



# Seoul International School

## Course Guide for Middle School 2024- 2025



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[Seoul International School is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges](#)

# Table of Contents

[Vision Statement](#)

[Mission Statement](#)

[Core "TIGERS" Values](#)

[Middle School Grades 6, 7, and 8](#)

[Language Arts](#)

[Mathematics](#)

[Science](#)

[Social Studies](#)

[Art](#)

[Band, Choir and Strings](#)

[Drama](#)

[Physical Education and Health](#)

[World Languages](#)

[Supplementary Courses](#)

[Enrichment Electives](#)

## Vision Statement

Seoul International School will foster an earnest passion for learning that inspires students to work with others in creating a better world for all.

## Mission Statement

Seoul International School develops inquisitive, independent thinkers and collaborative learners, who acquire the essential knowledge necessary to be caring and creative contributors to the world around them.

## Core “TIGERS” Values

Students at Seoul International School will be:

- **T**rustworthy individuals who:
  - Demonstrate academic and personal integrity
  - Strive to reach their potential and have a realistic understanding of themselves
  - Volunteer time, energies and talents to improve the quality of life in the school
- **I**ndependent, critical thinkers who:
  - Solve problems creatively
  - Analyze, evaluate, synthesize and apply information
  - Show competence in research and study skills
- **G**lobal citizens who:
  - Value and preserve the environment
  - Understand that physical and mental well-being is a lifelong commitment
  - Accept and respect the diversity inherent in a multicultural world
- **E**ffective communicators who:
  - Understand oral and written information
  - Express themselves clearly, logically and creatively in oral, written and visual forms
  - Have the ability to integrate technology
- **R**eflective learners who:
  - Demonstrate knowledge with understanding
  - Apply and integrate skills and knowledge from multiple disciplines
  - Recognize and develop their strengths and talents
- **S**ocially responsible individuals who:
  - Collaborate meaningfully and efficiently on teams
  - Value their own contributions and those of others
  - Demonstrate responsibility and effective leaders

# Middle School Program

**Core Courses:** SIS requires five core classes each year in middle school.

Language Arts	6-8
Mathematics	6-8
Social Studies	6-8
Science	6-8
Physical Education	6-8

**Performance Arts Electives:** Each student must also take at least one performance arts elective per year.

Band and Strings Courses		Choir	
Prelude Band	6	Prelude Choir	6
Prelude Strings	6	Opus Choir	7-8
Opus Band	7-8	Drama	6-7-8
Opus Strings	7-8		
Coda Orchestra	7-8		
Beginning Band	6-7		

## Visual Arts, Design, and Technology Electives

Introduction to Coding	6-8	Design and Technology	7-8
Advanced Coding	7-8	Studio Art 6	6
Intro to Robotics	6-7-8	Studio Art 1	7-8
Advanced Robotics	7-8	Studio Art 2	7-8
Fabrication and Design	6		

## World Language Electives

Chinese	
Chinese Foundations 6	
Introduction to Chinese Language and Culture 7	
Chinese 8	
Spanish	
Spanish Foundations 6	
Introduction to to Spanish Language and Culture 7	
Spanish 8	

## Enrichment Electives

Around the World	6-7-8
Debate	7-8
Exploratory Science	7-8
Leadership	7-8
Mindfulness for Academic Growth	6-7-8
Mock Trial	6
MUN	7
MUN	8



# COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

## Language Arts

### Language Arts 6

In this course, students will be using a workshop format to develop the necessary skills and fluencies needed in a balanced reading and writing program. Typically there will be a mini-lesson, independent student reading and writing time, and conferences with the teacher, as well as opportunities to work in small groups to further develop their communicating, listening, and comprehending skills. Analysis of character, personal narratives, research-based information writing, and nonfiction reading are among topics of this course.

### Language Arts 7

In this course, reading, writing and oral communication processes are developed and experienced in a workshop format. In the reader's workshops, students will be engaged in authentic reading experiences that develop reading strategies to improve fluency and comprehension. Students will explore a variety of genres, including narratives, historical fiction and nonfiction. The writer's workshops will incorporate collaboration, conferencing, and self-evaluation as students practice narrative, informational, and argumentative forms of writing.

### Language Arts 8

In this course, students will be using a workshop format to develop the necessary skills and fluencies needed to effectively analyze and discuss elements of literature, as well as develop students' writing and oral communication skills. Typically, there will be a mini-lesson, independent practice time, conferences with the teacher, as well as opportunities to work in small groups. Students will read and analyze a variety of genres, including cultural narratives, autobiographies/memoirs, nonfiction and media. The writing workshops will incorporate collaboration, conferencing, and self-reflection as students practice narrative, informational, and persuasive forms of writing. In addition, students will develop their public speaking skills by participating in debates and oral presentations.

## Mathematics

### Math 6

This is an integrated math course. Topics include computational skills involving integers and rational numbers, proportional thinking (including percentages), setting up and solving simple linear equations and applying these skills in geometry, measurement, basic probability, and problem solving. The objective of the course is to provide students with a foundation for algebra and will apply skills to problem-solving situations.

### Math 7

This course offers an integrated approach to mathematics. Topics include computational skills involving whole numbers, decimals, fractions, and mixed numbers as they relate to algebra, geometry, basic trigonometry, statistics, and problem solving. Math 7 helps students understand the "big picture" of mathematics to prepare them for Algebra I.

### Math 8

This course is designed for students who have studied pre-algebra and covers the applications of algebraic relationships: linear equations, inequalities, and systems; polynomials with factoring; quadratic equations and functions; and radical expressions and equations. This course prepares students for Geometry 9.

# Science

## Science 6

Science 6 is an introductory course in which students will gain experience using the scientific method and critical thinking while studying disciplines of chemistry, biology, earth science, and physics. Students will develop an inquiry driven mindset and delve into STEM oriented projects. Critical thinking will motivate students to question scientific explanations and confront current issues in science.

## Science 7

Science 7 explores numerous scientific disciplines. Students are introduced to and discover a variety of topics such as geology, biology, physics, and environmental science. Students are encouraged to think scientifically, draw conclusions and make connections. Methods of instruction include hands-on learning, reading, researching, reporting, investigating and experimenting.

## Science 8

In Science 8, we will learn how atoms, molecules, and compounds react and identify chemical reactions in our everyday lives. The journey of chemistry continues into biology as we learn about how energy and matter are transferred through organisms and ecosystems. Then, we will learn how this energy has led to changes in organisms over time through natural selection. This will include how humans can intervene in the protection of species and other impacts that humans have on the planet. The year will culminate with a deep dive into space systems and astronomy, including searching for stars and planets in the night sky on our overnight trip.

# Social Studies

## Social Studies 6

The 6th Grade Social Studies curriculum is a foundation in the study of geography. Students will focus on the physical and human characteristics of the earth, developing a deeper understanding of our planet and our place in it. While studying humans around the world, students will compare development, standards of living, systems of government, and economic factors across the globe. In addition, students will gain a rich understanding of global cultures and the historical factors that have shaped the world around them.

## Social Studies 7

Social Studies 7 is primarily a geography course organized around the essential question of how cooperation and conflict have shaped the progress and development of our world over time. The course also integrates history, economics, and current issues. There are regional units on the Africa and South Asia, and a culminating unit on the Holocaust and 20th Century Genocide. The central themes throughout the course are the causes of social and political conflict and the development challenges facing poorer nations. Students will acquire general world geographic literacy while developing critical writing, reading, speaking, technology, and research skills. Each unit ends with a real world authentic assessment designed to have students present a real world solution to critical problems involving human conflict.

## Social Studies 8

Social Studies 8 is a World History course that will introduce students to the study of empire and will move chronologically through Ancient times, the early Classical Period, the Middle Ages, the Early Modern Period, and the Age of Exploration. Empires, which share common characteristics, include the incorporation of a variety of peoples and territories in unequal relationships of power. Students will learn how empires have influenced and shaped much of human history. There will be an emphasis on global coverage embedded in each of the units. In this way, students will be able to learn history through a comparative study that looks at wide range of different civilizations across the Globe. Students will learn to: 1) identify, evaluate and analyze a variety of primary and secondary sources, 2) learn how scholars assess and revise the work of past historians, and 3) develop and support arguments based upon reliable evidence.

## Physical Education and Health

### Physical Education and Health

Open To: 6-8

Leads To: Physical Education - Grade 9

Course Description:

A comprehensive program of physical education in middle school provides students with the opportunity to learn and develop a variety of skills at their appropriate level. In grade 6 students are exposed to basic motor skills applicable to individual and team sports, which are further built upon in grade 7. In grade 8, students are continuing to develop skills leaning towards application into game play. This course is created to promote a healthy lifestyle through different fitness activities while reinforcing a spirit of cooperation, fair play, and sportsmanship.

# Performing Arts Electives

## Band Electives

### Beginning Band

Open To: 6-7  
 Prerequisite(s): None  
 Leads To: Opus Band

#### Course Description:

The Beginning Band is for students who are brand new to their instruments. No prior musical experience is required to join this class. Students will have the opportunity to try out both woodwind and brass instruments to determine which one they wish to study. Instruments available for selection include: Flute, Clarinet, Trumpet and Trombone. Once instruments have been selected, students will need to get their own instrument either through purchase or through a rental/lease with a music store. Assessments will be based on progress. Through practice and patience, students will gradually learn the basics of music theory and how to make quality sounds on their selected instrument. Evaluations will happen periodically and instrument changes can be made if appropriate (this is generally not an issue). This ensemble will perform at the Middle School Winter and Spring Concerts as well as have the opportunity to audition for the KIMEA Middle School Honor Festival and are eligible to participate in the KIMEA Solo & Ensemble Festival.

### Prelude Band

Open To: 6  
 Prerequisite(s): Must have basic ability to play a band instrument  
 Leads To: Middle School Opus Band or Middle School Coda Orchestra

#### Course Description:

The Prelude Band is where we begin to develop ensemble skills in young musicians. Students who already have basic ability to play a band instrument are encouraged to join. Through performance and rehearsal opportunities, students will develop greater skill on their individual instrument as well as listening and performance skills associated with performing in a large group. All assessments and evaluations in this course are designed to ensure that all students develop musically and perform at their full potential. Participation and practice are the key elements towards success in this program. This ensemble will perform at the Middle School Winter and Spring Concerts as well as have the opportunity to audition for the KIMEA Middle School Honor Festival and are eligible to participate in the KIMEA Solo & Ensemble Festival.

### Opus Band

Open To: 7-8  
 Prerequisite(s): Students must have developing ability to play a band instrument  
 Leads To: High School Band

#### Course Description:

The Opus Band is designed to combine a rigorous music curriculum with a high quality performance experience. Students in the Opus Band generally have 2+ years experience on their instrument. Students should not be beginners. Opus band members will have the opportunity to perform quality music repertoire and will participate in the annual KAIAC Large Ensemble Festival. All assessments and evaluations in this course are designed to ensure that all students develop musically and perform at their full potential. Participation and practice are the key elements towards success in this program. This ensemble will perform at the Middle School Winter and Spring Concerts as well as have the opportunity to audition for the KIMEA and AMIS Middle School Honor Festivals and are eligible to participate in the KIMEA Solo & Ensemble Festival.



## String Electives

### Prelude Strings

Open To: 6  
 Prerequisite(s): No audition. At least 1-2 years of experience on a string instrument, except for double bass and viola (6 months)  
 Leads To: Middle School Opus Strings, Middle School Coda Orchestra

#### Course Description:

The Prelude Strings provides grade 6 students with the opportunity to play in a string orchestra setting. This class rehearses every other day and will run the entire year. Students will perform in the winter and spring concerts. Basic playing techniques are reviewed and Intermediate techniques are introduced through a variety of scales, etudes and string orchestra repertoire. Students will begin learning ensemble skills and play level appropriate repertoire. In addition, students will study music literacy, knowledge of music terminology, and music theory.

### Opus Strings

Open To: 7-8  
 Prerequisite(s): No audition. At least 2-3 years experience on a string instrument, except for double bass and viola (6 months)  
 Leads To: Middle School Coda Orchestra, High School Strings

#### Course Description:

The Opus Strings provides grade 7&8 students with the opportunity to play in a string orchestra setting. This class rehearses every other day and will run the entire year. Students will perform in the winter and spring concerts as well in other music events. Intermediate playing techniques are reviewed and more advanced techniques are introduced through a variety of scales, etudes and string orchestra repertoire. Students will develop ensemble skills and play level appropriate repertoire. In addition, students will study music literacy, knowledge of music terminology, and music theory. Students in Opus Strings are eligible to participate in KIMEA and AMIS MS Honor Orchestra Festivals and KIMEA Solo & Ensemble Festival.

### Coda Symphony Orchestra

Open To: 7-8  
 Prerequisite(s): At least 2-3 years experience, members are selected through audition  
 Leads To: High School Orchestra, High School Strings, High School Band

#### Course Description:

MS Coda Symphony Orchestra is for accomplished grade 7&8 Strings or Band students who would like to perform in a full orchestra setting. This is an auditioned class and students must be enrolled in Opus Strings or Opus Band as their first music class. Coda Symphony Orchestra will be the student's second music class. Students will learn advanced ensemble skills and perform classical/symphonic to contemporary full orchestra repertoire and will participate in Winter/Spring concerts, KAIAC Large Ensemble Orchestra Festival, KIMEA Solo & Ensemble Festival, and also KIMEA and AMIS Honor Festivals.

## Choir Electives

## **Prelude Choir**

Open To: 6  
 Leads To: Middle School Opus Choir

### **Course Description:**

Students study and practice the art of singing within the context of a treble choral ensemble. Concepts of tone production, technique, and articulation will be introduced. Students will also be introduced to the concepts of changing voice, which they will experience later in middle school. In addition, students will study music literacy (sight-singing), knowledge of music terminology, and basic (level 1) music theory. In choir, students will encounter numerous musical styles, levels and genres of choral music performances. Through a combination of classroom study and ensemble rehearsal, students will be introduced to the choral art in which they will learn the importance of aesthetic expression and the joy of singing.

## **Opus Choir**

Open To: 7-8  
 Leads To: High School Choir

### **Course Description:**

Opus Choir serves to develop the voice as it changes throughout the teenage years. Students will explore more advanced repertoire which requires them to sing in three or four part harmony. They will develop their knowledge and skills of tone production, ensemble work, breathing techniques and vocal projection. For older students, Opus Choir is an excellent way to prepare them for auditioning for Ambassadors Choir or joining Concert Choir, both of which are for Grade 9-12 students. No prior experience is required however, a love of singing and being able to hold a tune is desirable.

## **Drama**

### **Drama**

Open To: 6-8  
 Leads To: Drama 2 or High School Drama

### **Course Description:**

Drama is a practical elective course for students that have little or no experience in Drama. The focus of this semester course is on physical performance and we will explore this through mime or mask work. In the second half of the course students will be encouraged to add the use of voice to create basic characters in the world of Fairytales or Melodrama. There will also be the opportunity for students to explore a theatre design role to expand their knowledge of the collaborative nature of the medium.

As students advance, they will have the opportunity to explore characterisation techniques in order to tell their stories in greater depth and detail. They will also be introduced to a historical genre of theatre and investigate ways to use the conventions of the genre to put across a message or story relevant to them in the modern world. The semester will end with a 'page to stage' unit where students will work together to produce a performance of a short play.

# Visual Art, Design, and Technology

## Studio Art 6

Open To: 6-8  
Leads To: Studio Art 1

### Course Description:

This is a beginning art class that teaches the elements of art and the principles of design. Students will explore basic art, media and techniques, such as drawing, painting, graphic design, photography, collage, ceramics, printmaking, sculpture and more to create an art portfolio and website. They will also learn art history.

## Studio Art 1

Open To: 6-8  
Leads To: Studio Art 2

### Course Description:

This is a beginning art class that teaches the elements of art and the principles of design. Students will explore basic art, media and techniques, such as drawing, painting, graphic design, photography, collage, ceramics, printmaking, sculpture and more to create an art portfolio and website. They will also learn art history.

## Studio Art 2

Open To: 6-8  
Leads To: HS Studio Art 1

### Course Description:

This is an intermediate art class that teaches students to use the elements of art and the principles of design to create art that communicates their ideas about the world. Students will strengthen skills learned in MS Studio 1 while creating an art portfolio. They will also learn about artforms and artists from all around the world.

## Design and Fabrication

Open To: 6  
Leads To: Kinesthetics and Electronics

### Course Description:

In this course, students will have a hands-on introductory experience of the basic fabrication process, which includes the iterative prototyping of three-dimensional form by utilizing various shop machines and power tools.

## Design and Technology

Open To: 7-8  
Leads To:

### Course Description:

This course aims to guide students in reading and building electronic schematics, building circuits, exploring motors and sensors, and experimenting with microcontrollers.

## Introduction to Robotics

Open to: Grade 6  
Course Description:

There is no doubt that the expanding industry of Artificial Intelligence is changing the way we interact with the world around us. This introductory Robotics elective provides students the opportunity to exercise skill sets of the 21st century, engage in team building, computational thinking, problem solving, and also problem finding. We will learn how to use block based coding to program a wide range of fun and engaging applications. No previous coding experience is required. Beginners are encouraged to join!

## **Advanced Robotics**

Open to:

Grade 7 & 8

### **Course Description:**

Advanced Robotics builds upon the foundational knowledge gained in the Introduction to Robotics class. Students will continue to refine their understanding of robot behavior while participating in engaging and collaborative engineering tasks. Prerequisites for this course include understanding key terms such as sensors, gear trains, manipulators, etc. Additionally, students should have basic coding knowledge.

# World Languages

## Chinese Foundations

Open to: 6  
Leads to: Introduction to Chinese Language and Culture

### Course Description:

This course aims to help students gain a solid knowledge of Chinese language and develop essential skills in understanding listening, speaking, key vocabulary recognition, and developing character writing knowledge and skill. In addition, students will be exposed to Chinese culture in order to better understand the cultural background in which their language skills will be used. This is a semester-long course.

## Introduction to Chinese Language and Culture

Open to: 7  
Leads to: Chinese 8

### Course Description:

In 7th Grade, students will acquire the Chinese language through lots of listening, speaking, reading and writing practices. It is a year-long course. The students will explore and comprehend different news-based graded readers. The news-based graded readers derived from the following units of study. We will focus on the following units in 7th Grade: Community Life, Current Events and Social Issues, Food and Healthy Living, Technology and Innovation, Travel and Vacation, Culture and Traditions.

## Chinese 8

Open to: 8  
Leads to: HS Chinese 2

### Course Description:

As a high school-level course, Chinese 8 is the first Chinese course of an articulated Chinese program that culminates with AP Chinese. Students will be able to conduct daily conversation in Chinese, and to read and write short passages at the end of the course.

Chinese 8 is an introductory course to Mandarin Chinese (Standard Chinese). With communicative classroom activities and online practice, this course seeks to help students acquire rudimentary knowledge of Chinese and develop basic skills in understanding, speaking, reading, and writing. By the end of the course, students are expected to have a good command of the pronunciation system and basic grammar, be able to conduct daily conversation in simple Chinese, and to read and write short passages. In addition, students will be exposed to Chinese culture in order to better understand the cultural background in which their language skills will be used.

## Spanish Foundations

Open to: 6  
Leads to: Introduction to Spanish Language and Culture

### Course Description:

This course explores the basics of the Spanish language and the culture it inhabits. With the aid of videos, music, images, texts and games, students will gain an initial understanding of the language, including colors, numbers, greetings, family, friends, and community. The course is open to students with no prior exposure to Spanish.

## Introduction to Spanish Language and Culture

Open to: 7  
Leads to: Spanish 8

### Course Description:



This year-long course will cover all the basic vocabulary and structures required for elementary Spanish, including expressing feelings, giving and receiving directions, describing surroundings, and engaging in basic conversation. The class will also devote time to culture in the Spanish speaking world. The culture segments of the class may be taught in English.

### **Spanish 8**

Open to: 8

Leads to: HS Spanish 2

#### **Course Description:**

It is the first course of articulated Spanish program that culminates in AP Spanish. In Spanish 8, we will be learning more tenses and grammatical structures. More tenses = more conversational range! The course also relies on projects and games to glue together the concepts and vocabulary learned in class.

Vocabulary will be grouped by themes that have relevance to students' life, such as family, technology, community and the environment.

# Enrichment Electives

SIS Middle School values promote exploration and well-roundedness. To that end, we offer elective courses to our sixth, seventh, and eighth graders. Courses vary year-to-year based on student interest. The courses are each one quarter long which allows students to experience four per year. Students will not receive a grade for these courses. The courses for next year are as follows:

## **Around the World**

Open to: Grade 6 & 7

Course Description:

This course focuses on explorations of the world around us and culminates in by-monthly presentations. Students will work in small groups and be given a different country every other week. They will research several aspects of the country, guided by the instructor, and they will present their findings orally and with minimal written aid. This course provides an excellent opportunity to practice public speaking and research skills.

## **Debate**

Open to: Grade 7 & 8

Course Description:

In Debate students will explore the art of 'organized arguing.' Students will be discussing current issues and if they don't already have a strong voice and good presentation skills, they will learn these skills in a fun and highly rewarding environment. Students will learn to create factual/logical, ethical and emotional arguments to persuade others that their "side" is correct. The club uses the formal debate format.

## **Exploratory Science**

Open to: Grade 7 & 8

Course Description:

This course is for students who want to deepen their knowledge of science and lab practices. This class is about DOING science! Throughout the semester, students will dive into a series of captivating experiments that not only demystify scientific principles but also cultivate essential skills such as observation, data collection, and analysis. By the end of this course, students will have gained a solid foundation in scientific principles and hopefully developed a sense of wonder and appreciation for the incredible world around them.

## **Leadership**

Open to: Grade 7 & 8

Course Description:

Our new Leadership course is for students who would like to do a bit more to make our middle school better. We will work to develop leadership skills in real-life situations. Students will work on planning and running assemblies, improving communication to all community members, and improving logistics around the middle school. We are looking for students who would like to take a chance and learn what it takes to be a leader who makes things better for others.

All students are welcome to sign up. Due to limited space, not all students may get into the class.

## **Mindfulness for Academic Growth**

Open to: Grade 7 & 8

Course Description:

Unlock your full potential with "Mindfulness for Academic Growth and Achievement"! In this transformative class, students will discover the power of mindfulness techniques to enhance their academic performance, personal well-being, and time management skills. Through various mindfulness practices, students will learn to cultivate focus, manage stress, and regulate emotions, creating a conducive environment for learning and growth. By integrating mindfulness into their daily routines, students will develop effective time management strategies, prioritize tasks, and achieve greater balance in their academic and personal lives.

Join us on a journey of self-discovery and academic excellence as we harness the profound power of mindfulness for success in school and beyond.



### **Mock Trial**

Open to: Grade 6

#### **Course Description:**

Mock trials have proven to be an effective learning tool for students. It helps students understand the law, practice critical thinking, increase proficiency in writing, and increase confidence in public speaking by assuming the roles of attorneys and witnesses in a fictional criminal or civil trial.

In this Mock Trial class, students will read and analyze specific court cases, perform mock trials, argue cases, and come to a verdict. To prepare for a mock trial, students will learn the techniques used to conduct trials, including the importance of evidence, preparing opening statements, direct examinations and cross examinations of witnesses, closing arguments, and objections.

### **Model United Nations 7**

Open to: Grade 7

#### **Course Description:**

This intro to MUN course for 7th grade students will include information and instructions for participating in MUN including how to perform topic research, policy statement writing, opening speech delivery and resolution writing. Apart from learning the procedures of MUN, students will learn about the history and mission of the United Nations and have the opportunity to research and understand contemporary global issues and topics.

### **Model United Nations 8**

Open to: Grade 8

#### **Course Description:**

This class is for students who would like to go to the next level in MUN. Students taking this course will have the opportunity to attend the MUN conference in Taipei American School in Taiwan (TASMUN). Since space is limited to go to TASMUN, selection criteria will be based on participation in other Seoul-based MUN conferences, behavior, and attendance. Final selection will be before Semester Two.

## Additional Classes

### **Learning Resource**

The Middle School Learning Resource class is designed to support students in building essential math, reading, and executive functioning skills. Through a differentiated curriculum, students receive individualized instruction tailored to their specific needs and learning styles. Students explore a wide range of mathematical concepts, from basic operations to problem-solving strategies, using hands-on activities while providing lessons to enrich learning in their grade level math class. In addition, students develop critical reading skills, including comprehension, analysis, and inference, through a variety of literature genres and informational texts. The executive functioning skills component focuses on helping students develop effective strategies for time management, organization, and fostering independence to achieve success in their academic pursuits. With a supportive and inclusive learning environment, the Middle School Learning Resource class equips students with the foundational skills and strategies necessary for academic achievement and lifelong learning.

### **Advisory**

Advisory period occurs Monday-Thursday and provides an opportunity for students to check in and ensure that every student knows he/she has an important place in the school community. All Middle School students have a faculty advisor who serves as a trusted adult, mentor, and advocate in the life of the student, and who leads the lessons and activities provided to them. Grade-levels have specific curriculum covering topics that are relevant and appropriate to their developmental stage. Each advisory group is also responsible for coordinating several grade-level assemblies throughout the year.