



WESTRIDGE SCHOOL

# Middle School

2024-2025

## Curriculum Guide

GRADES 7-8

## Philosophy

The Westridge Middle School program is based on the premise that middle school is more than a stepping stone to upper school. While our program builds the skills and habits that will be necessary in upper school, it is also designed to address the diverse developmental needs of students in the 7th and 8th grades. As girls navigate adolescence, they are immersed in a program that is designed for them and that places women and their impact at its center. Girls are encouraged to cultivate a love of learning, to develop an understanding of who they are and their values, and to learn how to explore, think, and draw conclusions. The middle school experience enables girls to enter the upper school as confident, articulate, self-motivated individuals.

# Middle School

## CURRICULUM GUIDE



More detailed curriculum information can be found at

[www.westridge.org/  
middleschool](http://www.westridge.org/middleschool)

### 7th Grade

- Cultural Studies (English & History)
- Pre-Algebra and Advanced Pre-Algebra
- Life Science
- Spanish, Mandarin Chinese, or Latin
- Physical Education
- Arts (choice of one):
  - Choir
  - Orchestra
  - Theatre
  - Visual Arts 7
- Computer Science 7 (one semester)
- Human Development 7 (one semester)
- Study Hall
- Semester Electives:
  - Coding & Game Design
  - Rocketry
  - Speech & Debate
  - STEAM Projects
  - Study Hall

---

### 8th Grade

- American Studies (English & History)
- Algebra I or Advanced Algebra I
- Concepts in Earth and Physical Science
- Spanish, Mandarin Chinese, or Latin
- Physical Education
- Arts (choice of one):
  - Choir
  - Orchestra
  - Theatre
  - Visual Arts 8
- Computer Science 8 (one semester)
- Human Development 8 (one semester)
- Study Hall (one semester)
- Semester Electives:
  - Coding & Game Design
  - Rocketry
  - Speech & Debate
  - STEAM Projects
  - Study Hall



16

AVERAGE  
MIDDLE SCHOOL  
CLASS SIZE

## 1:1 Laptop Program

As part of our 1:1 laptop program, each student in the Middle School is given the use of a Lenovo Yoga laptop computer, the cost of which is included in tuition and fees. The computer is on long-term loan to the students for use at school and at home. Technology is thoughtfully integrated throughout the curriculum to enhance student learning.

## Interdisciplinary Studies

Westridge's Middle School takes an interdisciplinary approach to English and history (Cultural Studies in grade 7 and American Studies in grade 8). In addition, the seventh grade engages in two separate interdisciplinary units on water and soil. Our English, history, math, and science faculty have created units that allow the students to discover the ways that different disciplines can join together to address problems that single disciplines cannot.

## Retreats & Trips

To kick off the school year, students bond as a class on their respective retreats. Teachers take full advantage of the numerous local cultural, historical, scientific, and artistic venues by creating field trips designed to enhance student learning. During Discovery Week in the spring, the 7th grade learn about the world around them via multiple day trips in the Los Angeles area, and the 8th grade attends "California Coasting," a 4-day, 3-night exploration trip up the coast.

## Arts

The arts are integral to the 4-12 Westridge program. Middle School students take a full year of an art of their choosing. Their options include orchestra, choir, visual arts, or theatre.

## Athletics

Middle School students compete in the Middle School Independent League in basketball, flag football, golf, soccer, softball, swimming, tennis, track and field, and volleyball, as well as in the Interscholastic Equestrian League. Middle School athletics provides each student the opportunity to participate on a team, and students are grouped by ability to support appropriate learning and challenge for both casual and competitive athletes.

## Student Support

Providing a support system for our students' well-being as they navigate school and social situations is of great importance to us. In Middle School, student support comes in many forms. Two school counselors, a dean of student support, and a learning support specialist are important resources for our students. In addition, we work with students on self-advocacy, independence, and preparing for life after middle school. Time is built into the schedule for conferencing with teachers and meetings with advisors, important habits for students to build early in their academic careers.

# Middle School Schedule

All grades at Westridge operate on a six-day cycle. Days are designated as 1-6 and referred to as odd or even days.

Our block schedule means academic and elective classes meet every other day, allowing for deeper class discussions and collaboration in 70-minute class blocks. Physical education meets every day for 40 minutes.

## 7th Grade

The Middle School curriculum offers an integrated, interdisciplinary approach to the teaching of English and history. In seventh grade, this course is Cultural Studies. In addition to math and science, students select a language (Spanish, Mandarin Chinese, or Latin), an art discipline, and an elective course, and take semester-long computer science, Human Development, and study hall classes. There is a 35-minute block every morning for advisory, clubs, class meetings, assemblies, conferencing, and other student support programming.

### SAMPLE 7TH GRADE SCHEDULE

	8:00-8:35	8:40-9:50		10:05-10:45	10:50-12	12-12:40	12:40-1:50	1:55-3:05
<b>Odd Days (1, 3, 5)</b>	Class Meeting	Computer Science	Snack	Physical Education	English	Lunch	Advanced Pre-Algebra	Speech & Debate
<b>Even Days (2, 4, 6)</b>	Assembly	Human Development	Snack	Physical Education	Spanish	Lunch	History	Science

## 8th Grade

Continuing with the interdisciplinary approach to English and history, eighth grade students take an integrated course of American Studies. In addition to math, science, and computer science, students continue with their language chosen in seventh grade and choose an art discipline and an elective. As with seventh grade, students have semester-long Human Development and study hall classes in addition to P.E. every day. There is a 35-minute block every morning for advisory, clubs, class meetings, assemblies, conferencing, and other student support programming.

### SAMPLE 8TH GRADE SCHEDULE

	8:00-8:35	8:40-9:50	10:05-11:15	11:20-12	12-12:40	12:40-1:50	1:55-3:05
<b>Odd Days (1, 3, 5)</b>	Clubs	Mandarin Chinese	Advanced Algebra	Physical Education	Lunch	Visual Arts	Rocketry
<b>Even Days (2, 4, 6)</b>	Conferencing	Science	History	Physical Education	Lunch	Computer Science	English



WESTRIDGE SCHOOL

324 Madeline Drive, Pasadena, CA 91105 • [www.westridge.org](http://www.westridge.org)