

February 16, 2024

Dear CGIS Parents of Rising 7<sup>th</sup> Graders,

It is time to begin our program planning for the 2024-25 school year, and we want you and your student to have the information you need to choose your child's elective courses. You will have an opportunity to discuss elective choices with your student using the below information and decide together. On Monday, February 26<sup>th</sup>, your student will receive an email with a link that will allow him/her to electronically choose his/her electives (1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> choices) for next school year.

Each 7<sup>th</sup> grade student will also have two elective periods. Students will have their main elective class on either Monday/ Wednesdays or Tuesday/ Thursdays. Students will also have a Friday elective. Therefore, you have two choices to make. To help with your decision, below are two links to give you more information about your choices.

- **Informational Video about your Elective choices:** <https://youtu.be/JMmK8Lr82dc>
- **Informational Video about your Friday Elective choices:** <https://youtu.be/kzGf1NY3Zao>

**Elective Courses (meeting on M/W or T/R)**

For the main elective course, students may choose one year-long course. Every student will choose from the following: (Descriptions on following pages.)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Band</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Available by staff recommendations only: (decisions made in the spring)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Academic Success (spring IEP team decision)</li> <li>○ Application of Reading Program</li> <li>○ Study Hall (Admin Selection)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creative Music &amp; Choir</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Orchestra</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• STEM</li> </ul>	

**Friday Courses**

For the Friday elective, every student will choose one of the following courses: (Descriptions on following pages.)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Band: Pops (Must be enrolled in above band elective)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Available by staff recommendations only: (decisions made in the spring)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Academic Success (spring IEP team decision)</li> <li>○ Response to Intervention- Reading and Math</li> <li>○ Study Hall (Admin Selection)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Orchestra: Chamber &amp; Music Leadership (must be enrolled above orchestra elective)</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Music: Performing Arts</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Art: Foundation of Clay</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• STEM (same as hour-long course listed above; do not choose both)</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PE: Fitness and Wellness</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Library: Hawk Helpers</li> </ul>	

Please discuss these choices with your rising 7<sup>th</sup> grader, your student will submit his/her choice of electives at school, so please be sure to have come to a decision by then. If you have any questions, please contact the appropriate Encore teacher listed below.

## Elective Course Descriptions

●**Band** (3rd Year): Students who are in their third year of instrumental music may sign up for the 7th grade band class. In this course, we will continue to master skills such as intonation, sight-reading, musical expression, and more. Students will be challenged with new musical skills, as well as more difficult concert/festival literature. This year is used to prepare students for their Jr. High Band experience.

Teacher: Erin Whaley, [erin.whaley@maryville-schools.org](mailto:erin.whaley@maryville-schools.org)

●**Orchestra** (3<sup>rd</sup> year) The early focus will be to get students prepared for more challenging music literature. This involves knowledge of 2-octave scales, music reading skills, and solo preparation. Building upon the previous years, students will continue to refine their intonation, vibrato, and shifting ability. Performance of challenging literature will raise the student's performance level. An additional pops concert collaboration occurs in March with the Jr. High Orchestra when students will learn how to play popular music styles and perform side by side with their 8<sup>th</sup>/9<sup>th</sup> grade peers.

Teacher: Melissa Hathorn, [melissa.hathorn@maryville-schools.org](mailto:melissa.hathorn@maryville-schools.org)

●**Creative Music & Choir**: In this exciting, energetic class students will learn how to read music, play the ukulele, and become better and more confident singers. All these skills will prepare students for performance opportunities such as Veteran's Day concert, City of Maryville Christmas Tree Lighting, Christmas Open House, CGIS Artfest, and our favorite-Spring Sing in the Smokies! If you want to learn to play the ukulele, this is the class for you! If you enjoy singing, this is the class for you! If you want to be a better singer, this is the class for you. If you think you cannot sing, sign up for this class and let me teach you! We will have a great time learning and making music together.

Teacher: Martha Robinson, [martha.robinson@maryville-schools.org](mailto:martha.robinson@maryville-schools.org)

●**STEM**: 7<sup>th</sup> grade STEM is a yearlong class with a focus on Automation and Robotics; students trace the history, development, and influence of automation and robotics. Students learn about mechanical systems, energy transfer, machine automation, and computer control systems. Working in collaborative groups that utilize problem solving, teamwork, and innovation is part of our exploration of robotics. Students will also be introduced to computer programming, as they learn to think systematically when programming the robots, they have created.

Teacher: Barbara Taylor, [barbara.taylor@maryville-schools.org](mailto:barbara.taylor@maryville-schools.org)

### **Administrative Placement Courses: (decisions made in the spring)**

●**Academic Success**: Academic Success is a scheduled class aimed at teaching specific academic skill gap weaknesses in reading and math identified by testing. Research based instructional programming is utilized to remediate academic weaknesses. In addition, this class also seeks to teach students prevocational skills such as organization and work completion. Student placement in this class is by IEP team decision only. If you have questions, please ask your child's IEP case manager.

●**Application of Reading Program (ARP)** is a scheduled class that will focus on improving reading skills, introducing and incorporating research-based reading strategies that students can use in their core classes, and digging deeper into a text to acquire a more complex understanding. Students will also have a voice in selecting class novels, themes, and projects for the year. We will also incorporate guest speakers around the themes and projects. Students will be placed in this class by invitation only.

●**Study Hall**: A period set aside during the school day for students to work independently and receive academic help from a teacher or teaching assistant.

## **Friday Elective Course Descriptions**

●**Band: Pops:** Students who wish to participate in the Coulter Grove "Pops" Band should elect to take this class. In this ensemble, students will get to experience a more diverse selection of repertoire. Music selections for this group are usually chosen from a more "popular" music genre such as rock, pop, jazz, movie soundtracks, and more! Additionally, this elective class will be used to prepare students who wish to audition for Junior Band Clinic in the fall semester. If you plan to audition, you should elect to take this class.

Teacher: Erin Whaley, [erin.whaley@maryville-schools.org](mailto:erin.whaley@maryville-schools.org)

●**Orchestra: Chamber Orchestra and Music Leadership:** Designed for the students who want to master the skills needed for Jr. Clinic, Chamber Orchestra, and solo performance. Introduction of 3-octave scales and a variety of ensemble literature will challenge the students to raise their level of musicianship. We will read a new piece every week to improve your sight-reading abilities to strengthen your performance skills and refine your auditions.

Teacher: Melissa Hathorn, [melissa.hathorn@maryville-schools.org](mailto:melissa.hathorn@maryville-schools.org)

●**Music: Performing Arts:** Do you love to sing? Do you enjoy being on stage? This yearlong course is action-packed with singing, drama, and choreography. Students will learn vocal techniques as well as drama skills. This class will help students become more comfortable getting up in front of each other through the use of pantomime and acting games. Students will learn how to think on their feet and grow creatively through the use of improvisation games & other activities. Basic stage terminology and acting skills will be taught. Students will further develop their skills through performance opportunities. Students must be able to stay after school on Thursday afternoons when working on a specific play presentation.

Teacher: Martha Robinson, [martha.robinson@maryville-schools.org](mailto:martha.robinson@maryville-schools.org)

●**Art: Foundation of Clay:** In this 3-D design course, students will be introduced to a wide variety of sculptural techniques that could include any of the following: ceramics, paper mâché, fiber arts, wood, found objects and mixed media. Students learn to translate their two-dimensional skills into three-dimensional forms through building, sculpting, carving, modeling, and more. Student artists develop creative, technical, and problem-solving skills in a sculptural context with a focus on safety procedures, routines, and techniques. This course is not progressive but is designed for student success no matter their prior experience.

Teacher: Ericka Ryba, [ericka.ryba@maryville-schools.org](mailto:ericka.ryba@maryville-schools.org)

●**STEM: (same as hour course description above, cannot choose both)**

Teacher: Barbara Taylor, [barbara.taylor@maryville-schools.org](mailto:barbara.taylor@maryville-schools.org)

●**PE: Fitness and Wellness:** This course will emphasize fitness concepts and lifetime wellness. Instruction will include personal goal setting, individualized workouts, nutrition education, and other physical and mental health topics.

Teachers: Kristi Dunkel and Ryan Tallent, [kristi.dunkel@maryville-schools.org](mailto:kristi.dunkel@maryville-schools.org) and [ryan.tallent@maryville-schools.org](mailto:ryan.tallent@maryville-schools.org)

●**Library: Hawk Helpers:** Love to serve? This class will allow a small number of students the opportunity to provide service to the school as office helpers, library helpers, and other roles throughout the school on Fridays. Teacher: Katie Voyles, [katie.voyles@maryville-schools.org](mailto:katie.voyles@maryville-schools.org)

### **Available by staff recommendations only: (decisions made in the spring)**

●**Academic Success:** Academic Success is a scheduled class aimed at teaching specific academic skill gap weaknesses in reading and math identified by testing. Research based instructional programming is utilized to remediate academic weaknesses. In addition, this class also seeks to teach students prevocational skills such as organization and work completion. Student placement in this class is by IEP team decision only. If you have questions, please ask your child's IEP case manager.

●**RTI:** Students receive skill-based instruction in their area of need, either reading or math. Students assigned to this class are made eligible by scoring in the at-risk range on our universal screenings and by a recommendation from the CGIS Response to Intervention team. At time of placement, parents receive notification from the reading or math teacher.

●**Study Hall:** A period set aside during the school day for students to work independently and receive academic help from a teacher or teaching assistant.