

2023-2024 MIDDLE SCHOOL

Curriculum Guide

Mission

Forest Ridge School of the Sacred Heart educates young women to think critically, embrace challenges, model resilience, confront injustices, seek equality, and lead globally in the pioneering spirit of our foundress. Our graduates change the world.

Vision

Our vision is uncompromising excellence in educating girls in the Sacred Heart tradition. In keeping with St. Madeleine Sophie Barat's vision for excellence in educating girls since 1800, Forest Ridge offers a program grounded in our rich Catholic tradition. We provide our young women the courageous leadership skills necessary to act with compassion and conviction in embracing the challenges of a diverse global society. Our graduates respond generously to the needs of their local and global communities and embrace their responsibilities to serve morally and ethically.

Core Values

Forest Ridge School of the Sacred Heart provides a diverse and rigorous college -preparatory environment that inspires young women to become confident compassionate leaders. As a member of a global network of more than 150 schools, we educate to the following Sacred Heart Goals:

- A personal and active faith in God
- A deep respect for intellectual values
- A social awareness which impels to action
- The building of community as a Christian value
- Personal growth in an atmosphere of wise freedom

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GRADE LEVEL PROMOTION REQUIREMENTS

During the middle school years, students will engage in an academically rigorous, integrated, global curriculum, rooted in the Goals and Criteria of Sacred Heart. Through intentional scaffolded learning experiences informed by the research of the Association for Middle Level Education, students grow their skills to be authentic leaders who face challenges with confidence and resilience, listen with openness, communicate clearly and authentically, and support the success of others while practicing personal well-being. During these critical adolescent years, the middle school program provides experiences and fosters critical-thinking skills needed for students to become agile thinkers who adjust to new challenges, adapt knowledge to make fresh connections, actively seek opportunities to stretch learning, negotiate differences to foster collaboration, and learn from feedback. Our innovative and rigorous curriculum supports students in becoming global citizens who seek to understand the natural and cultural complexities of problems, take responsibility for their impact on the world, advocate for justice, demonstrate personal, social, and civic responsibility, and act as stewards of the earth's resources. Forest Ridge School prepares graduates to live with integrity, think critically, embrace challenges, model resilience, confront injustice, seek equality and lead globally and the middle school program sets the critical foundation with the experiences and skills that are essential achieving these goals.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

At Forest Ridge Middle School, we pride ourselves on offering a rigorous and comprehensive academic program designed to prepare students for success at the secondary level and beyond. Students are required to carry a full course load of core academic classes, which includes the following disciplines: English, social studies, religion, math, science, and physical education.

As part of our commitment to global citizenship and cultural competency, students are also required to pursue studies in an international language for all four years of middle school, unless they are participating in Learning Support Services. Additionally, our students in the seventh and eighth grades must engage in a specialized writing course, which further hones their written communication skills. Students in the fifth and sixth grades participate in both visual and performance arts classes to foster creativity and self-expression. As students progress to the seventh and eighth grades, they have the opportunity to select from a variety of elective courses in both the Fine Arts and Technology departments, enabling them to further explore their interests and passions.

Finally, all Forest Ridge Middle School students are required to participate in one of our highly regarded Immersive courses, which take place each spring. This weeklong program is designed to challenge students in new ways, promoting collaboration, leadership, and experiential learning. At Forest Ridge School, we are committed to providing a well-rounded educational experience that prepares students for success in all aspects of their lives.

ADVISORY PROGRAM

The Forest Ridge Middle School Advisory Program supports the school community in living out the Sacred Heart Goals and Criteria. Advisory meets twice a week to provide a structured opportunity to develop social, academic, and leadership skills for students in middle school. Through a variety of activities, grade-level teams of adults empower students to create solutions to problems, to develop responsibility for their learning, to communicate openly, to serve others, and to better understand

what it means to be part of a Sacred Heart community through open discussion of our school values and goals. Advisory provides students the opportunity to learn to work and play together, to talk and listen together, and to learn to be self-directed. Advisory is one of many ways that the faculty at Forest Ridge come to know the unique and special gifts each child contributes to the class and school environment.

A student's advisor serves as her academic advisor and leads her advisory group of ten to fifteen students. The advisor helps promote a sense of community and trust among students in his or her advisory group or homeroom, members of the class, and the entire middle school. The advisor takes an active interest in the student's academic and social-emotional experience, tracking ongoing progress through the year. When appropriate, an advisor may contact parents with progress updates or concerns. The starting point for parent-student-teacher conferences in October is with the student's advisor, and parents are encouraged to get to know their daughter's advisor early in the school year.

GRADE-LEVEL TEAMS

A grade-level team, comprised of three to five teachers, works closely with each grade, 5-8. These teachers have close daily contact with the class through teaching academic classes and through homeroom, advisory, clubs, and activities. The grade-level team guides the members of the class, facilitates communication between school and home, and develops integrated learning experiences and class activities. Parent conferences in the Middle School are scheduled between a student's parents and a member of the grade-level team.

A team leader heads each grade-level team and serves as the primary contact for grade-level questions of parents and students alike. Your daughter's grade-level team leader is an excellent first source of information and guidance. Grade level team members come to know each student in the class and are available to them and their parents as caring and informed faculty members. Students and parents are encouraged to seek out a member of the grade-level team whenever a question or concern arises.

As a School of the Sacred Heart, we prioritize the importance of building a strong community among our students, faculty, and families. To support this work, in middle school, each student is seen and known by a grade-level team, comprised of passionate teachers who artfully craft a supportive and inclusive learning environment for each grade level, from fifth to eighth. These teachers work closely with students on a daily basis, teaching academic classes, leading clubs, facilitating advisory, and coordinating class activities. The grade-level team is committed to guiding students and fostering effective communication between the school and families, in order to create an integrated learning experience that meets the needs of each student. Furthermore, the team is dedicated to building a strong sense of community within the class and the school as a whole, consistent with our Sacred Heart values.

At the heart of this effort is the grade level leader, who serves as the primary point of contact for grade-level questions from parents and students alike. Your daughter's grade-level team leader is an exceptional resource for information and guidance, as they work to build a strong sense of community among their students and create a supportive learning environment for all.

SERVICE LEARNING

One of the essential goals of a Sacred Heart education is to graduate girls who are "educated to a social awareness which impels to action." This entails a significant emphasis on service learning throughout a student's experience at Forest Ridge. Service learning is precisely that: integrating teaching and learning through meaningful interactions in our community that are relational and incorporate intentional

reflection as part of the educational experience. Through these opportunities, Forest Ridge hopes to foster empathy, promote civic engagement, teach the skills of building community, and instill a willingness to step out of one's comfort zone to learn across all manner of perceived boundaries.

The overarching objective of service learning at Forest Ridge is to educate to a critical consciousness that leads students to analyze and reflect on the values of society and to act for justice. The program is thoughtfully designed to engage our students in making the world a better place. It is approachable, reasonable, and achievable. Thus, the service program and opportunities at Forest Ridge are developmentally and thematically based opportunities which vary by year. At every grade level, emphasis is placed on direct service and advocacy, social justice education, and reflection.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Our signature leadership program is built upon four fundamental pillars that serve as the bedrock of our integrated and intentionally scaffolded learning experiences. Firstly, we place great emphasis on fostering a deep understanding of personal strengths and style in our students, allowing them to recognize and cultivate their unique qualities, thereby developing a keen sense of self-awareness. Secondly, we offer numerous opportunities for collaborative problem-solving and tackling challenges, recognizing that effective teamwork and collaboration are essential components of true leadership. Thirdly, we teach our students proven strategies for effective collaboration, communication, and creativity, equipping them with the critical skills necessary for successful leadership in the 21st century. Lastly, we provide ample opportunities for our students to give and receive constructive feedback, facilitating deep reflection on their strengths and areas for growth, fostering a growth mindset that enables them to strive for continuous personal and professional development.

Students who take full advantage of the Forest Ridge Middle School leadership opportunities enter the Upper School as:

- Personal leaders who have a strong sense of their strengths and values and are able to motivate themselves to set goals and persist through challenges.
- Inclusive leaders who understand, value and appreciate differences and are able to bring the best out in others.
- Ethical leaders who look out for the good of all and understand that their actions have impact.
- Innovative leaders who believe problems have solutions and work to use their gifts and the talents of others to find solutions.
- Globally-minded leaders who understand that their actions and choices have impact beyond themselves and that the resources of our world need to be cared for and shared.

STUDENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Accountability at Forest Ridge is grounded in our Sacred Heart Goals and Criteria, particularly Goal 2, which upholds “a deep respect for intellectual values,” and Goal 5, which is focused on “personal growth in an atmosphere of wise freedom.” Guided by these Goals, our daily actions and interactions create the fabric of our community with these shared beliefs:

- How we treat each other matters – “Members of the school community model and teach respectful dialogue in support of clear, direct, open communication” (Goal 5, Criterion 3).
- Engagement is central to learning, including doing your own individual work and doing your part in group work – “Student and adult members of the school community grow in courage and

confidence as they discover new abilities, cultivate strengths, learn from mistakes, develop empathy, and exercise resilience in meeting challenges (Goal 5, Criterion 1).

- We control our choices and have personal responsibility for them – “All members of the school community endeavor to practice informed, ethical decision-making and accountability (Goal 5, Criterion 4).

Each member of our community makes a personal commitment to do their best to learn, grow, and be a community builder. Growing in personal integrity is a central component of a Forest Ridge education. Personal integrity extends to every aspect of a student’s life. We commit ourselves to focus conversations and consequences for poor choices on personal growth and learning.

FOREST RIDGE HONOR CODE

At the start of school year, each student makes a pledge to herself and the community by signing the Forest Ridge Honor Code.

As a member of the Forest Ridge community, I agree to strive in my words, actions, and choices to be a person of integrity;

- To be responsible and accountable for my choices and actions
- To own my own engagement and fully participate in my learning.
- To treat others with respect, even in moments of conflict and disagreement.
- To do my own work and positively contribute to the community and learning environment.
- To be a respectful communicator by valuing others’ perspectives, taking feedback, and seeking to understand other community members.
- To be truthful, even in difficult situations.
- To know and understand the school policies and do my best to follow them.
- To use technology appropriately as outlined in the Forest Ridge Acceptable Use Policy.
- To value and respect the school environment and possessions of others.

I am committed to growing in my personal integrity, even when it is challenging.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

At Forest Ridge, we believe every student can learn. We want to foster the development of curious and self-motivated people of integrity. We believe deep understanding of content and skills requires a process of learning. Therefore, any short-cutting of the learning process signifies a violation of academic integrity.

A student who violates the honor code in her academic work violates the trust among students and teachers that is vital to a learning environment in which we are genuine and fair with one another. She also robs herself of her own learning. When a student violates this trust, we have the responsibility to confront the behavior and provide appropriate consequences that we hope will guide her to better decisions in the future. We believe that it is through understanding and owning mistakes that trust is rebuilt.

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is offering as one’s own work the ideas, words, expressions, or thesis of another. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to:

- Using the words of others without appropriate citation this includes Generative AI

- Paraphrasing another’s work or Generative AI without appropriate citation
- Adopting, without appropriate citation, the thesis and line of reasoning from another source including Generative AI, even when the student restates these in her own words
- Using another artist’s work for inspiration without giving proper credit

CHEATING

Cheating is sharing, copying, or taking credit for the work of others. Cheating includes, but is not limited to:

- Copying the work of a peer or Generative AI
- Sharing work with a peer
- Discussing the content of a test with a student who has not yet taken the test
- Changing answers to already graded work and forging scores on work
- Not contributing fully to a group project and yet claiming credit for doing so
- Bringing unauthorized resources into a test setting
- Being dishonest about turning in work or technology issues to avoid consequences of not completing work

Academic integrity is an extremely serious matter. The burden of proof is on the student for the authenticity of her academic work. Should a student make a choice that breaks with our goal of having a deep respect for intellectual values, consequences and learning must occur. Faculty oversee all issues of academic dishonesty. They will assess the seriousness of the violation and consult with the Division Director and Assistant Head for Academics to plan a path forward.

LATE WORK

Students have two opportunities to complete a summative assessment. If a student is present or has an unexcused absence and does not submit a complete summative within four class meetings, they will receive a “No Evidence” as their first summative and are eligible for a second opportunity.

In order to be eligible for a reassessment:

- Students need to engage first with feedback.
- Teachers may require students to complete key formative work.
- In the 5th and 6th grades, students have two weeks after feedback is returned to resubmit. The date will be communicated on Veracross. Teachers will explain when an assessment is assigned if it cannot be resubmitted (ex: a letter sent to a legislator, performance, Socratic seminar, etc.), and give opportunities for feedback before the assignment is due, if possible.
- In the 7th and 8th grades, students have three school weeks to resubmit eligible assignments. Teachers will put the resubmit deadline in Veracross.
- Reassessment might not be identical to previous assessment.

If a student reassesses, the most recent grade will be entered in the gradebook.

STUDENT LEARNING ACCOMMODATIONS AND EXTENDED TIME

One of the most important things we can learn about ourselves during middle school is how we learn and the strategies that can help us be most successful in school. Sometimes a student will have completed the process of a professional learning evaluation that will recommend specific classroom and assessment accommodations. It is the policy of Forest Ridge that students who qualify for accommodations such as extended time will be offered those accommodations to the extent that we are reasonably able to do so. Specific learning accommodations for individual students will be discussed

and adapted as appropriate during individual meetings with parents, teachers, the Middle School Director of Learning Support, and school administrators.

Students who qualify for extended time may use that accommodation for their assessments. These students are responsible for scheduling their extended time with the teacher giving the assessment and may use the extended time opportunities offered during lunch, tutorial, break, or before/after school time. For the most part, students are expected to complete their extended time on the day that an assessment is given. Due to the middle school schedule, we are rarely ever able to offer continuous extended time during the school day.

HOMEWORK

Homework is given with purpose – to enhance learning and work on skills – and not simply to fill time. This formative work is designed as an essential component to meeting standard on summative work. As such, it is important that students make time and space to complete homework.

All students need to use an assignment planner, either electronic or hard copy, for recording work assigned for completion outside the classroom. Teachers work with students to help them use the assignment planner and follow the class assignment schedule. The students learn how to organize and budget their time in order to become increasingly independent in their learning.

Students will periodically be given time in class to complete homework. Homework is the student's personal responsibility. If the student is spending an excessive amount of time outside of class working on homework, she should contact her content area teacher to discuss ways she can be more efficient with her work completion.

Homework will not be assigned to students over Christmas, Mid-Winter, or Spring Breaks. However, students might need to work on long term assignments over long weekends or singular holidays.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION WAIVER

On extremely rare occasions waivers are granted from physical education requirements. These PE waivers are for students who participate in exceptionally intensive, rigorous, and competitive sports programs outside of school: gymnastics, swimming, dance, etc. In order to be considered for a PE waiver, a student must devote a minimum of twelve hours to practice and competition to her sport per week. Her coach must submit a statement verifying the weekly practice/competition schedule. Parents must request this waiver from the Director of Middle School. When a waiver is granted, it is valid for one semester. Waivers will be granted sparingly and on condition that a student is competing on a rigorous and exceptional basis.

ATTENDANCE

The student's presence in class and participation in learning experiences are vital to her learning process. She is expected to attend class and special events as they occur. Parents are asked to consider the consequences of having the student miss a class. Please consider that, when missing class, the student-centered experience of interacting with classmates and teachers is lost and makes it difficult to be actively involved in class participation. **If more than ten classes are missed in any course in any given semester, the student may not be able to earn credit in the class.** Exceptions are extended for illness, which must be confirmed by a doctor's note, serious family circumstances, and special arrangements. These exceptions are granted by the Assistant Head for Academics, in communication with the Division Director.

Assignments and/or activities not completed because of an excused absence or tardiness may be made up in the manner provided by the teacher. **A student is allowed one make up day for each day of absence.** For example, a student who is sick on Monday will have Tuesday to complete work and is expected to submit it on Wednesday. Failure to punctually complete missed work will result in receiving a “No Evidence” on the first submission and the student is eligible for one resubmit. Students should note that not all types of work can be made up (performances, special panels, guest speakers, etc.).

Students who miss three or more days will need to complete the “Ravens Rise Above Absences” document.

To be eligible to participate in after-school Forest Ridge sponsored activities (drama, athletics, dances) students must be present for at least half of the day (two or more class periods).

ABSENCES

A parent or guardian must inform the school if a student will arrive late, depart early, or miss school for the day. Parents should notify the school prior to 8:00 a.m. by emailing attendance@forestridge.org and include the reason for the absence in the notes section. Any absences not reported by a parent or guardian will be marked as unexcused.

If a student is ill, parents should email attendance@forestridge.org to report the absence and type of illness. The student should consult Canvas and email teachers regarding assignments. When the student returns to school, she is personally responsible for talking with each teacher about the work she missed, even if her class does not meet on that day. Teachers will determine the make-up options available, and a reasonable time will be provided to submit work.

If a student is absent on the day an assignment is due and the assignment was given before the absence, the student must be proactive in communicating with the teacher about how to submit work in a timely manner.

MAKE-UP TESTS AND QUIZZES

If a student is absent for a quiz or test, the student must be proactive in rescheduling the test or quiz at a time that is mutually agreed upon by the student and teacher. Make up tests and quizzes should be scheduled as soon as possible.

TARDINESS

Students are required to sign in with the School Office Coordinator in the Library if they arrive to school after the start of class (8:15am). Students who have not signed in and arrive to class without a pass will be sent back to do so.

TEXTBOOKS

Textbooks are the property of the school. Textbooks may only be signed out to students. If a student needs an additional textbook for tutoring, it will be signed out to the student by their teacher and will not be given directly to the tutor. A textbook used by the student during the school year can be signed out to the student for use over the summer. Students are not allowed to check out textbooks used in the next grade level.

TECHNOLOGY USE

Forest Ridge sees technology as a vital tool for learning and has created policies and programs to ensure that the network and equipment are available for all members of the Forest Ridge community to safely and reliably use it to learn. We do this in three ways:

1. **Acceptable Use Policy:** describes the expectations for appropriate school technology use, in order to protect the school network and equipment.
2. **Ethical Use Policy:** describes the expectations for ethical and respectful technology use, in order to support a welcoming and safe learning community.
3. **Digital Citizenship Curriculum:** teaches best practices and skills for safely, productively, and wisely engaging in our digital world.

ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY HIGHLIGHTS

- Students should take care of their laptops to prevent costly damage and loss.
- Some damage is covered by warranty. When it is not, parents/guardians are responsible for the cost of repair or replacement.
- If the school owns the laptop, students must return their laptops when they leave Forest Ridge
- If students own their school laptop, the school will remove school-owned software before they leave Forest Ridge.
- The school puts measures in place to prevent students from accessing inappropriate material and social networking sites. Students should not try to get around these systems.
- Students may not download illegal material (like unlicensed BitTorrents) using school technology or on the school network.
- The school cannot block all inappropriate material. Students should do their best to avoid inappropriate material and should tell an adult if they come across something that makes them uncomfortable.
- The school can see the things students do on their laptop and while connected to the network. Students should not assume that their emails, files, notebooks, or online activity is private while on the school network or while using school technology.
- Students should not claim the work of others as their own. Citing sources is a great way to avoid accidentally claiming the work of others.
- Students should be extremely careful about sharing personal information with people online.
- Students should protect their passwords and never loan their laptops to other people.
- Students may not record other people without permission (this includes recording video with sound).
- Students must gain permission prior to photographing or videotaping other people and then again before posting in a public place (including publicly online).
- Students must gain permission from the school before posting photographs or videos in a public place (including publicly online) that include the school campus, logo, or community members.
- If students want to create a social media account that will claim to represent the school (like a Forest Ridge Volleyball Instagram), they must get permission from the Communications Department first.

ETHICAL USE POLICY

All members of the school community are expected to use technology ethically and respectfully, in the classroom and beyond. The school defines ethical and respectful use of technology as:

- Showing respect, acceptance, and concern for yourself and others, in person and online.
- Taking personal responsibility for developing a relationship with technology that supports a safe, balanced, and healthy life.

The school understands that wise freedom includes developmentally appropriate expectations. This policy is an extension of the School Honor Code outlined on page 4. Additionally,

- All members of the school community are expected to be fully present during learning and community times.
- All members of the school community should expect to be asked about their technology use on campus.
- Middle school students are expected to always use technology under the supervision of an adult.

The Ethical Use Policy can be applied to specific cases such as school technology, personal devices, non-educational apps, and social apps.

SCHOOL TECHNOLOGY

- School technology includes the equipment, the connection to the Internet, school-managed software and apps, and school-managed accounts.
- We expect students to use school technology as tools for learning, unless they have received permission to use school technology for other purposes.

PERSONAL DEVICES

- Personal devices include cell phones, tablets, e-readers, smartwatches, and other devices that can be used to connect to the Internet.
- We expect students to keep personal devices away during the school day unless they have received permission to use the device in that location and during that time.

NON-EDUCATIONAL APPS

- Non-educational apps include any app or website that does not serve a clear educational purpose related to your academic work at Forest Ridge.
- Students should only use non-educational apps during the school day when they have received permission to use the app in that location and during that time.

SOCIAL APPS

- Social apps include any apps where you can interact with other people, for academic or entertainment purposes. These include social media sites, gaming sites, collaboration tools, and chat apps.
- When using any social apps, we expect students to always demonstrate the utmost level of care and respect for the school, members of the school community, and themselves.

SIGNATURE LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCES

GRADE LEVEL ADVISORIES

In the grade level advisory program, various activities, conversations, and reflections enable girls to explore and develop their natural leadership abilities. Through these activities, students have the chance

to practice both personal and collaborative leadership skills in various situations and settings. Some of the leadership-focused advisory activities include student reflection and goal setting, which occurs at every grade level. These reflections facilitate great conversations around personal leadership and growth, allowing girls and their advisors to brainstorm proactive strategies for development. Additionally, team challenges serve as a practice field for collaboration and problem-solving skills, providing an opportunity to observe personal behaviors and interactions. Before starting a team challenge, participants attend a pre-challenge meeting to review strategies for successful group work and identify areas of focus. The team then engages in the challenge and concludes with a debrief and reflection period.

GRADE LEVEL TRIPS

All middle school students are provided with a unique opportunity to hone their leadership skills and develop their social and emotional skillsets through a multi-day overnight experience. These experiences are specifically designed to enhance the curriculum, reinforce previously learned leadership skills, and build upon their existing knowledge. Each grade-level is immersed in exploring different aspects of the Pacific Northwest, allowing students to gain practical knowledge about themselves, their environment, and their capacity to effect positive change for the Earth and its inhabitants. In addition to building class community, these trips emphasize practical leadership skill-building, empowering students to make a positive difference in their communities and beyond.

FIFTH AND SIXTH GRADE LAB CLASSES

Fifth- and sixth-grade students engage in a specialized leadership curriculum. These classes are crafted to provide a dynamic and engaging learning experience that emphasizes the acquisition and development of essential leadership skills. Through these experiential and exploratory classes, students have ample opportunities to practice and experiment with specific leadership skills, while receiving valuable feedback and guidance from both peers and teachers. Our lab classes are carefully designed to help girls discover themselves as leaders, building their confidence and self-awareness. These courses include Creativity Lab, Leadership Lab, and STEAM Lab. It is important to note that these classes are ungraded, allowing students to focus on skill-building and personal growth without the added pressure of grades.

SEVENTH-GRADE ROPES CHALLENGE

As part of the leadership program, seventh-grade students participate in an exhilarating full-day experience on a high ropes course. This challenging and dynamic activity offers our students a unique opportunity to push themselves beyond their limits and build their personal leadership skills in a supportive and nurturing environment. With a focus on taking appropriate risks and working collaboratively to achieve a common goal, our girls are empowered to step out of their comfort zones and embrace new challenges with confidence and determination. Through this experience, students develop essential leadership qualities such as resilience, adaptability, and teamwork, which will serve them well both in and outside of the classroom.

EIGHTH-GRADE GLOBAL DAY LEADERS

Eighth grade students have the opportunity to develop their leadership skills during Global Days, a middle-school exploration of a topic with global implications. Through a variety of leadership roles such as Global Guides, Teacher's Assistants, Community Art and Awareness Team, and Prayer Service Leaders, students are able to practice and enhance their leadership skills in a real-world setting. Student leaders participate in workshops leading up to Global Days, which help them identify leadership skills they want to practice during their Global Days work. Faculty members provide coaching and feedback to

students throughout the two-day event, allowing students to refine their skills and become confident, effective leaders.

MIDDLE SCHOOL ASSEMBLY LEADERSHIP

The Leadership and Assembly Club is an exciting opportunity for students to take charge of the weekly middle school assembly, a hallmark of our community. Through this experience, students have the chance to develop and practice their leadership skills by planning and executing an engaging and informative assembly that educates our community about our mission and important local and global issues. In addition to building a sense of community among our diverse student body, the assembly also provides a platform to showcase and celebrate the incredible work of our students and faculty.

SACRED HEART NETWORK EXCHANGE

Eighth Grade Students can participate in the Sacred Heart Network Exchange. Through this program, students can stay with host families and attend other Sacred Heart Schools across the United States while immersing themselves in the school culture, community, and academic curriculum. The exchange program allows students to practice and develop their leadership skills in a novel setting. Students have the opportunity to share their own experiences and perspectives with their exchange school community while building connections and community. This unique opportunity allows students to expand their horizons, build relationships with students from different backgrounds, and hone their leadership skills in a supportive and enriching environment.

SELF-DIRECTED LEADERSHIP

By providing a wide range of leadership opportunities spanning various activities and topics, students are empowered to select experiences that align with their inherent strengths while also recognizing the value of pushing themselves beyond their comfort zones to take on new challenges that promote continued growth. With immersion in an environment that prioritizes leadership development, students can develop a deep understanding of their personal leadership style and how it can be leveraged to make a positive impact in the world. Whether through leading clubs, facilitating classroom discussions, organizing events, or serving as mentors, students have ample opportunities to apply their leadership skills in real-world contexts and develop the confidence and competence needed to succeed in future leadership roles.

IMMERSIVES

Spring Immersives are a one-week course during which students take one integrated, academic class which covers topics not traditionally explored in the middle school curriculum. Immersive courses include experiential learning opportunities such as week-long immersion trips, field trips, service-learning experiences, and labs. Students earn 0.25 credit each year, and courses are assessed on a credit/no credit scale.

Course offerings and registration for Immersives will occur in the fall.

COURSE OFFERINGS

ENGLISH

We believe that effective communication skills empower students to flourish as capable leaders. We also believe that a love of reading and the skill of being a discerning, critical, and appreciative reader are intrinsic attributes of life-long learners. These beliefs guide our English Department's curricular decisions through each phase of our students' education at Forest Ridge.

In middle school, writing is emphasized at every grade level, and dedicated writing specialists work with students in 7th and 8th grade. With an emphasis on process, students practice expressing ideas clearly to a variety of audiences for a variety of purposes. Focusing on critical and creative thinking, each girl develops her own writing voice and practices cultivating powerful responses. Through our skills- and analysis-based reading program, students learn to appreciate the aesthetics of the written word as well as its power to transmit ideas and give voice. Students analyze vocabulary words in context and focus on individualized reading challenges in a supportive reading community. Across grade levels, students practice literary dialogue in partnerships, book clubs, and class-wide discussions.

Grade Five: Establishing Roots

Fifth grade reading and writing curriculum is part of an integrated humanities program. In Humanities, we focus on an exploration of active reading skills and evaluation of literary elements. Students are encouraged to build habits toward becoming life-long readers, and read fiction and non-fiction books as a class, in small groups, and individually with an emphasis on realistic fiction, non-fiction, and fantasy genres. In realistic fiction book clubs, students begin using their active reading skills to analyze complex fictional texts. Later in reading workshop, fifth graders learn how to approach, analyze, and summarize non-fiction texts. Each student builds a toolkit for understanding how to interact meaningfully with informational non-fiction texts. Students navigate complex characters and magical settings to analyze metaphors, life lessons, quests, and thematic patterns. These units challenge each student to grow new interpretive reading skills within a book group. Students grow as readers and as community members while practicing critical communication skills, open-mindedness, and dialogue in small groups. In-class workshops and mini-lessons introduce students to tools to help them read their independent and book club reading books deeply and thoughtfully. Students practice reading skills and show their thinking in a Reader's Notebook and through discussion. Vocabulary and grammar skills are learned in the context of literature and writing and through online resources, No Red Ink and Membean.

Writing in fifth grade focuses on developing a commitment to the full writing process. Through a variety of projects, including personal narratives, literary essays, information writing, and fictional story-telling students explore the steps of brainstorming, prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing. Emphasis is placed on engaging in the entire writing process and working through multiple steps of revision. In addition, conventions and mechanics exercises practiced reinforced accuracy and clear communication in writing. The emphasis placed on writing at Forest Ridge challenges students to write effectively in all areas of the fifth-grade curriculum.

Course length: Yearlong

Prerequisites: None

Grade level: Required for 5th Grade

Credits earned: 1.0 MS English

Grade Six: Identity, Community, and Civilization

Sixth-grade literature and language arts curriculum is part of an integrated humanities program. In Humanities, we focus on an exploration of active reading skills and evaluation of literary elements. Students are encouraged to build habits toward becoming life-long readers, and read fiction and non-fiction books as a class, in small groups, and individually with an emphasis on sampling a variety of genres. Short stories are also studied. In-class workshops and mini-lessons introduce students to tools to help them read their independent reading books deeply and thoughtfully. Students practice reading skills and show their thinking in a Reader's Notebook. The online resource, Membean, is used as a tool for building vocabulary.

Writing in sixth grade focuses on developing a commitment to the full writing process rooted in the curriculum of the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project. Through a variety of projects, including creative stories, personal narratives, literary responses and information writing, students explore the steps of brainstorming, prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing. Emphasis is placed on crafting a clear thesis and providing evidence to support claims. In addition, conventions and mechanics exercises practiced through No Red Ink reinforce accuracy and clear communication in writing. The emphasis placed on writing at Forest Ridge challenges students to write effectively in all areas of the sixth-grade curriculum.

Course length: Yearlong

Grade level: Required for 6th Grade

Credits earned: 1.0 MS English

Grade Seven Writing: Building Blocks

This course demystifies the use of the basic building blocks of powerful writing and helps students harness the power of a well-crafted sentence alongside thoughtful word choice. What is a predicate? What's the difference between the subject and the object? Why does this author's writing style appeal to me while that author's writing style is confusing? We'll explore how it all comes back to how sentences are built and organized for the purpose of communicating complex meaning. Students will study sentence structure and variation with the aim of building strong paragraphs, and eventually essays. Practicing crafting main idea and thesis sentences alongside mentor texts from familiar and respected authors, while engaging in practice with elaboration and formulating compelling transition. This is foundational work leading to confidence in formulating longer, cohesive essays for a variety of purposes.

Course length: Semester

Prerequisites: None

Grade level: Required for 7th Grade

Credits earned: 0.5 MS Writing

Grade Eight: Identity, Rights, and Power

In eighth-grade English, students begin the year with a survey of short stories with a focus on analyzing the use of literary devices and elements in discussion and writing. They then extend these skills to novel, drama, and non-fiction study. Students also engage in year-long vocabulary and conventions practice. Throughout the year, a thematic focus on identity, rights, and power offers opportunities for cross-curricular explorations with social studies and religion.

Course length: Yearlong
Prerequisites: None
Grade level: Required for 8th Grade
Credits earned: 1.0 MS English

Grade Eight Writing: Growing Our Academic Voice

8th grade writing prepares students for success in academic writing for upper school and beyond. Students develop their academic voices by tackling three major essay styles that they will encounter again and again in their academic career: argumentative, analytical, and the ever-daunting research paper. Through teacher-led modeling, exploring exemplar texts, frequent peer and teacher review, and breaking down major pieces of each essay into digestible chunks, students will move forward from this course with confidence and a renewed sense of their own academic voice. In particular, we will focus on the building blocks of rhetoric and persuasion, literary analysis, and author choice, exposing students to foundational genres of academic writing. This course will also focus on the mechanics and “nitty-gritty” of academic writing that can be a challenge point for students, including embedding direct quotes and MLA citations/formatting. 8th grade writing is anchored in student choice – students will be able to select topics, current events, and reading materials for writing prompts, igniting their passions and interests as they build new academic writing skills.

Course length: Yearlong
Prerequisites: None
Grade level: Required for 8th Grade
Credits earned: 0.5 MS Writing

FINE ARTS

The Fine Arts Department, consisting of Music, Performing Arts, Digital Art, and Studio Art, educates each student by focusing on the individual discipline and utilizing values established in the Goals and Criteria of Sacred Heart education. The primary goals of the Fine Arts program are to expose the student to a variety of media from each of these disciplines, and to empower the work of creative imagination. Students learn how art mirrors a culture and gain appreciation of the artistic contributions of our global community, resulting in a deepened understanding of a variety of cultural perspectives. We teach concepts, skills, and learner traits. Concepts deal with aesthetics, discipline, balance, form, pace, rhythm, perception, and essential ideas. Skills are the mechanics of our disciplines - the manual dexterity of the artist in the studio, the ability to communicate and express ourselves with poise on stage, and the ability to make music with confidence and joy. Fine Arts courses place special emphasis on many positive traits; passion and curiosity which drive and motivate us, self-discipline and assurance which allows us to act with courage and resilience in our global community, imagination to see a variety of solutions to a single problem. These concepts, skills, and traits are essential to a well-rounded arts education and a well-rounded life.

Students in fifth and sixth grade take both a Visual and Performance Art course. Students in seventh and eighth grade will have the chance to enroll in a variety of semester-long electives. Below is a list of courses, some offered in rotating years.

The Art of Performance: Introduction to Vocal Techniques & Music Theory

In this course, fifth-grade students delve into the world of music and discover the fundamentals of vocal techniques. Our comprehensive curriculum includes instruction on proper breathing, enunciation, and singing habits, as well as a basic understanding of music theory and personal presentation strategies. Through practical application, our students hone their skills and create captivating spoken and sung performance art, showcasing their newfound abilities to the world.

Course length: Semester

Prerequisites: None

Grade level: 5th Grade

Credits earned: 0.5 MS Fine Arts

Exploring Visual Art: An Introduction to Design Concepts & Art History

In this course, students will be introduced to a wide variety of art materials and techniques, from drawing and painting to ceramics and more. Along with learning practical skills, students will also study design concepts and global art history. Through experimentation and exploration, students will develop their observation and imagination skills, make creative choices, and learn from their mistakes. Students will also have the opportunity to reflect on their work, with the goal of evolving their artistic abilities throughout the semester.

Course length: Semester

Prerequisites: None

Grade level: 5th Grade

Credits earned: 0.5 MS Fine Arts

Performing Arts Ensemble: Foundations of Theatre, Voice, and Movement

In this immersive performance skills class, students study theatre, spoken word art, and develop effective singing, speaking, and dance techniques. Throughout the semester, students collaborate to design, produce, and perform a holiday concert. Students explore all aspects of performance from the perspectives of performer, director, producer, and costume designer. This course cultivates individual creativity while emphasizing the importance of working as a cohesive ensemble. At the end of the semester, students showcase their skills and artistic talents in a culminating concert.

Course length: Semester

Prerequisites: None

Grade level: 6th Grade

Credits earned: 0.5 MS Fine Arts

Exploring Art and Creativity: A Journey Through Design

In this course, sixth-grade students dive into the world of visual art, where they discover and explore various art materials and techniques. Along with learning about the history and cultural significance of art around the world, students develop an understanding of design concepts such as composition, color theory, and form. Through daily hands-on art-making, students improve their skills of observation and imagination, as well as develop the confidence to make creative choices. Furthermore, students are encouraged to critically reflect upon their work, allowing them to better understand their artistic process and growth.

Course length: Semester

Prerequisites: None

Grade level: 6th Grade

Credits earned: 0.5 MS Fine Arts

Introduction to Drama: Discovering the Art of Performance

In Introduction to Drama, students develop an appreciation of theatre and the ability to perform through an introduction to the basic concepts and skills of acting. Through viewing and participating in performance activities, students will enhance imagination, poise, and confidence. Over the course of the semester, students will explore the following topics: actor and theatre vocabulary, pantomime and storytelling, vocal expression, and health, as well as create and cultivate characters through improvised and scripted scenes. Students will develop skills such as: non-verbal communication, vocal flexibility, memorization, script scoring, and collaboration on preparing a polished scene study. Students develop their projects using coaching from their peers and their teacher. At the end of the semester, the class demonstrate their skills by performing a short, memorized scene study with a partner.

Course length: Semester

Prerequisites: None

Grade level: 7th/8th Grade

Credits earned: 0.5 MS Fine Arts

Introduction to Ceramics

In this introductory course, students explore the exciting world of ceramic art. Through a variety of hand-building techniques and experiences on the potter's wheel, students will develop an understanding of the various stages of clay development, planning, construction, glazing, and firing. They will create both functional and decorative clay forms, and learn to analyze their own work as well

as the work of others. Through written reflections and art-centered conversations, students will develop an appreciation for the principles of form, function, texture, and balance in ceramic art.

Course length: Semester
Prerequisites: None
Grade level: 7th/8th Grade
Credits earned: 0.5 MS Fine Arts

Introduction to Creative Writing

In this introductory course, students explore the exciting world of ceramic art. Through a variety of hand-building techniques and experiences on the potter's wheel, students will develop an understanding of the various stages of clay development, planning, construction, glazing, and firing. They will create both functional and decorative clay forms, and learn to analyze their own work as well as the work of others. Through written reflections and art-centered conversations, students will develop an appreciation for the principles of form, function, texture, and balance in ceramic art.

Course length: Semester | Please note this course is offered on a rotating basis.
Prerequisites: None
Grade level: 7th/8th Grade
Credits earned: 0.5 MS Fine Arts

The Art of Public Speaking

In this course, students will learn the art of effective public speaking and develop the confidence and poise necessary to engage and captivate audiences. The curriculum emphasizes practical communication skills that are relevant to real-life scenarios. Through a variety of projects, students will refine their vocal techniques, including proper vocal health and anatomy. The projects for this class involve prepared opportunities for practicing public speaking. Planned projects may include, but are not limited to, formal introductions, reading aloud to a large audience, storytelling, dramatic monologues, debate skills, and poetry recitation.

Course length: Semester | Please note this course is offered on a rotating basis.
Prerequisites: None
Grade level: 7th/8th Grade
Credits earned: 0.5 MS Fine Arts

Foundations of Studio Art

This course immerses students in the process of creating art and provides them with the opportunity to explore and experiment with different media. Students develop foundational skills in drawing and painting by examining the Elements and Principles of Art and Design. Alongside hands-on artmaking, students contextualize their work within the broader framework of art history, current cultural trends, and global concerns. Through the study of diverse sources of artistic inspiration, students gain confidence in their creative abilities, and incorporate feedback to refine and enhance their work.

Course length: Semester | Please note this course is offered on a rotating basis.
Prerequisites: None
Grade level: 7th/8th Grade
Credits earned: 0.5 MS Fine Arts

HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The Health and Physical education classes at Forest Ridge aim to provide our students with a wholistic understanding of the importance of personal health and wellness issues, basic knowledge of sports and recreational activities and a foundation that promotes and encourages an active lifestyle.

Health class is designed to provide information needed to make important decisions about health, wellness, and individual lifestyle choices. Middle school health topics include CPR, healthy relationships, sexual education, brain anatomy and development, and disease prevention. Upper school topics covered include social/emotional health, nutrition, substance abuse, body image, healthy relationships, sexual health and first-aid. Emphasis is on self-advocation and assuming responsibility for one's own health.

The physical education classes are developmentally tiered and take into account varied skill levels with a focus on effort, improvement, participation and skill building. We encourage teamwork, self-discipline, perseverance, resilience, and sportsmanship.

Introduction to Fun, Cooperation and Active Games

Fifth-grade physical education is fun. Cooperation and learning to work with new classmates are most important. Many activities are offered to develop basic movement skills, hand-eye coordination, sportsmanship, teamwork, and the ability to assess and accept gifts and limitations. Emphasis is on class participation, cooperation, and individual effort. A positive learning environment is established by participating in cooperative activities. Non-competitive games reinforce good sportsmanship, teamwork, support of teammates, and respect for classmates.

Course length: Yearlong

Prerequisites: None

Grade level: 5th Grade

Credits earned: 1 MS Physical Education

Advancing the Fun, Cooperative and Active Games

The emphasis of sixth-grade physical education is to develop good fundamental motor skills, sound fitness skills, basic sports skills, knowledge of rules, and simple strategies for games. The level of intensity and skill is adjusted according to the abilities of the class. A positive, playful learning environment is established as students participate in cooperative activities and team sports. Some of the activities offered during the sixth-grade year may include various non-competitive games, soccer, basketball, floor hockey, badminton, track, pickleball, tennis, rock climbing, and volleyball.

Course length: Yearlong

Prerequisites: None

Grade level: 6th Grade

Credits earned: 1 MS Physical Education

Play and Developing Lifelong Fitness Habits

This seventh- and eighth-grade course emphasizes the development of sound fitness practices and habits, traditional and lifelong sports skills, knowledge of rules, and simple strategies for games. A positive learning environment is established by reinforcing good sportsmanship. Basic principles of fitness and their relationship to one's health and lifestyle are explored. Students learn individual skills and game rules for many different sports, which may include soccer, football, basketball, floor hockey,

volleyball, badminton, pickleball, tennis, softball, and golf. We also use the Forest Ridge fitness center as we continue to promote lifelong fitness.

Course length: Yearlong

Prerequisites: None

Grade level: 7th/8th Grade

Credits earned: 1 MS Physical Education

INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE

The primary aim of the International Language program is to present world languages as essential living tools for communication, given the global community in which we live. Employing proficiency-based methods, students develop the ability to use other languages in realistic situations following the standards of communication, cultures, connections, comparisons, and communities while developing the skill areas of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The knowledge, insight, and appreciation they gain for other cultures allows students to develop empathy by broadening their understanding of how others live, think, and interact in ways different to their own. Students build a solid linguistic scaffolding in middle school, which ultimately enables them in upper school to appreciate authentic, unabridged works in various media, and to express themselves with confidence and proficiency in communicating in another language. Sacred Heart schools are part of a dynamic international network with a well-established global exchange and service program. Upper school students may study abroad, and all FR families are invited to host exchange students.

Students begin learning an additional language in fifth grade, starting with French. Depending on the level of interest from students, we may also be able to offer an exploratory Mandarin class to fifth grader students. In sixth grade, students have the option to continue French or try Spanish. By seventh grade, they continue with a formal study of French, Spanish, or Mandarin and can complete the equivalent of a first-year high school language class by eighth grade. Students who successfully complete both 1A and 1B courses in a single language will advance to level two French, Spanish, or Mandarin in the ninth grade. These high-school level courses demand rigor, commitment, and developmental readiness. Homework of about twenty to thirty minutes per class includes listening and speaking exercises, written exercises, memorization to the point of recall, compositions, and other tasks.

The French Language & Our Sacred Heart Heritage

In this course, students will explore the basics of the French language while also learning about the history and traditions of our Sacred Heart Schools Network. Through a variety of interactive activities, students will develop their listening and speaking skills in French, and also gain an understanding and appreciation of the unique heritage of Sacred Heart Schools, including the life and legacy of Saint Madeleine Sophie, the founder of the Society of the Sacred Heart. In addition to common French phrases, students will learn key vocabulary for Sacred Heart Schools such as *congé* and *goûte*!

Course length: Yearlong

Prerequisites: None

Grade level: Required for 5th Grade or IL Waiver

Credits earned: 0.5 MS International Language

Interactive Mandarin: Games, Songs, and Conversation

In this course, students will work with Upper School students to learn basic Mandarin phrases and vocabulary through games and songs. The course will cover topics like greetings, numbers, colors, and common phrases. Through interactive and engaging activities, students will be able to practice their pronunciation and listening skills. This course is designed to be a fun and immersive learning experience.

Course length: Semester | This course is offered based on student interest.

Prerequisites: None

Grade level: 5th Grade

Credits earned: 0.25 MS International Language

Introductory French

The course aims to follow the natural path of language acquisition by supporting students in first mastering basic speaking and listening skills and then digging into the study of French phonics. By emphasizing basic conversational French, students will learn vocabulary and phrases for everyday communication. Students will have opportunities to learn through immersion games and practice in pairs and small groups as they focus on building their listening and speaking repertoire. Later in the course, phonics will be introduced to help students develop the foundations needed to rapidly acquire language in their future studies. This strong understanding of French phonics will allow students to read, write, and spell with fluency in future courses.

Course length: Yearlong

Prerequisites: None

Grade level: 6th Grade

Credits earned: 0.5 MS International Language

Introductory Spanish

The course aims to follow the natural path of language acquisition by supporting students in first mastering basic speaking and listening skills and then digging into the study of Spanish phonics. By emphasizing basic conversational Spanish, students will learn vocabulary and phrases for everyday communication. Students will have opportunities to learn through immersion games and practice in pairs and small groups as they focus on building their listening and speaking repertoire. Later in the course, phonics will be introduced to help students develop the foundations needed to rapidly acquire language in their future studies. This strong understanding of Spanish phonics will allow students to read, write, and spell with fluency in future courses.

Course length: Yearlong

Prerequisites: None

Grade level: 6th Grade

Credits earned: 0.5 MS International Language

French 1A: Communication and Culture

Students in French 1A study a series of units which encourages immediate use of practical expressions and appreciation of culture in the French-speaking world. Themes include school, daily life, home and family, and food and meals. Students learn parts of speech in French and how they function together to communicate in the present and near-future tense. Through texts, discussion, partner work, games, Internet resources, and audio files and videos, all four language skills: reading, writing, listening, and speaking- are practiced daily. This proficiency-based program offers in-class opportunities for students to engage in communicative activities as they work towards mastering instructional objectives. Students use a shared OneNote notebook to organize resources, notes, and homework.

Course length: Yearlong

Prerequisites: Conversational French or completion of summer work

Grade level: 7th Grade

Credits earned: 1.0 MS International Language

French 1B: History and Culture

In French IB students continue building on their language skills and on the content they have acquired in the seventh grade course. Level 1B expands the communication skills already acquired and broadens awareness of history and culture in the Francophone world. Through texts, discussion, partner work, games, Internet resources, audio files and videos, all four language skills- reading, writing, listening, and speaking- are practiced daily. Our program offers in-class opportunities for students to engage in communicative activities as they work towards mastering instructional objectives. Students use a shared OneNote notebook to organize resources, notes, and homework.

Course length: Yearlong

Prerequisites: French 1A

Grade level: 8th Grade

Credits earned: 1.0 MS International Language

Mandarin 1A: Mandarin Language and Culture

The first year of Mandarin is designed to guide students to effectively learn the fundamentals of In Mandarin 1B, students will apply what they have studied in Mandarin 1A. Supplemental materials help students learn common practical vocabulary and expressions not in the textbook. We will focus on tones for the purpose of improving pronunciation with emphasis on developing students' conversation, reading characters and writing skills. We will advance more on communication and writing with a computer as it will be rewarding for the learners and improve their practical language skills. Integration of technology will assist in fostering students' capabilities for Mandarin reading, listening, speaking, and writing. Students will learn about Chinese culture and how to interact with Chinese people with proper social norms. Since students have already gained some foundation for the language, they will find this second year of learning to be rewarding! Chinese used in daily life in China. Students learn to read and write simplified characters as well as tones and Pinyin, the official Romanization from China, which is widely used in Chinese language programs. Various learning activities related to real-life situations and cultural introductions are also included in the class through class activities and multimedia. The class is aimed to enable students to obtain basic communication skills; and students will understand and appreciate the culture of the Chinese-speaking countries.

Course length: Yearlong

Prerequisites: None

Grade level: 7th Grade

Credits earned: 1.0 MS International Language

Mandarin 1B: Mandarin Language and Culture

In Mandarin 1B, students will apply what they have studied in Mandarin 1A. Supplemental materials help students learn common practical vocabulary and expressions not in the textbook. We will focus on tones for the purpose of improving pronunciation with emphasis on developing students' conversation, reading characters and writing skills. We will advance more on communication and writing with a computer as it will be rewarding for the learners and improve their practical language skills. Integration of technology will assist in fostering students' capabilities for Mandarin reading, listening, speaking, and writing. Students will learn about Chinese culture and how to interact with Chinese people with proper social norms. Since students have already gained some foundation for the language, they will find this second year of learning to be rewarding!

Course length: Yearlong

Prerequisites: Mandarin 1A

Grade level: 8th Grade

Credits earned: 1.0 MS International Language

Spanish 1A: ¡Exploremos Español Juntas!

The approach to learning in Spanish is grammar and syntax-based, situational, and cultural; the theme of each unit encourages immediate use of practical expressions and introduces new grammatical structures, including subject-verb-adjective agreement and the present tense. Supplementary activities include viewing videos in Spanish, introducing the students to art from different Spanish-speaking countries, and listening, comprehension and writing activities.

Course length: Yearlong

Prerequisites: Conversational Spanish or completion of summer work

Grade level: 7th Grade

Credits earned: 1.0 MS International Language

Spanish 1B: Conversaciones y Culturas

Spanish 1B emphasizes good communication skills and cultural understanding. Supplementary activities include cultural studies and viewing short videos in Spanish. Investigations of cultural events, history, and geography are also incorporated.

Course length: Yearlong

Prerequisites: Spanish 1A

Grade level: 8th Grade

Credits earned: 1.0 MS International Language

MATHEMATICS

The aim of the Mathematics department is to nurture each Forest Ridge student to grow in her knowledge of mathematical content and to deepen her mathematical thinking. We lead students through a curriculum that allows every individual to be challenged to realize her highest mathematical potential, as we recognize that students have differing backgrounds and abilities. Thus, we believe it is essential that each student be placed in the level of mathematics that will provide the appropriate level of challenge.

Mathematics is a global language, and to that end our courses guide students through a global awareness of math through a study of current events through a mathematical lens, hands on projects to demonstrate real world applications, and a variety of cultural views and approaches to math.

Our middle school math courses are thoughtfully designed to provide all students with a comprehensive foundation, equipping them with the tools and skills necessary for success in advanced math courses. Students in fifth and sixth grade will be placed in a math class with their grade-level peers. All students are expected to demonstrate grade-level proficiency with Common Core math standards and engage collaboratively in rigorous mathematical practices, like attending to precision and reasoning abstractly. Students who may benefit from more challenging coursework are supported in pursuing additional rigor through a range of enrichment activities. Students may accelerate into Algebra 1 in seventh or eighth grade by engaging in enrichment activities and demonstrating proficiency with algebra readiness skills. Students who successfully complete Algebra 1 may advance to Geometry. Both Algebra 1 and Geometry are high-school-level courses and will require significant commitment from the student. Throughout our middle school math courses, we take great pride in cultivating the mathematical talents of students and fostering a deep, thorough, and multidimensional understanding of concepts that enable them to reach their full potential and succeed in whatever path they choose.

Foundations of Mathematical Practices

Our Foundations of Mathematical Practices course for fifth grade students features a differentiated instructional approach that supports and challenges all students. Before starting each unit of study, students complete a pre-assessment to identify areas where they have already mastered the content and areas that require further development. Our coursework is carefully designed to provide extensive exposure to real number operations and a strong foundation in practical problem-solving techniques. Using a hands-on, problem-solving approach, students gain both conceptual understanding and operational fluency in key topics such as fractions, decimals, and percentages, as well as the application of order of operations to write and execute solutions to complex problems. This course upholds high expectations for all and can be challenging for students who previously had less access to rigorous mathematical content and practices; these students are advised to seek additional support during tutorial sessions to ensure they are well-prepared to engage with the curriculum and collaborate effectively with their peers. The Foundations of Mathematical Practices course empowers students to become confident, reflective learners who are well-prepared to excel in math and beyond.

Course length: Yearlong

Prerequisites: None

Grade level: Required for 5th Grade

Credits earned: 1.0 MS Mathematics

Beyond Numeracy

Our Beyond Numeracy course for sixth grade students features a differentiated instructional approach designed to challenge and engage students at every level. Prior to beginning each unit of study, students complete a pre-assessment that helps us identify which topics they have already mastered and which areas require additional support. This course builds on students' prior knowledge of geometry and introduces new topics that will expand their understanding and problem-solving skills. Students will extend their understanding of areas of rectangles to reason about areas of parallelograms and triangles. They will also learn how to calculate surface areas using these geometric shapes. In addition to geometry, students engage with ratios through a formal, scaffolded introduction. They will learn several ways to represent ratios, including using double number lines, tables, as well as tape and hanger diagrams. These skills will enable them to convert units, calculate unit rates, and solve problems involving percentages. In addition, students will have the opportunity to apply mathematical concepts such as operations with decimals to real-life scenarios through inquiry-based activities that focus on problem-solving and critical thinking. This content-packed course also features data analysis, including measures of center and spread, to help students make sense of complex information. Students are introduced to exponents and learn to reason about equivalent equations. They develop their understanding of negative numbers on the number line and the coordinate plane. This course upholds high expectations for all and can be challenging for students who previously had less access to rigorous mathematical content and practices; these students are advised to seek additional support during tutorial sessions to ensure they are well-prepared to engage with the curriculum and collaborate effectively with their peers. Our Beyond Numeracy course is designed to foster a love of learning and a deep understanding of mathematical concepts that will stay with students for years to come.

Course length: Yearlong

Prerequisites: None

Grade level: Required for 6th Grade | Students may accelerate from Beyond Numeracy in 6th grade to Algebra 1 in 7th grade by consistently engaging in enrichment activities and demonstrating proficiency with algebra readiness skills.

Credits earned: 1.0 MS Mathematics

Structure & Precision

Structure and Precision provides rigorous and engaging learning experiences that will challenge and inspire students to reach new heights of mathematical understanding. Throughout the year, students will focus on understanding and applying proportional relationships, which is essential for success in future math and science courses. Students start by studying scale drawings, a foundational skill that sets up the introduction of proportional relationships. Through this work, students will gain a deep understanding of the relationships between objects in space and how they can be represented mathematically. They will apply this knowledge to understand the circumference and area of circles and to solve problems involving fractional quantities and percent change. Building on the skills they developed in Beyond Numeracy, students will extend their understanding of adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing positive and negative numbers, which leads to work on expressions, equations, and inequalities. As the year progresses, students will also explore geometry, probability, and statistics. They will study angles, triangles, and prisms, developing a keen eye for spatial relationships and patterns. They will also learn about probability and sampling, which as they will learn are essential skills for analyzing data and making informed decisions in a wide range of fields. With a focus on critical thinking, problem-solving, and real-world applications, Structure and Precision will give students the tools they need to thrive in challenging math courses in the future.

Course length: Yearlong
Prerequisites: 6th Grade Math/IM2
Grade level: 7th Grade
Credits earned: 1.0 MS Mathematics

Pre-Algebra

In Pre-Algebra, seventh-grade students will engage in an investigative approach to develop their abstract reasoning and mathematical discourse skills, while building a strong foundation in algebra readiness. Through inquiry-based activities, students will extend their understanding of mathematical concepts and apply broader, more abstract mathematical thinking to solve real-world problems. The curriculum will cover a range of topics, including a review of ratios, percents, and proportionality, as well as introducing variables, equations, and expressions. Students will practice evaluating and solving equations and exploring mathematical concepts such as simple roots and powers, the use of the Cartesian coordinate plane, scientific notation, and the Pythagorean Theorem. The collaborative problem-solving approach in this course is designed to equip students with the necessary skills and mindset for success in Algebra I.

Course length: Yearlong
Prerequisites: Successful completion of IM3 or teacher recommendation
Grade level: 7th Grade
Credits earned: 1.0 MS Mathematics

Models & Abstraction

In Model & Abstraction, eighth grade students embark on a rigorous journey in mathematics that lays the groundwork for success in high school and beyond. The course begins with a deep dive into the fascinating world of rigid transformations and congruence, which provides a solid foundation for the study of similarity and dilation. Students will apply their understanding of similar triangles to the study of linear relationships and slope. This leads to an exploration of the intricacies of linear equations, including systems of linear equations with variables on both sides of the equal sign. The study of functions will also be a highlight of this course, as students delve into what distinguishes a relationship as a function. The course will also dive into the volumes of cylinders, cones, and spheres, culminating in the return of linear relationships and an exploration of bivariate data. As students master the properties of exponents and scientific notation, they will develop the ability to represent very large and very small quantities. Finally, the Pythagorean theorem will be explored, allowing students to encounter square roots, cube roots, and irrational numbers with confidence and ease.

Course length: Yearlong
Prerequisites: IM2 or IM3
Grade level: 8th Grade
Credits earned: 1.0 MS Mathematics

Algebra 1

In this rigorous high-school level Algebra 1 course, students will delve into the foundations of algebra and hone their problem-solving skills through an investigative approach. Building upon a solid understanding of Pre-Algebra concepts, students will explore patterns and develop algebraic methods for solving increasingly complex problems. Topics covered include the modeling of linear, quadratic, and exponential functions, the manipulation of polynomials, systems of equations and inequalities,

exponents, and the use of rational and irrational numbers. By the end of the course, students will have gained a mastery of algebraic expression manipulation, function analysis, and advanced problem-solving techniques, positioning them for future success in higher-level mathematics courses.

Course length: Yearlong

Prerequisites: Successful completion of IM3 or teacher recommendation

Grade level: 7th/8th Grade

Credits earned: 1.0 MS Mathematics

Geometry

This high-school level Geometry course is designed for students who have demonstrated mastery of Algebra 1. This advanced course in geometry builds upon fundamental algebraic concepts and introduces students to the logical reasoning and development of both formal and informal proof methods of Euclidean geometry. Students will develop a deep understanding of geometric concepts and their real-world applications through an investigative approach. Topics of study include points, angles, polygons, circles, the properties of lines, congruence and similarity of triangles, as well as right-triangle trigonometry and its applications. Students will be challenged to think critically and abstractly while mastering the fundamental concepts of geometry.

Course length: Yearlong

Prerequisites: Successful completion of Algebra 1

Grade level: 8th Grade

Credits earned: 1.0 MS Mathematics

RELIGION

Goal One of Sacred Heart education is to "educate to a personal and active faith in God." By creating a safe and welcoming environment, we invite each student to explore a personal relationship with God and grow in community with others. We welcome families of all faith whose values are compatible with those of Sacred Heart education. In religion, we educate students in the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the history, traditions, and spirituality of the Catholic Church. We help them grow in their understanding and appreciation of all faith traditions and the role that all religious traditions play in the modern world. We challenge all students, regardless of their religious backgrounds and traditions, to grow deeper in their faith through study, reflection, discussion, prayer, and service. The spiritual journey is transformational and unique to each student, and emphasis is placed on what it means to be a child of the Sacred Heart, the importance of knowing yourself and your relationship with God.

Developing a Personal and Active Faith in God

The fifth-grade Religion program is rooted in Goal One of Sacred Heart education: to educate to a personal and active faith in God. Students explore their images of God and discover how their ideas of God are similar regardless of their faith traditions. They examine how God is revealed to people, including through the creation of the world and through the life and teachings of Jesus. They also learn the history of the Society of the Sacred Heart and deepen their understanding of the Goals and Criteria of Sacred Heart education. Students learn about foundational beliefs of the Catholic faith, and they are encouraged to consider how their beliefs affect the moral decisions they make each day. Through the study of the sacraments, the Liturgy of the Mass and prayer, students learn how Catholics celebrate the continuing presence of God in their lives. They read scripture, experience community prayer and reflection activities, and celebrate the liturgical seasons and feasts of the church. Through individual and group activities, students are encouraged to grow in their understanding of their relationships with God and with one another.

Course length: Yearlong

Prerequisites: None

Grade level: Required for 5th Grade

Credits earned: 1.0 MS Religion

Exploring World Religions and Hebrew Scripture

The first goal of a Sacred Heart education is to educate to a personal and active faith in God. Students begin the year by exploring the nature of religion in general. Students learn what it means to be a Child of the Sacred Heart and to be a part of a community steeped in the love of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, with an emphasis on prayer, feast days, and Sacred Heart heritage. Forest Ridge is a rich and diverse faith community, and students are invited to celebrate their own faith traditions and be welcomed into the celebration of Catholic traditions. Exploring the Bible and how Catholics read the Bible, with an emphasis on Hebrew Scriptures, is an important element of sixth-grade religion. Students also learn about the origins, beliefs, and practices of the major world religions, including Judaism, Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam. In conjunction with their spring experiential leadership trip to Camp Orkila, students reflect on stewardship of creation. Classroom resources include the *Breakthrough Bible*, and *How Do You Spell God?*

Course length: Yearlong

Prerequisites: None

Grade level: Required for 6th Grade

Credits earned: 1.0 MS Religion

Exploring the Person of Jesus, the Christ

The seventh-grade religion course explores the person of Jesus as encountered through the Gospels. Students learn about the historical context into which he was born and use this information to dig more deeply into his parables and gain a deeper understanding of Jesus's mission and deep love for the people who are most vulnerable in society. They begin exploring pertinent themes in their own lives, including service and resurrection. Through the Gospels and personal reflection, students come to understand the attitudes of the heart of Jesus (generosity, compassion, respect, and forgiveness) expressed in Goal One of a Sacred Heart Education. The course also examines the concept of kinship. Students learn about people who, like Jesus, seek to create authentic and compassionate relationships with those historically on the margins of society. In class throughout the year, students will notice an emphasis on written reflection, class participation, clear and respectful communication, small group discussion, and project-based learning.

Course length: Yearlong

Prerequisites: None

Grade level: Required for 7th Grade

Credits earned: 1.0 MS Religion

Catholic Social Teaching & Living Goal 3 of a Sacred Heart Education

The eighth-grade religion program is rooted in Goals One and Three of a Sacred Heart education: to educate to a personal and active faith in God, as well as a social awareness which impels to action. In the first semester, students develop an understanding of creeds by definition and explore a variety of creeds, completing an illustration and written exercise expressing their own creed and/or faith traditions. Throughout the year, students also continue to develop a deeper understanding of Catholic beliefs and practices.

In the second semester, students learn about Catholic Social Teaching and related topics, such as the dignity of the human person, poverty, homelessness, rights of workers and global issues. When opportunities for community service are available, students participate in a service program within the larger Seattle/Bellevue community. Students spend time reflecting on their service experience in order to understand it in the broader context of what they are learning in the classroom.

Course length: Yearlong

Prerequisites: None

Grade level: Required for 8th Grade

Credits earned: 1.0 MS Religion

SCIENCE

At Forest Ridge, girls will think like scientists, do science, and see themselves as scientists. Every day, our program is skills-driven, inquiry-based, and hands-on. Class time centers around authentic experiential learning opportunities, where students are encouraged and expected to actively engage in scientific inquiry skills and practice good scientific habits of mind. They are invited to both zoom in to important details and to think big as they take a deeper look at life's mysteries and conundrums. A student's science experience will help her grow as an innovative and globally-minded leader who believes problems have solutions and who understands her actions and choices have impact beyond herself. Throughout her time at Forest Ridge, she will have full exposure to life, physical, and applied sciences. The science curriculum gives students opportunities to individualize their program of study by offering second level courses and electives. This curriculum encourages students to be women who can reason critically based on evidence, approach complex problems with confidence, and make choices based on a deep respect for, and understanding of, natural systems.

Experimental Science

The fifth-grade experimental science curriculum revolves around the nature of science, and students learn content from life, earth, and physical science domains by using scientific skills. Students begin to develop skills in three major categories: scientific inquiry, scientific communication, and engineering. The goal for every student is to engage with content in a variety of learning experiences that align with the National Science Teachers' Association recommendations for middle school science, including use of "hands-on, minds-on" inquiry-based science instruction in which at least eighty percent of instructional time is spent on investigations. Units preview content from the next three grade levels, including life, earth and physical science.

Course length: Yearlong

Prerequisites: None

Grade level: Required for 5th Grade

Credits earned: 1.0 MS Science

Life Science

The sixth-grade curriculum revolves around the theme of life science, and students learn content using scientific skills. Students continue developing skills in three major categories: scientific inquiry, scientific communication and engineering. The goal for every student is to engage with content in a variety of learning experiences that align with the National Science Teachers' Association recommendations for middle school science, including using "hands-on, minds-on" inquiry-based science instruction in which at least eighty percent of instructional time is spent on investigations. Within the life science content, units of study include the astrobiology, cells, plants, ecology, genetics and evolution.

Course length: Yearlong

Prerequisites: None

Grade level: Required for 6th Grade

Credits earned: 1.0 MS Science

Earth Science

Seventh-grade curriculum revolves around the theme of earth science, and students learn content through the use of scientific skills. Students will develop proficiency in four major categories: scientific

argumentation, scientific inquiry, engineering design, and scientific literacy. The goal for every student is to engage with content in a variety of learning experiences, which align with the National Science Teachers' Association recommendations for middle school science including using "hands-on, minds-on" inquiry-based science instruction and where at least eighty percent of instructional time is spent on laboratory investigations. Units of study include the rock cycle, plate tectonics, earth's natural disasters, and geologic time scale, as well as some astronomy. In the spring, the class will also continue the middle school health curriculum with a focus on human reproductive systems, sexually transmitted infections, and an examination of the stages of pregnancy and fetal development.

Course length: Yearlong

Prerequisites: None

Grade level: Required for 7th Grade

Credits earned: 1.0 MS Science

Physical Science

The eighth-grade science course plays an integral part in the ongoing curriculum to prepare students for upper school, building on skills and concepts previously introduced. The curriculum revolves around the theme of physical science, and students learn content through the use of scientific skills. Students demonstrate proficiency in three major categories: scientific inquiry, scientific communication and engineering. The goal for every student is to engage with content in a variety of learning experiences that align with the National Science Teachers' Association recommendations for middle school science, including using "hands-on, minds-on" inquiry-based science instruction in which at least eighty percent of instructional time is spent on laboratory investigations. Within the physical science content, units of study include energy, physical and chemical properties of matter, motion, force, electricity and magnetism.

Course length: Yearlong

Prerequisites: None

Grade level: Required for 8th Grade

Credits earned: 1.0 MS Science

SOCIAL STUDIES

Our goals are to build a historical context for understanding modern issues, to examine the interconnectedness of history, and to become active, informed global citizens. Students will explore the tensions between the wants and needs of individuals and groups, and concepts such as fairness, equity, and social justice. Through active discussion, written communication, and leadership opportunities, students are exposed to varied perspectives and gain confidence to develop and voice their own opinions. In social studies, students at Forest Ridge will participate in discourse that develops an appreciation for United States culture along with an understanding of the broad spectrum of cultures, experiences, and accomplishments that characterize today's world. The department fosters opportunities to contribute to the global community and develop active citizenship. Furthermore, the curriculum is designed to build skills and attitudes that will assist our students in further academic study. These include evaluation of and access to varied sources, constructive discussion and debate, oral presentations, technological competency, analytical writing, and research.

America's Past

The fifth-grade social studies curriculum focuses on the study of America's past. In our first unit, students review and practice basic geography and map skills, including labeling features on maps, determining absolute location using latitude and longitude, and identifying physical features of the United States. Students discover how and why Europeans came to the New World. Throughout the year in humanities, we work toward understanding our diversity as a class and appreciating the diverse people and cultures of the United States. The students explore the actions of the British that angered the colonists in the 1700s, and factors that led to the American Revolution. The students discover the main ideas in the Declaration of Independence, and later they will uncover how the unlikely victory of the colonists in the American Revolution unfolded. Students also spend time exploring and interpreting the remaining freedom documents, the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Finally, we end our yearlong study of America's past with a unit on the causes and events of the Civil War. Each social studies unit in fifth grade provides an opportunity for each girl to recognize her personal rights and responsibilities as a young citizen. These historical topics push each student to grow and apply critical thinking and discussion skills while developing a deep knowledge of American heritage and ideals.

Course length: Yearlong

Prerequisites: None

Grade level: Required for 5th Grade

Credits earned: 1.0 MS Social Studies

Identity, Community, Civilization

Sixth grade social studies curriculum is part of an integrated humanities program focused on a year-long study of ancient cultures. Understanding the characteristics of civilization becomes a lens through which we examine a wide range of ancient people. Throughout the year, students investigate civilizations including India, China, Greece, and Coast Salish. We begin each unit by exploring maps to identify physical features of each region and seeing how geography influenced the location of early settlements. Students explore the culture and achievements of each civilization. Throughout the year, students develop an understanding of different types of government and begin to compare and contrast different civilizations. Activities, projects, and historical fiction immerse students in the cultures and civilizations studied. Students practice a variety of academic skills including developing and supporting claims, presentation, note taking, study strategies, researching, and citing sources.

Course length: Yearlong
Prerequisites: None
Grade level: Required for 6th Grade
Credits earned: 1.0 MS Social Studies

Contemporary Global Issues through Historical Context: Developing Global Citizenship

The seventh-grade social studies program focuses on educating students to be global citizens in an increasingly interconnected world. We will explore how the history of our world has shaped human culture and relationships over time and how major events continue to connect or divide people. Major topics include revolution, world demographics, poverty, globalization, population growth, natural resources, and sustainability. Our guiding questions are: How do I fit within this complex, competitive, and connected global village? What are the global priorities of the 21st century? How can we use our own power for the good of the world? Students will be challenged to think critically about history and investigate contemporary global issues. The content of the class provides an opportunity for students to build skills that will help them to develop and practice their abstract critical thinking skills, ask meaningful questions, and become informed global leaders. Students will practice notetaking, annotation, reading for information and analysis, discussion, study skills, research, and writing. Simulations, class discussions, project-based learning, and a research project will help students gain appreciation of the multicultural world in which we live using. Student materials and tools will include a shared class notebook, textbook excerpts, news articles, online resources, videos, and stories.

Course length: Yearlong
Prerequisites: None
Grade level: Required for 7th Grade
Credits earned: 1.0 MS Social Studies

Civics, Citizenship, and Power in the United States

Main areas of focus for eighth-grade social studies are the U.S. Constitution, Washington state history, and United States history. The course is rooted in the study of the history, structure, and purpose of the U.S. government and Constitution. This study prepares the students to be informed and active democratic citizens. In the winter, we turn our attention to Washington state as students learn about geography, indigenous experiences, westward expansion, and the road to statehood. Next, we do an in-depth, thematic study of the fight for equality for Black people in America and women. Finally, we explore what it means to be American through the study of immigration policy, attitudes, and experiences. In addition to a historical perspective, each area of focus also includes a close look at relevant current events, including Supreme Court cases, election coverage, and social movements. Through class activities, group projects, essays, and presentations, students develop critical skills such as understanding varied perspectives, analyzing primary and secondary source material, forming oral and written arguments, implementing annotation strategies, and research.

Course length: Yearlong
Prerequisites: None
Grade level: Required for 8th Grade
Credits earned: 1.0 MS Social Studies

TECHNOLOGY

At Forest Ridge we believe that every student can competently, confidently, and ethically use and innovate with technology. The Technology Department offers courses for all students to develop competencies in computational thinking and in using common software applications, as well as courses for developing a deeper knowledge of computer science and emerging technologies. The Department also advises on the development of technology-rich curriculum across the academic program.

Creativity Lab

Girls work systematically through the creative process and engineering design process to solve real-world problems and produce beautiful works of art. A focus on productive communication and age-appropriate leadership skills accompany each project. To support their endeavors, students have access to state-of-the-art resources at The Shop at Forest Ridge, where they can learn new maker skills and expand their horizons.

Course length: Semester

Prerequisites: None

Grade level: 5th Grade

Credits earned: 0.5 MS Elective

Introduction to Technology Creations

The goal of Intro Technology Creations is to cultivate a deeper, creative appreciation for technology and what we can achieve with computing. Students will explore the creative possibilities within computer programming by learning the fundamentals by game development using the block-based programming language, Scratch. Additionally, students will also be introduced to physical computing with the Micro: Bit controllers and will understand some of the very basics of creating electrical circuits which interface with code. Furthermore, students will be introduced to the basics of text-based programming using the Python programming language and will learn how to create a variety of animations and game concepts.

Course length: Semester

Prerequisites: None

Grade level: 6th Grade

Credits earned: 0.5 MS Elective

Foundations of Programming: Robots to Python

Foundations of Programming introduces students to basic computational thinking concepts and basic programming skills. Problem-solving and teamwork are emphasized. Students begin the semester working in teams to program our NAO robot (Rosie) to dance or tell a story. Rosie is programmed using Choreograph, a block-programming language. Rosie can also be programmed using Python. During the second half of the semester, students begin a study of Python. They learn new skills through in-class activities and apply them during self-selected independent and group projects. Project management, record keeping, and self-reflection are practiced regularly as students make use of the creative design process to turn ideas into products.

Course length: Semester | Please note this course is offered on a rotating basis.

Prerequisites: None

Grade level: 7th/8th Grade

Credits earned: 0.5 MS Elective

Programming & Problem-Solving with Python

This course offers a comprehensive exploration of the fundamental tools and techniques necessary for effective problem-solving through Python programming. Python is a highly regarded language used by seasoned professionals in the field and mastering it can provide students with invaluable skills for the future. Students will collaborate as they learn to tackle complex problems by breaking them down into manageable sub-problems, and develop clear and concise projects. This course offers an engaging hands-on learning experience, aimed at equipping students with the skills and knowledge necessary for success in both future computer programming courses and independent passion projects.

Course length: Semester | Please note this course is offered on a rotating basis.

Prerequisites: Foundations of Programming or teacher permission

Grade level: 7th/8th Grade

Credits earned: 0.5 MS Elective

Maker Lab: High-Tech Wearables

In this course, students develop an innovation mindset by actively engaging in open-ended, self-directed projects. Projects center around designing high-tech wearables. This course is taught out of the Fabrication and Innovation Shop where the core tools of this course are available, including LilyPad Arduinos, sewing machines, an Epilog laser cutter, leatherworking tools, and Chibi Lights. An innovation mindset is cultivated through the growth mindset practice of effortful work, the maker mindset practice of personal initiative, and the team mindset of productive collaboration. Progress is measured through regular self-reflection, peer feedback, and teacher observations.

Course length: Semester | Please note this course is offered on a rotating basis.

Prerequisites: None

Grade level: 7th/8th Grade

Credits earned: 0.5 MS Elective

Graphic Design

This course provides an in-depth exploration of the elements and skills necessary for creating aesthetically pleasing and impactful designs. Throughout the semester, students will gain a comprehensive understanding of the categories of typefaces and their various applications in design, as well as the basic design principles of proximity, alignment, repetition, and contrast. Students will refine their design skills and create stunning posters, flyers, and other promotional materials, seamlessly combining images and text for on-campus advertising purposes. With the use of industry-standard software such as Adobe Fireworks, Photoshop, Illustrator, and InDesign, students will learn the essential features of vector-based images and explore the range of tools and functionalities available in these programs. This engaging and challenging course is designed to provide students with a strong foundation in the principles of graphic design, empowering them to create visually compelling works of art that showcase their creativity and ingenuity.

Course length: Semester | Please note this course is offered on a rotating basis.

Prerequisites: None

Grade level: 7th/8th Grade

Credits earned: 0.5 MS Elective

Video Production

This course provides a thorough introduction to the essential techniques and principles of cinematography. Students will learn proper camera and tripod usage, as well as the basic principles of frame composition and the different types of shots used in filmmaking. Through a combination of individual and group projects, students will develop their creative talents and generate innovative ideas for script treatments and storyboards. Students will spend a majority of the course working in small groups to film and edit their projects, utilizing the latest industry-standard software such as Adobe Premiere Pro. The course will cover various topics, including capturing and cutting footage, using layers of film and audio tracks, adding transitions and credits, and exporting final productions. This course is designed to equip students with the skills and knowledge necessary to create visually stunning and engaging films, making this course an ideal choice for aspiring filmmakers.

Course length: Semester | Please note this course is offered on a rotating basis.

Prerequisites: None

Grade level: 7th/8th Grade

Credits earned: 0.5 MS Elective