



## MIDDLE SCHOOL CURRICULUM GUIDE



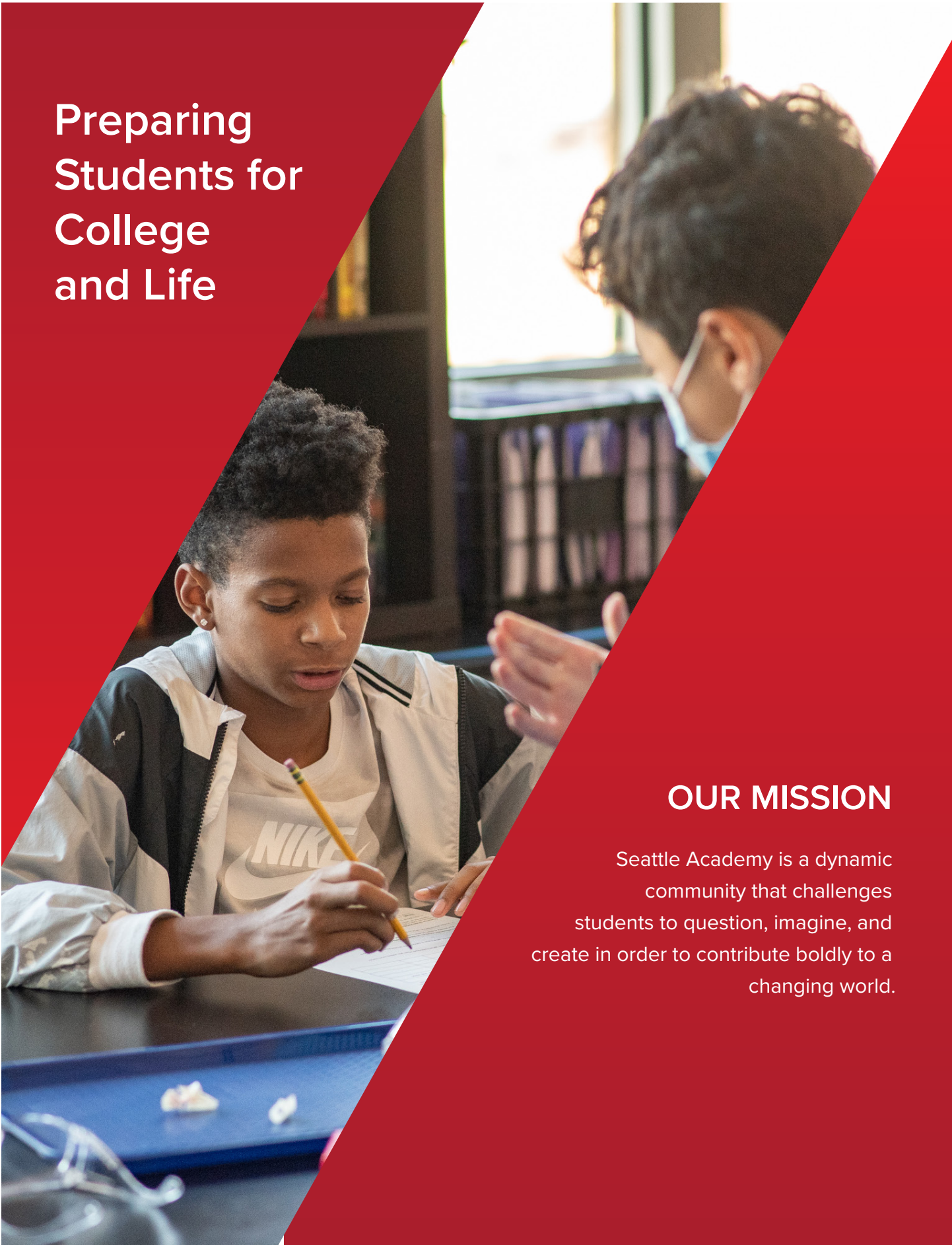
**2023-2024**

---

Registration Information

---

Course Descriptions



# Preparing Students for College and Life

## OUR MISSION

Seattle Academy is a dynamic community that challenges students to question, imagine, and create in order to contribute boldly to a changing world.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Purpose of the Curriculum Guide .....	4
Registration Information .....	4
Student Schedule .....	5
Innovations Distribution .....	5
Daily Schedule .....	6
After-School Activities .....	7

## 2023-2024 COURSE DESCRIPTIONS AND CREDITS BY DEPARTMENT

Arts   6th Grade .....	8
Arts   7th Grade .....	8
Arts   8th Grade .....	10
Computational Thinking .....	11
English .....	11
Entrepreneurship & Design .....	12
Financial Literacy .....	12
Health .....	12
History .....	13
Mathematics .....	14
Physical Education .....	15
Rhetoric .....	16
Science .....	16
Study Skills .....	17
World Language .....	18

---

Appendix A: Advisory .....	19
Appendix B: Conferences .....	20
Appendix C: Math Course   Chart .....	21

## Purpose of the Curriculum Guide

Our Middle School Curriculum Guide is designed to help SAAS parents and students understand the curricular offerings in the middle school.

Our hope is that our curriculum engages kids through the application of skills, habits of mind, and habits of action in the pursuit of solving real-world problems. These applications paired with rich opportunities for exposure to arts, athletics, technology, trips, and participation as a member of a community are vital in serving our kids and our mission. Our philosophy aims to do four primary things: Conduct learning in a culture of performance; educate our students with a timeless and contemporary curriculum; build strong and trusting relationships; and facilitate character development.

## Registration

Students register online in the spring with the help of the Office of the Registrar and Middle School Division Team. Math and World Language placements are made in consultation with the Math and World Language faculty and are finalized in the spring.

Incoming 6th graders will get to decide if they would like to take year-long Instrumental along with PE or choose the arts rotation which is one trimester each of Music Theater, Dance, and Visual.

7th & 8th graders will select from a range of choices in the arts and are placed in art and PE classes based on their preference and availability while taking into consideration the level and complexity of the schedule.

## Schedule/Course Changes

Once the schedule has been made, math placements are secured and their World Language has been selected (7th and 8th grade only), it can be extremely difficult to change a student's schedule during the year. Please take careful consideration when choosing your World language preference and your arts sequence.

## Grading Policy

Letter grades are based on a grading scale that includes plus (+) and minus (-) grades. That scale is: A(4.0), A-(3.7), B+(3.3), B(3.0), B-(2.7), C+(2.3), C(2.0), C-(1.7), D+(1.3), D(1.0), D-(0.7), F(0).

Pass grades are not figured into the grade point average. High Honor Roll is a GPA of 3.75 and above. Honor Roll is a GPA of 3.45 to 3.74.

## Washington State History Requirement

This course is completed in the 7th grade year at Seattle Academy and usually completed in the 7th or 8th grades at other institutions.

## After School Study Hall

We offer a no-cost, supervised after-school study hall program that provides a quiet study environment. Students are expected to work quietly. Computer access will be available for those students who need it and at the discretion of the supervisor. After School Study Hall 3:00 PM - 5:30 PM.

After Activities Study Hall 4:00 PM - 5:30 PM (starts when the sport or activity ends on a given day).

- **Registration:** We ask that parents and guardians register their students for any day the student will regularly attend. You can register your student by going to our Seattle Academy Website, clicking on Student Life, Clubs, Middle School Club Guide, After School Study Hall.
- **Drop-in Sign Up:** If a student needs to attend study hall as a “drop-in” for a single day, you can indicate this on the Student Logistics Request on the Veracross families portal
- **Attendance Updates:** For registered students, you can update a student's expected attendance on the Veracross families portal.

## Attendance

To report your child absent or late, please log in to the parent portal in Veracross and click update attendance. You can also email [msattendance@seattleacademy.org](mailto:msattendance@seattleacademy.org) or call the main school line at 206-323-6600. You can refer to our Student/Parent Handbook located on the Seattle Academy website for more information.

## Student Schedule

Seattle Academy's academic year is divided into three trimesters. Students will take five year-long core academic courses (English, History, Math, Science, World Language/Study Skills, one of the Innovations Distribution Requirements each trimester and then two elective courses (arts and PE) each trimester. Below is an example of a 6th grade schedule.

	ODD	EVEN
8:15 – 9:25	History 6	English 6
9:25 – 9:40	Transition	
9:40 – 10:10	Community Time	
10:10 – 10:25	Transition	
10:25 – 11:35	Science 6	Latin 6
11:35 – 12:25	Lunch	
12:25 – 1:35	PE 6	Innovations 6
1:35 – 1:50	Transition	
1:50 – 3:00	Math 6	Music Theater 6

## INNOVATIONS DISTRIBUTION

This table illustrates the new course areas that have become part of our Innovations Distribution. Students are placed in these courses and do not need to register for them. They will take one course per trimester.

Grade	Trimester	Trimester	Trimester
6th	Health	Innovations	Computational Thinking
7th	Health	Innovations	Rhetoric
8th	Health	Financial Literacy	Computational Thinking

## Daily Schedule

The main school buildings open at 7:30 AM. For the 2022-2023 School: classes begin at 8:15 AM and end at 3:00 PM.

The daily schedule is a "block" schedule. \*Below is an example of our block schedule for 2022-2023. Courses are assigned to time "blocks" (class periods = time blocks: 1-8). Blocks are 75 minutes long and are on an even/odd rotation. When a day is missed, the day students return will continue the sequence.

Sample Schedule 2022-2023

Day /Time	Monday Odd	Tuesday Even	Wednesday Odd	Thursday Even	Friday Odd
8:15 - 9:30	Block 1	Block 2	Block 1	Block 2	Block 1
9:30- 10:15	Community Time	Community Time	Community Time	Community Time	Community Time
10:15 - 11:30	Block 3	Block 4	Block 3	Block 4	Block 3
11:30 - 12:20	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
12:20 - 1:35	Block 5	Block 6	Block 5	Block 6	Block 5
1:35 - 1:45	Transition	Transition	Transition	Transition	Transition
1:45- 3:00	Block 7	Block 8	Block 7	Block 8	Block 7

## CALENDAR OF AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Below is a listing of activities that are offered after school. **It is important for students to note that the schedules for the after-school activities in the chart below overlap and conflict with each other, so students need to choose one activity per season.** Questions about individual options or conflicts should be directed to the Athletic Director.

### Participation and Excellence

All programs represent the school's philosophy of Participation and Excellence. Sports teams have turn-outs for placement to ensure that all students have access to programs and can participate at their appropriate level. For example, sports teams have CYO, Red, Black, Grey, and additional teams when needed.

FALL	WINTER	SPRING
Soccer	Basketball	Tennis
Girls' Volleyball	<i>After-School Clubs (TBD):</i>	Golf
Cross Country	Bouldering, Open Studio,	Lacrosse
<i>After-School Clubs (TBD):</i>	Robotics	Ultimate
Adventure, Bouldering,		Track and Field
Open Studio, Robotics		<i>After-School Clubs (TBD):</i>
		Adventure, Open Studio,
		Robotics

# 2023-2024 COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

## Arts

Seattle Academy Middle School has a broad selection of arts course offerings. We have outlined the arts courses by grade. All arts courses listed are one trimester except for Band which is a yearlong course.

### 6th Grade Arts Curriculum

The 6th Grade arts curriculum is a unique introduction to the full array of arts offerings at SAAS. Students will take courses in Dance, Visual Arts, Theater and Music throughout the year. Students have the opportunity to take Band as a yearlong class, and if a student chooses the yearlong Band class, they must then choose between taking the other arts classes or taking PE (instead of other arts classes).

#### Dance 6

Dance 6 is a trimester course and designed as a general introduction into the world of concert dance. During the trimester, students explore basic concepts and principles of dance such as isolation and rotation of body parts, dancing in canon, etc. In addition, students work to develop a basic vocabulary of connective steps which will be performed in a variety of patterns. The class culminates in a tightly choreographed production number which will be performed in front of an audience at the end of the trimester. During this course performance skills are taught in addition to techniques for memorizing choreography.

#### Visual 6

Visual 6 is a one-trimester class where we focus on building a visual language and developing a sense of joy in the process of making and exploring personal voice. Students will become familiar with different mediums and a range of materials as we introduce the Elements and

Principles of Design. They work on reinforcing their motor skills and hand-eye coordination by drawing objects from life. We prepare them to be members of the studio and set up practices for maintaining the studio, supplies, and space.

#### Music/Theater 6

This is a one-trimester course designed to familiarize students with elements of both music and drama. Students will learn several songs in the course of the trimester in a wide variety of styles including contemporary choral, pop and Broadway. Drama skills will be addressed and developed through creative dramatics, improvisation and theater games. These theater skills will then be applied to short written scenes. The trimester culminates in a musical performance at the end-of-tri concert.

#### Band 6

6th Grade Band is a yearlong class for either beginners or those with experience. Students either continue or start on saxophone, trumpet, trombone, clarinet (later adding saxophone), flute (later adding saxophone), percussion or bass. There are two concerts during the year, as well as end-of-tri performances and opportunities to play in the Drum Line. Students work with professional specialists weekly throughout the year in pull-out sessions in addition to the ensemble class time.

### 7th Grade Arts Curriculum

All 7th grade students select three single-trimester courses from options in Dance, Visual Arts, Theater and Music. Students are able to select from options in each category.

#### Dance 7

This course is a beginning-level dance class that culminates with a final dance performance at the end of the trimester. Students will learn to identify and talk about a variety of dance

styles and develop the ability to learn and perform movement sequences with musicality and technical proficiency. Students will also be asked to explore and demonstrate four main elements of dance: body, space, time and relationship. Our work will highlight community and collaboration, physical education, social and emotional learning, cognitive engagement, and joyful movement.

### **Visual 7**

Visual 7 is a one-trimester class where we continue to build on the skills gained in Visual 6. Students will begin to think more about personal voice and reflecting the world around them. Students will explore both 2-D and 3-D projects with a range of materials as we continue to focus on the Elements and Principles of Design.

### **Middle School Musical**

*Open to 7th & 8th graders*

Students will rehearse and perform a workshop production of selected songs, dance numbers and scenes from a major musical. The cast is split into smaller ensembles which will focus on different numbers. The full company performs at least one large musical number together. Some principal roles are double cast, which allows more students to experience larger roles. Our workshop production uses projections to communicate time and place, neutral costumes to allow for flexible casting, and narration to tell the story and tie numbers together. Focus in rehearsal and performance is on developing the dance, vocal, acting and ensemble skills required to tell a truthful and engaging story in the musical theater genre. Attendance is required the week before Mid-Winter Break and Production Week, which includes after-school technical rehearsals and performances.

### **Production 7**

This is a one-trimester course in which students will rehearse and perform a production of a one-act play. This play will be selected for the group of actors enrolled in the class. Near the end of the trimester, there will be two public performances of the play. In the course of production, students will learn and apply

performance skills, such as vocal projection, memorization and physical characterization. Special emphasis is placed on effective communication and storytelling.

### **Improvisation 7**

Through fun theater games and exercises, students will explore the building blocks of improvisation and sharpen their improvisational skills. Students will practice their ability to play “in the moment,” make and accept offers and will work together to create characters in compelling situations.

### **Tech Theater 7**

Middle School Technical Theater class combines lecture, group discussion and hands-on learning to expose students to opportunities in the diverse fields of entertainment design and technology. Major points of focus include theatre and workshop safety, technical personnel and their roles, theatrical design and construction techniques, theatre control systems and practical aspects of production.

### **Vocal Ensemble 7**

This class is about creating music with a group of singers. Students will learn several songs in a range of styles from concert choral music to pop and Broadway. Special emphasis is placed on blend, phrasing and harmony to create a satisfying musical experience for the singers and the audience. This is a one-trimester class, culminating in a concert at the end of the term. This group may also perform at other school functions such as Open House and end-of-tri.

### **Band 7**

7th Grade Band is a yearlong class for those with experience or those willing to take private lessons as they catch up. There are two concerts during the year as well as end-of-tri performances and opportunities to play in Drum Line. Students work with professional specialists weekly throughout the year in pull-out sessions, in addition to the ensemble class time.

## 8th Grade Arts Curriculum

All 8th grade students have the opportunity to take a trimester of Visual Arts, Music and a Theater option. Students are able to select from options in each category.

### Visual 8

Visual 8 is a one-trimester introduction to digital mediums where we focus on building an understanding of visual language with a focus on developing 21st century skills. Building on the student's knowledge of the Principles and Elements of Art, this class centers on digital art production including digital still-image making and video and animation production. Students have a great deal of freedom in exploring several media-making applications and focusing on what captures their individual interest. More than just learning how to use these tools, the Visual 8 curriculum also emphasizes how to adapt to the ever-changing world of technology as critical thinkers and creative problem solvers.

### Middle School Musical

*Open to 7th & 8th graders*

Students will rehearse and perform a workshop production of selected songs, dance numbers, and scenes from a major musical. The cast is split into smaller ensembles which will focus on different numbers. The full company performs at least one large musical number together. Some principal roles are double cast, which allows more students to experience larger roles. Our workshop production uses projections to communicate time and place, neutral costumes to allow for flexible casting, and narration to tell the story and tie numbers together. Focus in rehearsal and performance is on developing the dance, vocal, acting and ensemble skills required to tell a truthful and engaging story in the musical theater genre. Attendance is required the week before Mid-Winter Break and Production Week, which includes after-school technical rehearsals and performances.

### Production 8: Comedy

In this one-trimester course, students will rehearse and perform a short comedy. Working together as an ensemble, students will explore how to bring a comic text to life with their bodies, voices and imaginations. The class culminates with two public performances at the end of the trimester.

### Improvisation 8

This course explores the building blocks of improvisation through improvisational games and short form improvisations. Students will learn key improvisational skills like working from impulse, building each other up, making and accepting offers, building stories together and looking for ways to raise the stakes. Students will also learn strategies for what to do when you are blocked or stalled on stage.

### Tech Theater 8

Middle School Technical Theater class combines lecture, group discussion, and hands-on learning to expose students to opportunities in the diverse fields of entertainment design and technology. Major points of focus include theater and workshop safety, technical personnel and their roles, theatrical design and construction techniques, theatre control systems and practical aspects of production.

### Vocal Ensemble 8

This class is about creating music with a group of singers. Students will learn several songs in a range of styles from concert choral music to pop and Broadway. Special emphasis is placed on blend, phrasing and harmony to create a satisfying musical experience for the singers and the audience. This is a one-trimester class, culminating in a concert at the end of the term. This group may also perform at other school functions like the 8th grade Moving Up ceremony.

### Music Production 8

The one trimester Music Production class helps students work together to write, record and compose original music. Class takes place in a recording studio setting where students will use digital audio workstations and outboard

recording equipment to produce and record their songs. Curriculum covers basic audio engineering, introduction to music theory and song composition.

### **Band 8**

8th Grade Band is a yearlong class for those with experience or those willing to take private lessons as they catch up. There are two concerts during the year as well as end-of-tri performances, 8th Grade Moving Up and opportunities to play in Drum Line. Students work with professional specialists weekly throughout the year in pull-out sessions in addition to the ensemble class time.

## **Computational Thinking**

### **Computational Thinking 6**

*One trimester*

#### **6th grade**

Computational Thinking involves solving problems by identifying possible solutions and selecting elegant, effective and efficient strategies to implement them. Students will learn the core concepts of algorithms through block-based programming. They will learn how to break down large problems and process requirements through a project based curriculum. They will also use general principles of software development to solve problems and develop their own projects including a playable game.

### **Computational Thinking 8**

*One trimester*

Computational Thinking is a trimester-long project-based course in which students learn to think like computer scientists, learn the fundamentals of computer programming and code a portfolio of software using Python. As well as gaining practical programming skills, students also gain social-emotional skills that software developers use in the professional world such as persistence, patience, planning and collaboration. Students leave this class with a deeper understanding of how the applications they use daily work, as well as the expansiveness of technology and how it impacts each and every field, from science to finance to entertainment.

## **English**

The Middle School English curriculum asks students to explore essential questions we believe all students should consider to prepare for college and life. Students examine these questions through reading, writing and discussing a broad range of texts, including: fiction, non-fiction, poetry, plays, graphic novels, short stories, science fiction and fantasy. The Middle School English program focuses on teaching students to hone their ability to develop strong claims based on strong evidence. By giving students complex questions and diverse texts, we consistently ask students to think critically and apply their skills in new contexts. Students will learn to be active readers by annotating passages that help answer the essential questions as they read. Students will also engage in daily seminars and writing activities to build their understanding of the text and cultivate their ability to listen and respond to others' ideas. Middle School English emphasizes collaborative learning, recognizing that all student voices are valuable to our individual and shared understanding of the texts and our world.

### **English 6**

*Yearlong*

English 6 starts with the individual sense of self and then explores how individuals shape society. The year starts by asking students to consider what keeps people from being themselves before looking at how individuals, communities and society as a whole decide right from wrong. Lastly, students are asked to examine leadership and explore how people fight for freedom through both non-fiction and fictional texts. Students will learn the annotation system used throughout the middle school to help students build and demonstrate their understanding of the text. English 6 focuses heavily on persuasive writing, developing students' ability to write claims, select strong evidence for their claims and explain evidence clearly. Students will also practice these skills in seminars as well as develop the ability to create their own discussion questions.

## English 7

### *Yearlong*

English 7 builds on the skills and questions of English 6, asking students to think more broadly about what makes a just and successful community. Students start by considering how we know where we belong and then exploring the nature of power and justice. These themes are explored congruently with History 7 which covers American history. Students will continue to develop their independence in persuasive writing, working on more complex sentence structures and analysis of their evidence. Students will also build an awareness of literary devices as part of a poetry unit and have the opportunity to analyze and leverage these tools in their own writing.

## English 8

### *Yearlong*

As students prepare for high school, English 8 asks students to revisit many of our existing themes with increasingly complex texts and depth to envision how they want to contribute to a new community. We begin by asking what we owe each other, exploring the concept of the social contract such as unwritten rules that govern society. Students consider why societies have rules, which rules should be followed and the ways that rules affect our daily lives. Building on this question, we return to right and wrong; considering the ethics of various decisions from individual interactions to large scale social movements. English 8 writing focuses on refining the style of their persuasive writing, giving students more tools to engage the reader and convey more nuanced claims and analysis. In the Spring, students research and write their own non-fiction article on a topic of their choice to practice making expertise accessible and experimenting with more freedoms in structure, tone and style.

## Entrepreneurship & Design

### **Innovations 6**

#### *One trimester*

Students will engage in a trimester-long project

that will explore the design thinking process through hands-on activities. This will include creating viable solutions to a problem that exists within their immediate community. They will be guided through the steps of problem identification and solution creation and the class will culminate in a presentation of their project and reflection of their learning about human-centered design.

### **Innovations 7**

#### *One trimester*

Students are challenged to observe problems in the world and innovate possible solutions through an iterative process revolving around human empathy. They will ask and seek to answer the essential questions; "Using the design thinking process, how can I design a solution for a particular user that might have different needs and preferences other than myself?" Inherent in the design thinking process are practicing skills of flexibility, problem solving and frustration tolerance. Success in this process will require giving and receiving feedback on projects and making more revisions than you think you need. Design thinking is a hands-on process that is both fun and challenging.

## Financial Literacy

### **Financial Literacy 8**

#### *One trimester*

Students learn the knowledge, skills and habits needed to be a financially responsible citizen as they become more independent. Over the course of the trimester, students will reflect upon their own value systems and discover how those values might impact their financial decisions. They will gain a foundational understanding of budgeting, savings, income and cost of living through discussions, activities and projects.

## Health

### **Health 6**

#### *One trimester*

Students work together to explore topics that contribute to physical, emotional and mental health. Our sixth grade curriculum

explores the Digestive System Structure and Function, Nutrition, Exercise, Body Image, Healthy Relationships, Peer Pressure, Conflict Management, Social Media Safety and Sex Ed (Puberty, Gender Identity & Sexual Orientation, Reproduction, Sexual Health). Material is presented using a variety of means, including: guided discussion, books, videos, written reflection, role playing, research projects, building models, guest speakers and case studies.

## **Health 7**

### *One trimester*

7th grade health continues the exploration of topics that contribute to physical, emotional, and mental well being for our Middle School students. The following topics are covered in 7th grade Health: Immune System Structure and Function, Disease Prevention, Cardiovascular System Structure and Function, CPR/AED Training, Healthy Relationships, Social Media Safety, Sex Ed (Puberty, Reproductive System Structure and Function, Sexual Orientation & Gender Identity, Reproduction, Pregnancy, Contraception, STIs, Consent). Material is presented using a variety of means, including: guided discussion, books, videos, written reflection, role playing, research projects, building models, guest speakers and case studies.

## **Health 8**

### *One trimester*

8th grade health dives deeper into topics from previous years to provide content that will encourage students to develop healthy behaviors and habits that will serve them well throughout life. The following topics are covered in 8th grade Health: Nervous System Structure and Function, Adolescent Brain Development, Substance Use, Mental Health, Healthy Relationships, Comprehensive Sexuality Education (Reproductive System Structure and Function, Sexual Orientation & Gender Identity, Reproduction, Pregnancy, Contraception, STIs, Consent). Material is presented using a variety of means, including: guided discussion, readings, videos, written reflection, role playing, research

projects, building models, guest speakers and access to resources.

## **History**

### **History 6**

#### *Yearlong*

History 6 is a course on Pacific Northwest social studies, civics and civic engagement. In this course, students learn about the past and present of their home community, Washington State and its surroundings. The course includes components of history, civics and contemporary issues. Students will learn content such as local civics and the expansion of democracy over time, the tribal nations who have lived in what we now call Washington since time immemorial, and the contributions of the many groups of people who have arrived in WA since the 19th century. They will engage critically with topics of justice and injustice in our state's past and present. In this course, students will encounter and analyze a variety of perspectives and worldviews like and unlike their own and feel empowered to take meaningful and informed action in their worlds. Along the way they will explicitly learn foundational literacy and historical thinking skills such as strategies for making meaning from nonfiction texts and for thinking, writing and speaking using evidence and reasoning.

### **History 7**

#### *Yearlong*

7th grade U.S. History will focus on answering essential questions such as, "How do the sources you choose shape the story you tell?" and "who is the "we" in we the people?" These questions guide us on our exploration of the differing perspectives that have shaped the history of the United States. The course material covers early colonial American life, U.S. Constitution and elections and the Civil War through the Civil Rights era in American history. The course also includes Pacific Northwest and Washington state history. Importance will be placed on reading and discussing primary source documents to develop a complete understanding

of events. In addition, the class will reinforce key skills of argumentative writing, close reading, annotations, culture of performance and seminar engagement skills. This course fulfills the WA State History requirement.

### **History 8: Global Systems**

#### *Yearlong*

8th Grade History focuses on Global Systems and uses geography and current events to study the basic systems that exist in our world. Students investigate the culture and religions that guide eastern civilizations, and study the concept of diplomacy as it relates to various nations. The fall concludes with a UN summit on significant emerging issues. During the winter trimester, the focus shifts to African civilizations and concepts. In addition to the trimester-long human rights project, students demonstrate the culture of performance by going in-depth in their study of capitalism by playing the budget game. The spring trimester begins the study of European geography with communism, egalitarianism and nationalism and students learn firsthand through playing the nation-state game. Students are asked to play roles in the first-person on a regular basis so as to better understand the motivations of people around the world.

## **Mathematics**

### **Math 6**

#### *Yearlong*

Math 6 focuses on developing a deeper understanding around the manipulation of numbers in various applications. Students work to strengthen their number sense, mathematical reasoning, justification and problem-solving skills. Students also practice group work and collaboration alongside note-taking and autonomy in the math classroom. Throughout the year, we cover content that includes topics ranging from fractions, percents and decimals to ratio, proportions and operations and integers. Students get exposure to variables, expressions, and equations to prepare them for Pre-algebra in their next year of math.

### **Pre-Algebra 6**

#### *Yearlong*

Students placed in this course demonstrate strong problem-solving skills, number sense and mathematical reasoning when entering 6th grade. In this course, students apply their understanding of numbers to more abstract concepts with variables. The goal of Pre-Algebra is for students to develop a foundational fluency with variable expressions, equations, inequalities and functions. Alongside these mathematical skills, we work to develop collaboration, note-taking, autonomy and resilience in middle school math.

### **Pre-Algebra Concepts**

#### *Yearlong*

Pre-Algebra Concepts in 7th grade focuses on developing conceptual understanding of new topics that lay the groundwork for Algebra while supporting and strengthening students' number sense, operation fluency and the perseverance in solving multi-step problems. Within this class, students will have the opportunity to learn new concepts like solving equations and inequalities, graphing on the coordinate plane, and analyzing linear functions. While exploring these new concepts students are also supported to strengthen foundational understanding of ratios, number manipulation, fractions, integers and order of operations. The goal of Pre-Algebra Concepts is to empower each student to grow as a mathematician, increase confidence, cognitively engage with the content, make connections and build on the math that they have already mastered.

### **Pre-Algebra 7**

#### *Yearlong*

Students placed in this course demonstrate strong problem-solving skills, number sense, and mathematical reasoning when entering 7th grade. In this course, students apply their understanding of numbers to more abstract concepts with variables. The goal of Pre-Algebra is for students to develop a foundational fluency with variable expressions, equations, inequalities

and functions. Alongside these mathematical skills, we work to develop collaboration, note-taking, autonomy and resilience in middle school math.

## **Geometry**

### *Yearlong*

Geometry allows students to apply their knowledge of Pre-Algebra topics to visual representations of two and three dimensional figures. Students classify and describe shapes in terms of congruence, similarity and transformations as they explore angles, lines, triangles, quadrilaterals, circles and solids. Throughout the course, students will develop their reasoning, measurement and construction skills, and they will use coordinate geometry to further their understanding of linear functions in preparation for Algebra.

## **Algebra Concepts 8**

### *Yearlong*

Algebra Concepts in 8th grade focuses on developing conceptual understanding of new topics that are essential components of the Algebra 1 curriculum, while supporting and strengthening students' number sense, operation fluency and the perseverance in solving multi-step problems. Within this class, students will have the opportunity to learn new concepts like quadratic functions, exponents and linear systems. While exploring these new concepts, students are also supported to strengthen foundational understanding of integers, fractions, expressions and equations. The goal of Algebra Concepts is to empower each student to grow as a mathematician, increase confidence, cognitively engage with the content, make connections and build on the math that they have already mastered.

## **Algebra 1**

### *Yearlong*

Algebra 1 explores solving linear equations and inequalities, exploring their patterns as functions and moving between their different representative forms. Students extend their understanding of manipulating expressions,

solving equations, and graphing functions to polynomials and quadratic equations. Students use a variety of technologies to strengthen conceptual understanding. The goal of this course is to develop their ability to abstract patterns, analyze data and understand multiple representations.

## **Accelerated Algebra 1**

### *Yearlong*

Accelerated Algebra 1 is a course designed for students who are ready for more rigor and a faster pace. In addition to covering the same topics as Algebra 1, the Accelerated Algebra 1 course explores some additional topics related to absolute value equations, functions, radicals and exponents, quadratic functions and systems. In this course, students will gain a deep understanding of linear and quadratic equations and functions. *Open to students who have passed the Accelerated Algebra 1 readiness assessment and have received teacher approval.*

## **Math Lab**

### *Yearlong*

Math Lab is designed for students who need more support in the form of a personalized curriculum for mathematics. Each class has no more than five students and the curriculum is uniquely designed to meet the needs of each student. Math Lab teachers tailor content from the Math 6, Pre-Algebra 7 and Algebra 1 content to extract the essential topics and explore them in depth with a variety of visuals, manipulatives and practice. The goal of the class is for each student to progress in their understanding of foundational math concepts and re-enter the full math classes when ready.

## **Physical Education**

### **Physical Education 6-8**

#### *Yearlong*

Middle School Physical Education (PE) provides all students with the opportunity to develop and maintain good levels of fitness through a variety of games and other traditional and non-

traditional PE activities. All students are expected to participate to the best of their abilities and to encourage and support the participation of others. Students will work towards competence in a wide variety of body movement and physical skills, and will gain a working understanding of the rules and regulations for each activity in the curriculum, such as Ultimate, Krell ball, 4-square, handball and target games. Within major units, alternative activities are interspersed to provide a break from the traditional games.

Through experience, individual and group feedback and occasional reflection - students will learn how to play in groups. Students will play in ways that are inclusive and recognizes that everyone has a unique role to play and contributions to make. Collaboration is encouraged just as much as competition. Rules, boundaries and expectations are in place to help keep everyone safe and create a level playing field. Self-awareness and self-control are central aspects to helping students learn how to make a positive contribution to the group experience. Conflicts are inevitable in play and we always work to help students resolve them together and in a way that benefits everyone involved, taking responsibility for their own words and actions as well as hearing other points of view.

Students will also engage in a wide variety of fitness activities each week including running and other cardiovascular exercises, muscular strength and endurance building exercises, stretching, balance and agility activities.

## Rhetoric

### Rhetoric 7

*One trimester*

Rhetoric is a single trimester course that focuses on the development of communication, research and persuasion skills in order for students to become effective speakers and writers. Students will be introduced to the concept of rhetoric through the use of rhetorical appeals. They will learn to identify and analyze the use of these

appeals in both writing and oratory and then apply them to their own speeches. Over the course of the trimester, students will practice a variety of speech styles, including storytelling, persuasive and expository. An additional focus will be placed on teaching students the importance and value of both active listening and formulating and defending a position.

## Science

### Science 6

*Yearlong*

In Science 6, we take an interdisciplinary, inquiry-driven approach to examine larger questions about the social and ethical implications of what we learn. In examining larger questions about the natural world, students practice role-playing while investigating a variety of topics through lab activities, media analysis, engineering design processes, seminar-style discussions, analytical writing, debates, civic action and field-trip aligned activities. Students leave 6th grade science understanding what it means to be a steward to their environment. In each unit, students address an anchoring event with essential questions. With a year-long curriculum that gives them a foundation in ecology, chemistry, policy and current local environmental issues, 6th graders end their year with the young reader's edition of *The Omnivore's Dilemma* and discussing the ethical implications of the food we eat. All of their practice in role-play, research, data collection and discussion comes to a close with a two-day debate that is judged by a panel of guest experts.

### Science 7

*Yearlong*

During seventh grade, students will focus on Physical, Earth and Space Sciences while incorporating Design Engineering throughout the year. The year begins with an exploration of force and motion with a heavy focus on design engineering followed by units on both Sound

and Light. We then explore the laws of physics through the lens of Space Sciences, studying seasons, the moon, and the classification of objects in the solar system. Our year ends with a look at forces within Earth and how they shape the land and affect life. We learn about the geologic time scale, plate tectonics, and explore our local geology as it relates to earthquakes and volcanoes. These various branches of science are investigated through hands-on discovery, experimentation, reading, writing, discussion, research and presentations. Our focus is on building students' skills in modeling, investigation and analysis, evidence-based explanation, problem-solving and collaboration.

## Science 8

### *Yearlong*

In Science 8, students explore life from the Microscopic to the complexities of the Human Immune System. The course focuses on the life sciences in which we will examine life on the cellular level, Mendel's genetics, evolution and human organ systems. Students will define life and study its complexities while incorporating inquiry and project-based learning. Students will participate in hands-on labs, collaborative learning, performance based assessments and self guided research. In each unit, students address an anchoring event with essential questions. With a year-long curriculum that gives them a foundation in biological science, 8th graders end their year with a student directed investigation into a topic and a school wide symposium in which students exchange their results and ideas to the community.

## Study Skills

### Study Skills 6-8

Students work on individually identified goals based on their own specific learning profile. The small group setting allows students to work collaboratively with peers and receive individual support from their teacher. Initial emphasis is on developing habits for tracking assignments, time management, willingness

to ask for and accept help and metacognition. Once students have established regular habits around turning assignments in on time, higher order study skills are introduced. Rather than a separate study skills curriculum (i.e., stand alone unit on note taking or mnemonic memory strategies), students are learning to apply these skills to their current coursework from their content area classes. Study Skills is a small group, fee-based, elective class. To enroll as a new student in this class, parents meet with the Director of Learning Support to determine if placement is desired. Once a supplemental contract for Study Skills has been signed, a student is scheduled into a Study Skills class. Students receive support for executive functioning as well as additional content support. As with all electives, students receive an elective credit and a grade for this class and students can take it for multiple trimesters. In Middle School, students can take Study Skills in place of World Language, PE or Art.

### Who is Study Skills for?

Students who typically enroll in a Study Skills class are ones who benefit from high frequency, individualized support for a variety of reasons:

- Students who need help with organization and time management
- Students who need help with managing stress
- Students with specific learning differences who need help in learning how to utilize their accommodations and developing individualized learning strategies to work around their specific areas of challenge
- Students who need help with making connections in the curriculum or need more guided practice in doing reading, writing, or math assignments.
- Students who are waiting for developmental maturity to catch up and need help managing expectations of a fast paced and demanding academic environment.

Please contact **Jess Claesson**, Director of Learning Support, if you have questions or are

interested in learning more about the program.

**World Language**

**Foundations of World Languages: Grade 6**  
*Yearlong*

Language study in the 6th grade combines content knowledge with metacognitive practice and prepares students for continuing studies in both English language arts and modern language. The 6th grade Foundations class has three goals: to introduce the foundations of grammar and language study, to strengthen students' understanding of and facility with English and to foster a love of words and their meanings. By the end of the Foundations class, students have developed linguistic skills that will enhance both their modern language and their English studies.

**Modern Languages: Grades 7 and 8**  
*Yearlong*

Beginning in 7th grade, students have the opportunity to study Mandarin Chinese, Spanish, or French. The 2023-2024 school year will be the first year that students will be able to make this choice in 7th grade. During the 2023-2024 school year, both 7th and 8th grade students will begin their study of a modern language. The language that students choose will remain their language of study until the completion of middle school. In upper school, students will have the opportunity to choose a new language. Students continuing their language studies in upper school will be placed according to their proficiency level.

**World Languages in the Middle School:**

**2023-2024 School Year**

6th grade: Foundations of World Languages  
7th grade: Level 1A French, Mandarin Chinese, or Spanish  
8th grade: Level 1 French, Mandarin Chinese, or Spanish

**2024-2025 School Year**

6th grade: Foundations of Languages  
7th grade: Level 1A French, Mandarin Chinese, or Spanish  
8th grade: Level 1B French, Mandarin Chinese, or Spanish

## ADVISORY

In the Middle School, students are assigned a new advisory group and faculty advisor each year of their Middle School experience. Advisors work closely with grade-level teachers, coordinators, counselors and administrators, to act as a clear conduit of information and support between school and home.

In addition to going through orientation and opening days as a group, advisory meets two to three times a week. Monday morning community gathering is either an all Middle School meeting or an advisory lesson. During advisory lessons, faculty advisors lead curriculum for social-emotional learning and equity and inclusion. Curriculum is chosen and tailored to each grade-level appropriate experience and incorporates topical school community conversations and real world events. Through the CASEL Social Emotional Learning framework, students develop competencies in Social Awareness, Self Management, Responsible Decision Making, Relationship Skills, and Social Awareness.

Some advisory time is used informally to connect and check-in but also to clean out binders, stay up-to-date on work and remain organized. Activities include announcements, sharing highs and lows from the week, writing in gratitude journals and playing games together. Advisors also use this time to individually check in with students and help facilitate any support plans that are needed.

Our goals for Advisory are to create an opportunity for students to feel connected to a small group (10-12 same-grade students) of peers within the larger school community and to provide a safe space for students to reflect and share. Each faculty advisor works to build a unique advisory culture so that their group feels a sense of belonging to something special.

### For students, faculty advisors:

- Act as a student advocate
- Help students navigate their own experiences
- Foster student social-emotional growth
- Offer organization strategies and support
- Strategize solutions for students to resolve differences with teachers and peers
- Connect students with the resources they need to be successful
- Serve as the first line of communication; answer questions
- Connect families with resources within the school
- Coordinate academic and support plans
- Provide insight into your student's day-to-day experience at school including understanding each student's overall academic and social-emotional well-being.

## APPENDIX B: PARENT/GUARDIAN TEACHER CONFERENCES

### PARENT/GUARDIAN TEACHER CONFERENCES

We believe that Middle School is a time for students to address their own strengths and areas for growth at school and to begin to learn to self-advocate. Therefore, students attend parent-teacher conferences. Advisors work with students to properly prepare them for conferences. This is a great time for both teachers and parents to share information with and about their students and for students to speak to their experiences.

- Parent and Guardian conferences are required for all 6-8th grade students.
- Middle School conferences are 20 minutes in duration and will take place in person in the fall trimester. Middle School conference sign ups will take place via Veracross in the parent portal.
- Advisors, students and family members and guardians attend the conference. Conferences in all middle school grades may also include one other faculty member or administrator who teaches or knows the student.
  - In 6th grade, parent and guardians meet with the advisor for the first 10 minutes. The 6th grade student is invited to participate in the second half of their conference.
  - In 7th grade, students are present for the entire conference and help facilitate.
  - By 8th grade, our goal is to have students lead their own conferences.

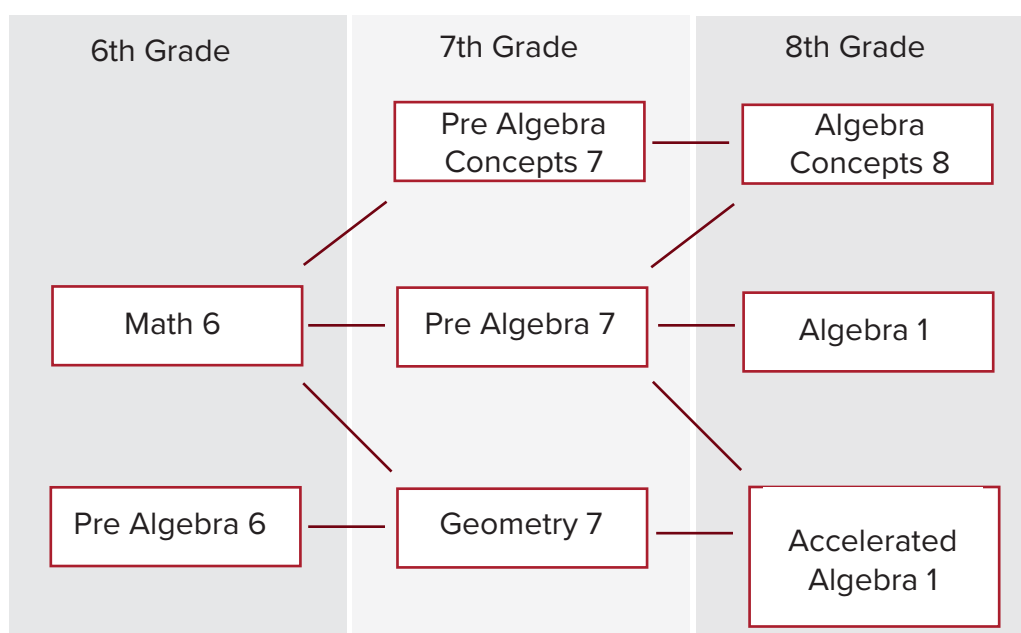
During the conference families should expect to:

- Hear directly from their student as they reflect on the fall trimester
- Gain and share perspectives and insight into their student's learning
- Develop an understanding of how skills are developing across disciplines
- Generate short and long term goals to meet their student's needs
- Review examples of student work
- Receive information about available support mechanisms

## APPENDIX C: MATH COURSE OFFERINGS: MIDDLE SCHOOL

Below is a visual representation of course sequences for math.

Our goal is to provide a math class that meets each student's needs by strengthening gaps in learning, teaching, new content and challenging student thinking while constantly assessing and re-assessing student understanding.





1201 E Union Street  
Seattle WA 98122

t (206) 323-6600