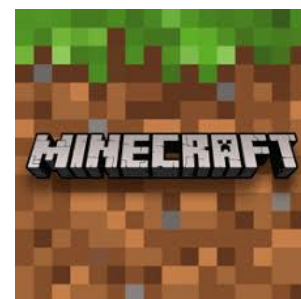
### **Intro to Korean - Mr. Park**



This is an introductory Korean language and culture course where we will cover the fundamentals of reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Throughout the course, you will learn basic Korean vocabulary, phrases, greetings, numbers, and more! We will also explore the Korean culture through its food, entertainment, arts, and clothing.

### **Minecraft- Mr. Guardado**

Let's build a Minecraft world one block at a time. This creative class will allow students to explore basic computer programming concepts while having fun in Minecraft Education Edition. Each session students will be given a challenge that will either require them to build a unique creation in Minecraft or to practice programming using the game's built in coding platform. No experience is needed, and students will be using the education edition of the game that will run on the school issued Ipads.



## **Architecture - Mrs. Metoyer**

Have you ever wanted to shrink down the world around you in order to see it differently? This introduction to architecture course will give you the beginning foundations to design and create your own little world. Throughout the year students will spend time learning about the drafting elements, drafting 2D scale drawings of real life spaces like their classroom or home, and designing and building realistic 3D cities. This class allows students to be creative, collaborate with their classmates, and develop a new vision of the space around them!



## **Creative Writing - Mrs. Leggett**



Calling all authors! Are you looking for a place to showcase your creative, introspective, or adventurous side? If so, the creative writing elective is for you! In this class students will have the opportunity to explore a variety of creative writing mediums, such as novels, poems, journals, short stories, songs, scripts, and more! The purpose of creative writing is to express something, whether it be feelings, thoughts, or emotions. As a class, we will achieve this by practicing mindfulness and reflective exercises, learning to craft dynamic characters and stories, and working collaboratively to help each other grow as writers.

## **Newspaper - Mrs. Lee**

Extra! Extra! Read all about it! The NDA Newspaper is back on the presses. As a member of the newspaper staff, you have the opportunity to try the many different jobs involved in publishing a paper. If you love to investigate and research, you have the chance to write about the current events happening both at NDA and around the world. If you have talent for art and humor, you can entertain your classmates with comics in the funnies section. Share your opinion on important topics by writing Op-Eds. Write creative short stories or poems. Use your knowledge of sports to report on the latest games and share important stats on the best players. Do you have a passion for pop culture? At the newspaper, you can write reviews of your favorite and the newest books, music, movies, and TV shows. Do you love to talk and connect? The newspaper gives you the chance to interview important members of the NDA community. Become part of the newspaper staff to try it all and keep our community informed.



**Watch for sign-ups in your email inbox or visit the link below!**  
**[Link to Google Form Survey for Middle School Electives 21-22](#)**