



Cardigan Mountain School

2021-2022 Academic Year
Course of Study

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Academic Program Requirements

Each student is required to take six courses each year at Cardigan to include history, English, math, science, a world language (French, Latin, Spanish, or ESL), and Personalized Education for the Acquisition of Knowledge and Skills (PEAKS®). To enhance the academic experience of the boys, we also require that students take an art course each year. Grade six and seven students take an introduction to studio art course while students in grades eight and nine are required to take art or woodworking, drama, and music. All students in grades six and seven participate in the Gates Invention & Innovation Competition program.

Academic Departments

HISTORY

Grade 6: Humanities

The sixth-grade humanities course helps students develop cultural awareness through the study of the world and its rich and diverse history, literature, music, art, and philosophy, while furnishing them with the tools to understand the process of being an independent and inquisitive thinker in a global society. The course utilizes a worldwide geographic focus as a springboard for discussion and critical thinking during each of the three trimesters. Using a reader's and writer's workshop approach, the students are encouraged to choose books and writing topics based on their individual interests. Students are required to read a minimum of four books each trimester from a variety of genres. They will also explore various forms of writing, including expository, narrative, persuasive, and descriptive forms, as well as fiction and poetry. Grammar and spelling are covered throughout the writing process. The "CAFÉ Menu," created by Gail Boushey and Joan Moser, is used as the basis for teaching reading strategies and covers the areas of comprehension, accuracy, fluency, and expanding vocabulary. Various mentor texts are utilized in order to display strong examples of good writing.

Grade 7: Humanities

Humanities: In Grade 7 boys take a humanities course that combines the study of literature and history. The historical curriculum focuses on the development and reinforcement of critical thinking and reading skills through the study of pre-colonization of the United States through the Civil War. Students will examine the founding of the United States, the structure of American government, and the influence of past events on today. The English component of this course is designed to emphasize, refine, and master previously learned skills in reading, writing, and presenting. Boys will be exposed to a diverse variety of readings that represent a reflection of the diversity that contributes to the American experience.

Grade 8: American History

The eighth-grade curriculum focuses on American history from Reconstruction through present day. The goal of the course is to utilize historical content to enhance the development of essential academic skills. Project-based learning and Socratic discussions are two of the many methods used to enhance critical

thinking and writing skills. Students are asked to improve their public speaking as well through a variety of exercises. The content itself is taught thematically, looking at America and its development into a globally relevant nation. This requires us, at times, to use a chronological approach to the study of American history while also looking at larger themes and their overall impact.

Grade 9: Origins of Western Civilization

Ninth-grade history traces the rise and development of Western Civilization to provide students a clearer understanding of our society's historical inheritance. The course focuses on three primary civilizations: Egypt, Greece, and Rome. Within each, discussions focus on the development of political, economic, and social systems, the role of value and belief systems in shaping human interaction, and the impact of these classical developments on modern society. Students will be challenged to develop their critical thinking and analytical writing skills as they consider Socratic issues such as "What is and should be the relationship between the individual and the state?" and "How does one live a good life?" A major component of the course is the ninth-grade research paper, a significant undertaking; during the writing process, students are guided in utilizing primary and secondary sources to gather evidence, craft a thesis statement and outline, and produce a well written historical research paper.

ENGLISH

The English curriculum at Cardigan is designed to help students develop competencies in English that will prepare them for the diverse demands of future literature classes, with particular attention paid to preparing the boys for the demands of English classes at their eventual secondary school. The English curriculum builds on skills from year to year in the areas of writing, grammar, vocabulary, spelling, reading, and literary analysis. At each grade level, review is an integral part of the teaching process so that those students new to the School may be integrated smoothly into Cardigan's English curriculum.

Grade 6

Theme: Humanities

Please see the grade six humanities course description on page two.

Grade 7

Theme: Humanities

Please see the grade seven humanities description on page two.

Cardigan's year-long grade seven humanities course utilizes a team-teaching model and the class material to emphasize, teach, and develop the necessary skills and tools for students to progress in both the English and history program at Cardigan.

Grade 8

Theme: Literature and Fiction

Students in eighth-grade English are exposed to literature through novels, plays, poetry, short stories, and nonfiction. The classes read a selection of novels, a nonfiction collection of adventure stories, a piece of classical drama, and selected poems and short stories. They learn to identify major, minor, and incidental characters. The literary selections will highlight theme and foreshadowing and many elements of figurative language, including simile, metaphor, imagery, and personification. Students will learn proper paragraph structure, the structure of expository essays by writing multi-paragraph, multi-draft essays with thesis statements and supporting references, and they will write creative narratives and poetry. For grammar, the classes will cover sentence types, sentence structure, parts of speech, agreement, phrases, and clauses. Vocabulary and spelling words are culled from literary pieces and will be used in creative writing. Students will learn definitions, synonyms, and usage. Group work and public speaking facilitate oral proficiency.

Texts and Materials likely to be used:

The English department is constantly striving to represent a variety of perspectives, voices, and characters and literature selections are always evolving. These titles represent a selection of the works explored in recent years: *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck; *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee; *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* by John Boyne; *Deep Survival* by Laurence Gonzalez; *A Midsummer Night's Dream* by William Shakespeare.

Grade 9

Theme: Written Expression

English in ninth grade aims to increase the sophistication of each student's written expression. Students will develop their writing in many different genres: reflecting in journals; developing themes in poetry, narratives, and biographical essays; and forming a clear thesis in their critical essays based on the literature read in the class. Students collect their various drafts in portfolios, which allows them to revisit and revise their work over the course of a term and the year. Most of these pieces are completed in at least two drafts. They will have a choice of topics in several essays but will also be expected to learn how to write on demand, given both a prompt and a time limit. A majority of the writing is prose, but the students also write ballads, sonnets, odes, and free verse.

It is important for good writers to understand how the English language is properly assembled. The use of proper grammar is explored with the goal of having each student acquire a strong foundation in basic grammar. This allows the student to better edit his own writing, as well as that of his peers. Areas of focus include parts of speech, the sentence base, correct use of pronoun case, punctuating compound sentences, and subject/verb and antecedent/pronoun agreement.

Students are encouraged to be active readers, understanding not just the large picture but also delving into the text on a closer level and “unpacking” what they find. We explore how characters are formed in fiction, how to recognize themes and the persuasive power of sensory detail. Students are often asked why an author makes a particular choice. They will learn to recognize literary elements such as metaphor, personification, alliteration, analogy, and irony found in both the prose and poetry. Students are exposed to short stories, poetry, plays, novels, newspapers, and essays—and to the elements that distinguish each of them.

Particular attention is paid to the more sophisticated vocabulary used in the texts both in order to expand upon each student’s ability to better understand the material and to voice more accurately and powerfully his ideas and opinions. Spelling is emphasized and students collect their spelling mistakes in a list that they keep and add to with each writing assignment.

Texts and Materials likely to be used:

The English department is constantly striving to represent a variety of perspectives, voices, and characters and literature selections are always evolving. These titles represent a selection of the works explored in recent years: *The Things They Carried* by Tim O’Brien; *Oedipus* by Sophocles; *Romeo and Juliet* by William Shakespeare; *Montana 1948* by Larry Watson; *The Kite Runner* by Kahled Hosseini; *The Art of Racing in the Rain* by Garth Stein; *The Loved One* by Evelyn Waugh; *Before We Were Free* by Julia Alvarez

MATHEMATICS

Placement tests for all students are administered at the beginning of every year and used in conjunction with previous coursework and student performance to fine-tune placement in the first two weeks of school. The teacher, department chair, and director of studies make final decisions regarding placement.

Sixth-Grade Math

Prerequisite: None (Placement test administered, students will be meeting the requirements for either Mathematics 1, 2, or Pre-Algebra.)

The sixth-grade math course uses Math in Focus, Courses 1 and 2. Students learn about the positive and negative numbers, multiplying and dividing fractions and decimals, ratios and rates, percents, algebraic expressions, statistics, volume, and area. Students are taught math through direct instruction, manipulatives, small-group activities, and differentiation. Successful completion of this course prepares boys to take pre-algebra in seventh grade.

Middle School Mathematics Course 2 (Offered in Grade 7)

Prerequisite: None (Placement test administered.)

This course extends the student's understanding of number and operations; data, statistics, and probability; geometry and measurement; and problem solving, reasoning, and proofs. Interconnection between these topics is emphasized with the goal of developing the student's ability to represent and interpret mathematical relationships. Furthermore, basic skills are reviewed, and available technology is used appropriately to support investigations.

Pre-Algebra (Offered in Grades 6,7, and 8)

Prerequisite: Middle School Course 1 and/or Course 2, and/or placement test result

The Pre-Algebra course prepares the students for the rigors of algebra and geometry with steady progression of lessons, building on the mathematical concepts that have been acquired from previous courses. Topics include operations with real numbers, variables and expressions, data analysis, probability, solving equations and inequalities, graphing lines, ratios and similarity, geometry and measurement, sequences and functions, and set theory and discrete mathematics.

Algebra 1 (Offered in Grades 6, 7, 8, and 9)

Prerequisite: Pre-Algebra and/or placement test result

Algebra 1 introduces the student to key algebraic concepts they will utilize in all high school mathematics courses. They are introduced to the notion of variable expressions and patterns that lead to generalization of the properties of real numbers. They will learn linear, polynomial, rational, quadratic, and radical expressions, and will learn how to solve equations and inequalities related to these functions. The utilization of variable expressions to model problems with real world implications are emphasized throughout the course. Algebra 1 can also be taken in a two-year sequence, as Algebra 1a and Algebra 1b, for students who would benefit from the slower pace.

Geometry (Offered in Grades 8 and 9)

Prerequisite: Algebra 1 and/or placement test result

The course studies Euclidean geometry in two dimensions and three dimensions. Students are encouraged to investigate, experiment, and explore geometric properties using both technology (Geometer's Sketchpad) and hands-on material. Following a carefully sequenced development of the logical and conceptual precursors to writing proofs, students undertake and learn to appreciate the rigor and elegance of deductive reasoning.

Algebra 2 (offered in Grade 8 or 9)

Prerequisite: Geometry, Algebra 1, and placement test result

Mathematical facts, concepts, and procedures in Algebra 1 and Geometry are reviewed and extended; these include linear, quadratic, polynomial, exponential, and logarithmic equations; rational and radical functions; and inequalities. Properties and attributes of functions, including inverse functions and transformation of functions, are emphasized. The graphing calculator is used extensively to explore and effectively visualize mathematical concepts. Applications of these concepts with real-world implications serve to motivate the discussion of the topics. The objective is to cover as many chapters as time allows, with the goal of reaching at least the chapter on conic sections.

Precalculus (Offered in Grade 9 or as an Independent Study)

Prerequisite: Algebra 1, Algebra 2, Geometry, and special permission from the Math Department chair and director of studies

The course objective is to provide the mathematical background needed for calculus. The concepts that play a central role in calculus are explored from the numerical, the algebraic, and the graphical perspectives. The graphing calculator is utilized extensively as each student is expected to participate actively in the development of these concepts and to use the technology to complete a particular discussion or to explore examples.

SCIENCE

There are three essential components of the Cardigan Mountain School science curriculum:

1. Gaining information about the structures and processes by which the natural world operates.
2. Learning ways to think, organize, and present information.
3. Using what is known in order to discover what is unknown.

Obtaining information and becoming proficient in the thinking skills necessary to discover new information are fundamental aspects of the Cardigan science curriculum. The program embraces many different teaching methods in the delivery of science content and skills. Inquiry is incorporated as the basis for learning at all levels. An inquiry-based program encourages an active search for knowledge and understanding to satisfy a young man's inherent curiosity. Guided inquiry helps students assemble their own toolset in developing analytical and critical-thinking skills. Students are offered a practical and efficient program that combines observational experiences, experiments, and demonstrations in an organized manner. They will consequently be more prone to engage in the process of science and will have more opportunities to progress from concrete to abstract ideas, rethink their hypotheses, and retry experiments and problems. Students at all grade levels build upon skills learned in previous science classes and carry their "knowledge toolset" into subsequent classes. Through the inquiry process, they actively take charge of their learning.

The Science Department takes advantage of the School's beautiful 500-acre campus, which includes an ecosystem abundant in living organisms of all shapes and sizes and an environment rich in diverse land features. In addition to having dedicated classroom space and appropriate class sizes, the science program has forests, meadows, fields, streams, and waterfront, which provide the perfect backdrop for a rich and vibrant curriculum. The proximity of science classrooms also enables students in different classes to collaborate on projects or gather together in seminar fashion.

Grade 6: STEM Class

The sixth-grade Science Technology Engineering Math (STEM) course utilizes a problem-solving approach to learning, in a hands-on, real-world manner to help prepare students to think critically about the world around them. The class will be instructed through the use of integrative units aligned with the Common Core State Standards and the Next Generation Science Standards using Project-Based Learning. The students will learn to make scientific observations by asking questions, formulating and testing hypotheses through engineering problems, collecting, evaluating, and analyzing data through the

use of various computer programs, taking effective notes utilizing numerous note-taking skills to solve various mathematical problems. Units of study include astronomy, number systems, energy, expressions and equations, weather, ratios and proportional relationships, geology, ecology, and geometry. A placement exam will be given at the start of the course to assess students' math knowledge so that the curriculum can be tailored to meet their individual math needs.

Grade 7: Earth and Environmental Science

The seventh-grade science program utilizes a curriculum developed by the Lawrence Hall of Science and University of California at Berkeley. The two units of study, Earth History and Populations, and Ecosystems, are issue-oriented and use a hands-on approach to making science engaging and relevant. Students will construct much of their understanding of the natural and human-designed worlds through inquiry. At Cardigan, inquiry implies emphasis on the development of skills and cultivation of attitudes or habits of mind that will enable individuals to continue the quest for knowledge throughout life. Topics of study include, but are not limited to, Earth's history, rock cycle, plate tectonics, ecosystems and biomes, energy and life, and biodiversity. In addition to the "Earth and Environmental Science" program, students are integral members of the award-winning Living Laboratory project. Student teams maintain terrariums that house mini-ecosystems, which include various plants and small animals (e.g., snakes, lizards, frogs, and turtles). The project is designed to engage seventh-grade students in an authentic task by involving them in direct study and care of plants and animals, emphasizing "learning by doing" and promoting character growth, teamwork, and reflection. Its goals are to bring Cardigan's students together with animals to help them learn about their environment and the importance of stewardship of the natural world.

Grade 8: Physical Science

Eighth-grade science classes survey concepts and skills associated with the physical sciences, primarily introductory mechanics and chemistry, utilizing the CPO Science Teaching and Learning System. Each class topic is introduced with hands-on investigations, employing a guided inquiry approach that allows students to discover concepts and explore, rather than prove or demonstrate them. Content development is structured around lab experiences. Direct observation comes first; students discover firsthand what happens and then find the connection to real-world applications. Theoretical information is provided to give the "how" and "why." Time will be spent refining observational and analytical skills (e.g., making accurate and precise measurements). Areas of study include scientific process, motion and force, work and energy, matter and energy, atoms and elements, changes in matter, and electricity and magnetism. Three project-based learning units are completed: pneumatic rockets, tower of power, and mousetrap cars. This course enables students to make a smooth transition to the biology course offered in ninth grade, as well as to the chemistry and physics courses students will take at their secondary school.

Grade 9: Biology

This course presents students with an in-depth study of life at the cellular and organismal levels. Students will be presented information through a variety of media including textbook readings, small group discussion, didactic lectures, field explorations, inquiry-based laboratory work, and project based learning experiences. Topics explored throughout the year include a study of the scientific method, carbon-based biological macromolecules, the cell, cellular processes, genetics, systems of the body, theories of evolution and natural selection, and ecology. The course's overarching theme includes an emphasis on helping students become biologically literate through inspiring the spirit of scientific inquiry about our

living world. Cardigan's biology program prepares students for tenth grade and beyond by instilling study skills and habits of mind for both the classroom and laboratory.

WORLD LANGUAGES

Cardigan Mountain School requires world language study of all students unless otherwise approved by the director of studies. Each student is provided with a solid language foundation to spark an interest in continued study. Proficiency in conversation, listening, comprehension, reading, and writing are key components of all language courses. Students gain experience in communicating and in learning about the history and culture of regions that share their chosen language.

Grade 6 Language

Students in grade six will begin their course of language study by selecting one of the three languages offered at Cardigan: French, Spanish, or Latin. The grade six language courses provides students with a basic introduction to these languages, including pronunciation, vocabulary, and culture.

Grade 7 Language

The following language courses are offered for seventh-grade students.

- Intro to French A
- Intro to Latin A
- Intro to Spanish A

Grade 8 Language

The following language courses are offered for eighth-grade students.

- Intro to French A—or—Intro to French B
- Intro to Latin A—or—Intro to Latin B
- Intro to Spanish A—or—Intro to Spanish B

Grade 9 Language

The following language courses are offered for ninth-grade students.

- Intro to French B—or—Fundamentals of French—or—Intermediate French
- Intro to Latin B—or—Intermediate Latin
- Intro to Spanish B—or—Fundamentals of Spanish—or—Intermediate Spanish

Intro to French A

Intro to French A is the first in a two-course sequence. This course makes use of the D'accord 1 textbook to develop the fundamentals of French through listening, speaking, reading, writing, and culture. Intro to French A can be compared to the first half of a high school level 1 course. This course is not available to native or heritage speakers of French.

Intro to French B

Intro to French B is the second in a two-course sequence and is offered to students that have completed Intro to French A or its equivalent. This course makes use of the D'accord 1 textbook to continue development of the fundamentals of French through listening, speaking, reading, writing, and culture. Intro to French B can be compared to the second half of a high school level 1 course. This course is not available to native or heritage speakers of French.

Fundamentals of French

This intensive course is offered to beginning or experienced ninth-grade French students and covers the same material as the combination of Intro to French A and B. This course makes use of the D'accord 1 textbook to introduce and continue development of the fundamentals of French through listening, speaking, reading, writing, and culture. This course is not available to native or heritage speakers of French.

Intermediate French

This course is offered to ninth-grade students that have completed Intro to French A and B or the equivalent and have demonstrated a strong foundation in elementary French vocabulary and grammar. Intermediate French makes use of the D'accord 2 textbook and will offer a brief review of introductory French before moving on to more complex grammar and further development of French language skills through listening, speaking, reading, writing, and culture activities. This course is not available to native or heritage speakers of French.

Intro to Latin A

Intro to Latin A is the first in a two-year course sequence. Using the first half of the Wheelock's Latin, this course introduces students to Latin grammar, Roman history, and ancient mythology. Intro to Latin A can be compared to the first half of a high school level 1 course.

Intro to Latin B

Intro to Latin B is the second in a two-course sequence and is offered to students that have completed Intro to Latin A or its equivalent. Using the second half of Wheelock's Latin, this course continues the introduction to Latin grammar, Roman history, and ancient mythology begun in Latin A. Intro to Latin B can be compared to the second half of a high school level 1 course.

Intermediate Latin

Intermediate Latin is offered to students who have completed Latin 1B or its requirements. After a comprehensive review of Latin grammar and vocabulary, this course transitions to the use of a graduated reader, introducing students to authentic Latin prose. Readings are from War with Hannibal, an epitome of Livy's *Ab urbe condita*. Intermediate Latin can be compared to a standard second-year high school course, and students can proceed to Advanced Latin at Cardigan or Latin 3 in secondary school.

Advanced Latin

Comparable to a third-year high school Latin course, Advanced Latin is designed for the student who has completed Intermediate Latin. The course assumes knowledge of Latin grammar at the intermediate level, significant vocabulary, and an ability to handle extended, authentic prose. The textbook for

Advanced Latin will be Caesar's *Commentarii de bello gallico*. Advanced Latin will also include an introduction to Ancient Greek and the classical humanities, preparing students for Latin 4 in secondary school, which is often Advanced Placement Latin.

Intro to Spanish A

Intro to Spanish A is the first in a two-course sequence. This course makes use of the *Descubre 1A* textbook to develop the fundamentals of Spanish through listening, speaking, reading, writing, and culture. Intro to Spanish A can be compared to the first half of a high school level 1 course. This course is not available to native or heritage speakers of Spanish.

Intro to Spanish B

Intro to Spanish B is the second in a two-course sequence and is offered to students that have completed Intro to Spanish A or its equivalent. This course makes use of the *Descubre 1B* textbook to continue development of the fundamentals of Spanish through listening, speaking, reading, writing, and culture. Intro to Spanish B can be compared to the second half of a high school level 1 course. This course is not available to native or heritage speakers of Spanish.

Fundamentals of Spanish

This intensive course is offered to beginning or experienced ninth grade Spanish students and covers the same material as the combination of Intro to Spanish A and B. This course makes use of both the *Descubre 1A* and *1B* textbooks to introduce and continue development of the fundamentals of Spanish through listening, speaking, reading, writing, and culture. This course is not available to native or heritage speakers of Spanish.

Intermediate Spanish

This course is offered to ninth grade students that have completed Intro to Spanish A and B or the equivalent and have demonstrated a strong foundation in elementary Spanish vocabulary and grammar. Intermediate Spanish makes use of the *Descubre 2* textbook and will offer a brief review of introductory Spanish before moving on to more complex grammar and further development of Spanish language skills through listening, speaking, reading, writing, and culture activities. This course is not available to native or heritage speakers of Spanish.

English as a Second Language (ESL)

Classes at Cardigan are taught entirely in English, with the exception of world languages, and the expectation for each student is to participate in all aspects of the curriculum regardless of his written and spoken proficiency. For this reason, Cardigan offers English as a Second Language (ESL) to students whose primary language is not English.

Vocabulary is one of the more challenging aspects of life in a foreign country. English is full of words with multiple definitions and intricate differences. Furthermore, our reliance on idioms and expressions in common language can be frustrating for English language learners. The ESL program sets out to maximize exposure to key words and terms that are crucial for success inside and outside the classroom by introducing our students to new vocabulary in a variety of ways that foster comprehension through use, as opposed to simple definitions alone.

The goal for every ESL student at Cardigan is academic and social success. Students enter Cardigan with specific skill based and interactive needs. Our instructors recognize that international students at Cardigan face a variety of academic, social, and extracurricular demands that require English mastery across the board. As our school is an English-immersion environment, students are taught how to take advantage of additional learning opportunities outside of our classroom. They are taught that:

- Self-advocacy is crucial to learning English (using context clues, asking questions).
- Fear of mistakes can hold you back more than making errors will.
- Communication is the end goal. You can be understood without being perfect.
- Learning from errors is key to developing effective communication skills.
- In order to master another language, you need to learn how language works (collocations, cognates).
- Expanding your vocabulary gives you more tools to work with when communicating.

Grammar is taught in a manner relevant to each individual's unique language background. Students receive individualized practice and feedback in these areas.

ESL at Cardigan subscribes to a "Grammar in Use" method of instruction. While it is essential that English language learners develop more specific understanding of grammatical structures in their target language, it is equally important that an emphasis be placed on functional use and understanding in reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Students are studying weekly lists of the most frequently occurring academic words, which will allow them to increase their comprehension of texts and spoken language in all of their courses.

PEAKS[®]: Personalized Education for the Acquisition of Knowledge and Skills

(Note: Because Cardigan recognized the value and innovation in this unique department, the PEAKS[®] brand was trademarked in 2009.)

The PEAKS Department, located in the Stoddard Center, was created in 2008 to support Cardigan's overall academic program and enhance the experience for the boys. Before the PEAKS Department was established, Cardigan offered a fee based academic support department that served approximately 10 percent of the student population in any given year. In the creation of the PEAKS Department, Cardigan sought to provide a non-fee-based academic resource that would benefit all students and expand its scope beyond the general academic curriculum. PEAKS serves 100 percent of our students.

Guided self-development is the cornerstone of the department, and its focus lies in helping each student become a reflective, efficient learner and self-advocate from a holistic perspective (mind, brain, wellness, and education) no matter his skill level. In particular, the PEAKS Department is responsible for a progression of courses taken by students each year. The courses are geared to helping students understand the interrelated factors that impact learning and wellness, with a particular focus on applying this information to the discovery of how they learn best. In these unique PEAKS classes, students identify their individual strengths and challenges, and they learn to advocate for themselves.

PEAKS is taken by every student (grades six through nine). Students attend their PEAKS core class four days per week and, with the help of their PEAKS coach, explore ways to employ effective strategies for leading more productive lives—in their academics and beyond. The curriculum focuses on the skills students need in order to be successful at Cardigan, including study skills, technology, and wellness. In addition to teaching classes, PEAKS coaches act as secondary advisors and mentors. Whether it's working one-on-one on a math problem or providing an opportunity for students to express their feelings, the role of the PEAKS coach outside of the classroom manifests itself in numerous ways. In addition, PEAKS coaches observe their students in other classes and in other areas of school life, and they actively communicate with the other adults on campus regarding students' accomplishments and concerns. PEAKS coaches also support the Cardigan community in a professional development capacity, and the department serves as a sounding board for ideas.

What Is the Philosophy Behind PEAKS?

We recognize and believe that every student learns differently. As each boy comes to an enhanced understanding of himself and his style of learning, he will be better equipped with more-personalized tools going forward, enabling him to find success as a lifelong learner. The PEAKS Department helps students become aware of how they learn best, and helps to provide students fundamental study, organizational, and technological skills necessary to become academically self-sufficient—in and out of the classroom.

Building close and healthy relationships with each student is the underpinning of the PEAKS coaches' role. Strong relationships allow the coaches to observe, listen, and ask questions in a way that helps them understand each student's experience. Coaches use knowledge of students' strengths and challenges to facilitate the development of personal competencies and to encourage students to use this information toward a commitment to action.

Relationship building doesn't happen on a set schedule, nor does learning happen on demand. PEAKS coaches are widely available to students around the campus during various times (during the day, at night, and on weekends). In addition, the coaches are available during set hours in the PEAKS® Suite, which is a safe, secure, and fun learning environment.

What Is the PEAKS Mission?

PEAKS helps to lead the Cardigan Mountain School community to achieve its full potential by integrating and supporting habits of learning.

Cardigan Habits of Learning

- Growth Mindset – students will focus on improvement and understand that intelligence can be developed.
 - Problem solving
 - Resilience
 - Open-mindedness
- Self-Awareness – students will manage themselves and reflect on their decisions.
- Coexistence – students will peacefully and productively collaborate with others.
- Critical Thinking – students will question and analyze information to draw conclusions.
- Communication – students will articulate ideas with clarity and precision through a variety of media.
- Ownership – students will advocate for themselves and take responsibility for their life and learning.
- Creativity – students will explore and imagine.

What Is Learned in PEAKS?

The PEAKS Department is responsible for courses geared to helping students understand the interrelated factors that impact learning and wellness, with a particular focus on applying this information to the discovery of how they learn best. The PEAKS curriculum is aligned with the school mission statement and is designed to enhance the Cardigan experience.

In each of the grades, the PEAKS course focuses on study skills, technology education, and wellness. Topics vary by grade and section necessities and may include:

- Study Skills: organization, time management, writing with a purpose, reading, note taking.
Technology education: Microsoft suite, presentation skills, media editing software.
- Wellness: personal wellbeing, mental health, stress management, tobacco, alcohol and other drugs, human reproduction and sexuality.

Grade 6

The youngest students require a good bit of “close shepherding” in all areas of Cardigan life. PEAKS coaches actively help these students to better acclimate to boarding school life by teaching emotional intelligence and social skills, in addition to the essential skills in time management, study methods, and organization that all Cardigan students receive. Emphasis is placed on close observation of these boys in order to quickly assist them when challenges arise. A primary goal of sixth grade is the development of study and organizational skills.

Grade 7

The seventh-grade PEAKS curriculum allows for natural maturation and supports students’ adjustment to subject specific classes. The course focuses on self-management, positive peer interactions, and collaboration. The acquisition of a sense of personal responsibility and self-identity is a goal for this grade.

Grade 8

Eighth grade boys develop a better understanding of themselves and their place in the world. Cardigan boys assume more responsibility for their academics and their lives. PEAKS helps to cultivate this new self-awareness, while fostering collaboration through peer teaching of skills and appreciation of learning differences. Students are strongly encouraged to develop a habit of self-advocacy with teachers.

Grade 9

The ninth-grade PEAKS class focuses on developing the boys as independent, lifelong learners. Students work to understand how they learn best, based on current neurobiological research, understanding how their brain works and how to apply this in their everyday lives. Additionally, the PEAKS Coach works to prepare students for the transition to the next school following Cardigan.

VISUAL ARTS

Visual arts classes at Cardigan provide an opportunity for students to learn about, explore, and engage in the creative process using many forms of media. Students create a variety of projects, from two-dimensional drawings to three dimensional sculptures. Students work on drawing, painting, printmaking, and ceramics in a large, well-equipped studio under the direction of a trained and practicing artist. Projects emphasize art concepts that reinforce perception skills and hand–eye coordination, enabling the students to draw and translate their ideas into visual language. Emphasis is placed on the use of tools and materials for each project. Art history is also an integral part of the art curriculum where artists' styles are discussed and made pertinent to students' artwork. Various spaces around the campus, including the Needham Gallery near the art classroom in Bronfman, as well as the lobby of the Stoddard Center, are typically used to display students' completed artwork for the enjoyment of faculty, staff, parents, visitors, and fellow students.

All sixth graders take one term of visual arts while students in the seventh, eighth, and ninth grades elect to take a term of either visual arts or woodworking.

Grade 6

Students in grade six will take a one trimester introductory course in studio art. Students will work with a variety of art media, including pencil, color pencils, marker, pen-and-ink, and watercolor. One favorite project is when the sixth graders develop their own Mandalas, a multi-layered, circular design with mirrored imaging. Each one is unique, interesting, and reflective of the artist.

Grade 7

Students in grade seven will take a year-long foundation of studio art and arts exploration course. Students will explore a range of mediums and projects including optical illusion drawing, gesture drawing, positive and negative space understanding, scratch prints, block carving, printmaking, and charcoal drawings.

Grade 8

Students will explore a range of mediums and projects including color theory, watercolor painting, acrylic painting on canvas, and continuous line portraits with ink and watercolor. Students work with concepts of negative and positive space, volume and mass drawing, and color value; they also develop perceptual skills and hand-eye coordination.

Grade 9

Ninth-grade students take a term-long course that solidifies the foundation of skills needed to express, capture, and communicate the world around them. The overarching goal is to be able to thoroughly and confidently communicate ideas and the self in a creative and thoughtful manner. Students conclude their experience with a toolbox of techniques and processes, including a group mural in a Cardigan common space, Zentangle drawings, Plexi-glass etchings, printmaking, and a self-proposed senior project with an open studio concept.

MUSIC

Students may initially be unaware, but music is more than just music. Music is philosophy in the sense that it expresses truths about what it is to be human. Similarly, music is also history in that it can illuminate and teach us much about the society in which it was written.

Through performance and the study of genres, forms, and histories, the music program at Cardigan provides the student with an understanding of some of the meanings in music that lie beneath the surface sound. Through the use of films, videos, and audio recordings, students learn about a variety of musical subjects, including the history of jazz, rock 'n' roll, the American musical, and important "classical" composers who span the Baroque, Classical, Romantic, and Twentieth Century periods. Worksheets, presentations, and/or poster projects are typically required, depending on the subject.

All Cardigan students take music for one term each year. Sixth-grade and seventh-grade students will learn either the basics of playing the recorder or the basic elements of music, along with the instruments of the orchestra. Sections with larger class sizes will occasionally perform on the hand chimes in Chapel services throughout the year.

Students are encouraged to join the Cardigan Glee Club, which practices weekly and performs during a number of Chapel services as well as on special occasions throughout the year. Students who play an instrument may join the Music Ensemble, which meets weekly, and will either accompany the Glee Club or perform pieces on their own. (Note: Private lessons are available for any instruments of the orchestra, as well as drums, piano, guitar, and bass guitar.)

For the length of the term, students in all music classes keep a detailed "playlist" document outlining all listening examples (correctly formatted) that have been played during class. In any of the music classes, the instructor may administer a test or quiz that he has previously announced.

Grade 6

Grade six music will introduce concepts of musical education through the learning of the Ukulele.

Grade 8

Music in the eighth grade is separated into three separate units or "strands," and each strand is taught on one of the three class days. Classical Music History—This strand focuses on the events and composers of the Baroque, Classical, Romantic, and Twentieth-Century/Modern periods. Students select, with a partner, a composer from one of these four eras in music. They then perform research on their composer and present their findings in a multimedia presentation. The notes of the scale/Solfege (Do, Re, Mi, etc.)

Students will learn the 'solfege' notes and how they apply to sung music in many styles. For the purposes of eighth grade music, the solfege utilized is of the 'Moveable Do' variety, while the class will also learn solfege notes in 'la-based' natural and harmonic minor. Questions about solfege systems should be directed to the director of music. Utilizing a Sight-Reading song book such as the Folk Song Sight-Singing Series, Oxford University Press, original ©1953, students will learn to identify Do and other notes in a sight-reading example, and be able to sing these excerpts on solfege notes. The final part of the term will involve students learning to sing a particular song, in its entirety, and bringing that song to concert readiness. Currently, all eighth grade music classes sing as a part of the all-school student concert series.

Grade 9

Music class in the ninth grade represents the culmination of the music sequence at Cardigan. Instead of playing instruments or singing—as is done in grades seven and eight—ninth-grade music focuses on music and its use in media, including how TV and movie directors use music to elicit certain emotions from the viewers, and how certain pairings of music and visual media send a particular message. For the last several years, the term project in ninth grade has involved selecting a movie or TV excerpt, then pairing it with two contrasting musical examples—one of which must be a classical example from before 1900. Students then integrate the video clip with each of the musical examples and present the piece as one might in a film festival—with a well-prepared speech before the class and invited guests. If time allows within the term, students will view a Broadway musical, or movie version of a Broadway musical, then discuss the musical and the thematic and dramatic elements within the show. This unit culminates in a Socratic discussion based on the themes of the musical.

WOODWORKING

The Williams Wood Shop, which occupies half of the Gates I.D.E.A. Shop (and thus lies adjacent to the Gates Lab), contains an extensive array of hand and power tools, and instruction in the operation and care of all equipment is provided before students begin project work. Students familiarize themselves with the use of both hand tools and various power tools, including the radial arm saw, table saw, band saw, and drill press, as well as the process of sanding, staining, and finishing. Student projects can often be quite sophisticated, both in their design and execution. Beginning in the seventh grade, students have the option of taking one term of woodworking.

Grade 8

This eighth-grade course provides students with their first exposure to all the power tools in the shop. After a student demonstrates the safe operation of each machine, he begins work on a project of his choice (with the concurrence of the shop director), from concept and design through fabrication, building, and completion.

Grade 9

Ninth-grade woodworking allows the student to work on a project of his choice, with the concurrence of the shop director. Prior to fabricating, building, and completing, the student will design and draw plans for this project, as well as outline the process for machining and assembly.

THE GATES PROGRAM

Required for students in grades six and seven.

The Charles C. Gates Invention & Innovation Competition program is an academic offering at Cardigan made possible by a generous contribution from a past parent and Cardigan trustee. The Gates program at Cardigan provides a hands-on offering designed to encourage creative thinking, problem solving, risk taking, team building, and entrepreneurial spirit, and to develop in students of all grades an appreciation for creativity, hard work, perseverance, and resilience. Students are charged with identifying a specific problem in the real world and developing a “functioning innovation or invention to solve that problem.” Each student or student team designs and builds the invention with guidance from the Gates director overseeing the program. Criteria for the invention or innovation include the following: it must perform a practical function, make life easier or safer, entertain, or solve an everyday problem. While pride in accomplishment is first and foremost, participants in the program vie for cash awards in a competition similar to a trade show at the end of the year. Outstanding projects that are unique and merit further consideration may be awarded a “patent nod” by the judges.

THEATER ARTS

Grades 8, 9

Each section of eighth and ninth graders will take one trimester of Theater Arts. Theater is a wonderful vehicle for improving students’ habits of learning: creativity, communication, coexistence, self-awareness, growth mindset, and critical thinking. Our boys in particular will enjoy exploring and creating in a dynamic environment of movement and space.

Through improvisational games and activities, each class learns to form a productive and collaborative ensemble that is respectful, supportive, and flexible with each other. Students are encouraged to become more confident and spontaneous in their creative choices and will gain a better understanding of how to better communicate and express their ideas through their instrument: their voice and their body, they will also be introduced to some of the technical aspects of theater, such as lighting, set design, and costuming, that serve to enhance a production.

In the end, each ensemble will aim to create an original theatrical piece worthy of a public performance.