

GREENBUSH-MIDDLE RIVER PERFORMING ARTS

K-6 General Music

9-12 Choir

7-12 Band

7-8 Theatre and Choir

Minnesota students are required to be literate in the arts by the time they graduate from High School. A student is considered literate when they possess a combination of 1) foundational knowledge (knowing and understanding) and applied skills (doing) in an art form. The *Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards in the Arts* list five arts disciplines for students: dance, music, theater, visual, and media arts.

At Greenbush-Middle River School, we teach Music and Theater. We do this in a supportive, nurturing, and challenging environment that provides students with opportunities for growth, skills development, knowledge, and encouragement for personal and creative expression at age-appropriate levels. This study of Music and Theatre prepares confident life-long learners who are equipped with tools for success in a complex and rapidly changing world. Our challenging performing arts programs foster meaningful creative, intellectual, social, and personal growth for all students, regardless of ability.

How do we do it? Our teaching and learning are based upon a set of core beliefs which support and influence our class time with purpose and direction. These are:

- The arts are essential to a well-rounded education and a well-informed mind.
- The Performing Arts are academic disciplines requiring effort, scholarship, skill development, and assessment. They also take time to learn, practice, and master.
- An effective and challenging arts curriculum provides students with opportunities for personal and academic growth.
- Through Music and Theatre studies, students learn alternative forms of personal expression; they use imagination to communicate and share ideas, they use their physical bodies as a vessel for making art, they learn to perceive the world around them in ways unique to the arts, they expand their creative awareness, they sharpen problem-solving skills, they practice teamwork, they improve relationship skills, and they grow in confidence.
- The arts teach and students learn the common language that is shared across cultures, nations, beliefs, and ethnicities.
- All modalities and ages for learning can be implemented in teaching performing arts.
- All modalities of teaching (in-person, hybrid, online) can be successfully implemented studying performing arts.

Our GMR learning environment is safe, supportive, and respectful, every day. As our students learn to become adults, to live as good citizens, and contribute to their communities, the arts continue to play a vital role in creating cultures, building civilizations, and connecting one group of people to another. They remain a necessary catalyst for human expression and provide balance in an increasingly technological society.

We look forward to having your student join us!

PERFORMING ARTS FOR GRADES 7-8

In this class, students begin a more formal academic study of the performing arts of theater and vocal music. They move from fine arts at the Elementary basic level toward an Intermediate level of knowledge, experience, skills, and participation.

Introduction to Theater – Semester I

We explore our shared human experience that is found in all plays – comedy, drama, tragedy - and we learn the basic design and technical elements of theater. We begin our studies in Ancient Greece and finish in the 21st Century.

Students are introduced to theater arts in the following way.

- We examine theater through a historical and cultural perspective.
- We read, study, analyze, and discuss great plays, focusing on the universal themes of family, love, human behavior, social issues, and problem solving.
- We learn and practice elements of theatrical design for each play we discuss in class. These are set design, lighting, sound, music, properties, script writing, acting, costumes, makeup.
- We learn basic performance techniques as appropriate for each genre of play: storytelling, masks, puppets, voicing, accents, character, physicality.

We study plays, appropriate for Middle School students, from among the following list:

Antigone, Twelfth Night, A Midsummer Night's Dream, The Importance of Being Earnest, The Matchmaker, Sorry Wrong Number, Our Town, The Miracle Worker, Arsenic and Old Lace, Hamilton, The Odd Couple, The Marriage Proposal, Twelve Angry Men.

Students will participate in the GMR Winter Concert.

Introduction to Choir – Semester II

In this semester, Junior High students are introduced to the basic foundations of music literacy, singing, and musicianship appropriate to their age, grade, and development. This class prepares them for more advanced studies in High School.

Students are introduced to music in the following way.

- Artistic Foundations (Music Literacy) - Students learn to read, explain, and write music notation and understand the basic elements of music theory, rhythm, dynamics, melody, harmony, tone color, texture, form, style, genre.

● **Creating Music** - Students read, interpret and use the symbolic language of music notation and the structures, materials and techniques of the discipline to learn their songs and sing as an ensemble.

● **Singing** – Students use their maturing voice to learn to sing in a modified bel canto style that is appropriate to their age and development. The sound is deliberate, elegant, refined, and sweet-toned. It emphasizes diction, sound placement, and voice health. In this style, their natural voice and sound is deliberately controlled, chosen, and shaped, new vocal technique is learned and applied, and the anatomy of the entire body is used to create, produce, and sustain beautiful sound.

● **Responding to Music** - Students learn and demonstrate their ability to interpret, perceive and respond with understanding when they describe, analyze, interpret, evaluate, and manage their own music and the music of others.

● **Performing Music** - Students sing alone, and with others, a varied repertoire of music, applying basic skills in singing, reading music, and playing instruments, to interpret and share the music they are learning and creating.

● **Connecting Music to Other Things** – With their new knowledge and confidence, students demonstrate an understanding of our shared artistic heritage through discussions of the history and cultural contexts of the music they are singing. They apply their knowledge from music in the study of other disciplines, including math, science, social studies, culture, literature.

Students participate in the GMR Spring Concert and Graduation. They will sing as an ensemble and with the High School Choir. Middle School Choirs are considered a Junior Varsity activity under MSHSL rules and are not eligible to participate in the MSHSL Large Ensemble Music Festival.