The IDEAL School of Manhattan

2025-26
High School Curriculum Guide

Updated July 2025

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Mission

The IDEAL School of Manhattan is an inclusion school dedicated to creating a diverse community that affirms and accepts the full identities of all people, while inspiring academic excellence, creative leadership, and a desire to build a more just and equitable world.

High School Vision Statement

IDEAL's High School is a uniquely student-driven, flexible, and individualized program. In small, seminar-style classes, expert faculty cultivate the voice, skills, and confidence of each student through challenging and differentiated academics, creative leadership and service learning opportunities, an integrated multicultural curriculum, and nurturing student-faculty relationships.

IDEAL's High School model is based on a rotating curriculum. Students in Grades 9-12 learn together in intentional groups designed to challenge and support each individual. This means that all High School students study the same essential subject matter in English, history, and science simultaneously. For example, in the 2025-26 school year, all High School students will study United States History, while in English, they will all read literature related to the themes of identity and power. Students in Grades 9-11 study biology in science, and students in Grade 12 take advanced elective courses. Each course is offered at various levels, based on student readiness, including foundational, college-preparatory, and honors. Throughout the year, students from across sections come together to work on projects, participate in extensive discussions, take trips, and share presentations. Creativity is at the heart of IDEAL's High School, and all students are required to participate in arts elective classes.

IDEAL's faculty consists of talented general educators, learning specialists, related service providers, and faculty advisors who collaborate and work in partnership with students and families to provide students with a personalized experience during their High School years.

Honor Code

This Honor Code summarizes but does not replace the community standards and rules for students set forth in The IDEAL School Family Handbook or the IDEAL Upper School Student Handbook and Code of Conduct. It is comprised of five essential rules and responsibilities to guide each community member to serve the school's mission and to participate in the creation of an inclusive and respectful community, in and out of the classroom, where all individuals have the opportunity to strive for excellence, demonstrate creative leadership, and work together to build a more just and equitable world.

The Five I's of IDEAL

1. I will be respectful of the learning process, strive for excellence in and out of the classroom, and engage respectfully in all school classes, programs, and activities.

2. I will act with integrity and represent myself and my work honestly.

3. I will ensure that my words and actions demonstrate respect for all and acceptance of the full identity of all individuals that make up our diverse community.

4. I will strive to ensure that my actions, my work, and my words help to create a more inclusive community and a more just and equitable world.

5. I will be a creative and compassionate leader by modeling IDEAL's core values both in and out of school.

IDEAL Four-Year Course Map

The following course map highlights IDEAL's unique High School rotating curriculum model. Students in Grades 9-12 are blended and learn together in intentional groups designed to challenge and support each individual learner. This means all students in High School study the same essential subject matter in English, history, and science at the same time. Each course is offered at a variety of levels based on student readiness, including foundational, standard, and honors. Throughout the year, students from across sections come together to work on projects, participate in large discussions, take trips, and share presentations.

Graduation Requirements

English 4 Credits	History 4 Credits	Math 4 Credits	Science 3 Credits	Language 3 Credits
Arts 4 Credits	Physical Education 3 Credits	Health 1 Credit	**Graduation** **Required Credits: 26** **Credits Per Year: 7, including Physical Education/Health**	

English

Year 1: Identity and Power
Year 2: Coming of Age and Journeys
Year 3: Conflict and Resolution
Year 4: Heritage and Global Connections

History

Year 1: United States History
Year 2: Semester 1 – Government, Semester 2 – Economics
Year 3: World History
Year 4: World History: Global Civil Rights Movements

Math

All students are placed in the appropriate course in the math sequence below, as determined by the math department and High School Head.

- Math for the Real World, Levels 1-4
- Introduction to Algebra, Algebra 1, or Algebra 1 Honors
- Geometry or Geometry Honors
- Algebra 2/Trigonometry or Algebra 2/Trigonometry Honors
- Precalculus or Precalculus Honors
- Statistics on alternate years

Science

Year 1: Chemistry
Year 2: Physics
Year 3: Biology
Year 4: Electives and online options, including AP, will be available and suited to student and teacher interest and expertise

Language

All students take the appropriate course in the Language sequence below, as determined by the language department and High School Head. Language exemptions may be granted at the discretion of the High School Head.

Spanish Exposure
Spanish 1
Spanish 2
Spanish 3
Spanish 4
Spanish 5/AP Spanish

American Sign Language 1
American Sign Language 2
American Sign Language 3

Arts Electives

- IDEAL offers a variety of arts electives each year, based on student and teacher interest
- Students select a new elective – drama, music, or visual art – each semester in High School
- STEM units are integrated through the curriculum and engage students in self-expression, communication, and problem-solving

Physical Education and Health

- Physical education classes meet three days per week for all students in Grades 9-12
- Students can earn PE credits by joining an after-school APEX team
- A new dance option is also available that earn PE credits
- Health classes meet one day per week during the mid-day advisory block for all students in Grades 9-12

One Schoolhouse

- IDEAL students who meet the prerequisites for a One Schoolhouse class and demonstrate interest and independence in this area of curriculum may apply to take one One Schoolhouse class per year at no additional charge
- Prerequisites are listed in the One Schoolhouse online curriculum guide
- Applications to take a One Schoolhouse class are attached at the end of this guide

Next Steps 18-21 Transition Program

- Optional for seniors with an IEP who have not completed the requirements for a diploma
- Students continue to develop core skills in math, reading, and writing
- Community outings/volunteering
- Navigating public transportation
- Life skills (cooking, cleaning, health, daily routines)
- Organizational skills (planning, time management, etc.)
- Extended internship opportunities

The Arts

Graduation Requirement: Four years (four credits) in the arts

Through IDEAL's robust arts curriculum, students develop creativity, critical thinking skills, and confidence, and they learn to take healthy risks as they explore multiple perspectives and strengthen their own thinking. The skills students acquire in the arts enhance their learning in all academic areas. Partnerships with New York City outreach programs and cultural institutions extend classroom experiences and create a vibrant curriculum that is integrated throughout all disciplines. Arts classes are mixed-grade, semester-long, and based on student interest. Arts offerings each semester are custom-tailored to suit the individual needs of students enrolled in each specific class.

Music

In High School music classes, students continue to train their "musical ears," musicianship, and music appreciation skills. Students learn to sing polyphonic harmonic music, how to choose a technique that is appropriate for the genre, and how to use musical vocabulary to critique their own performances. Students engage in choral and solo singing, call and response percussion playing, reading notation, and practice performance etiquette in live (concert) and not-live (recording studio) settings. Students who are ready to extend their learning play beginning, intermediate and advanced level musical instruments in a band context (drums, guitar, keyboards, bass), and all students combine their learning by recording and producing their own live performance.

Choir & Vocal Technique Elective

The cross-divisional choir brings together students in different divisions of the school to collaborate in a high-level choral ensemble. The choir focuses on advanced vocal technique, music theory, and ensemble performance. While designed to challenge experienced singers, the choir is inclusive and supportive of all skill levels. Students learn the benefits of breath control, posture, pitch accuracy, and overall vocal health. Students strengthen their confidence, musical literacy, teamwork, and stage presence – skills that transfer well beyond music. Through personalized vocal coaching and diverse repertoire, the ensemble fosters artistic growth, discipline, and meaningful musical connections across the school community.

Drama

Shakespeare and Adaptations (Semester One)

High Schoolers explore Shakespeare and adaptations in drama class. They will understand the basics of Shakespearean text, plot, and character to use as a jumping-off point to create their own takes on the classics. This class will explore dramatic structure and how to tell an interesting story. Students will experiment with characters' wants and needs, and how those desires drive their actions. The class will also engage students in creating original

performances inspired by their passions for storytelling, current events, and character development.

Behind the Scenes (Semester Two)
High Schoolers explore the behind-the-scenes side of theater. They will understand the basics of Viewpoints to create a vocabulary for theatrical criticism and develop their artistic styles. They will explore the lighting, sound, and set design aspects of technical theater, and also take charge of the theatrical process, assuming the role of director. Students will use these skills to help effectively communicate a story and collaborate with their classmates.

Visual Art

Studio Art (Semester One)
During High School art, students implement the artistic thinking process to create at least two W.O.W. (Wonderful Original Works) pieces. The process begins when students identify their personal creative goals based on specific art mediums they want to improve. Once their goals are set, they develop an idea for an original piece. Students work through the development phase by completing independent research and practicing their skills before applying it to their piece. Students are responsible for the care and upkeep of their shared art room studio. Throughout the course, students keep a sketchbook and participate in class critiques and discussions.

Fashion and Design (Semester Two)
In the second semester, the focus shifts to an Introduction to Fashion and Design class. Students learn about different kinds of fashion designers and either draw or use a digital template to create their look. They know the fundamentals of using a sewing machine safely and then choose a project that aligns with their sewing machine experience. Students learn about costume design and help create a styled look for a character in IDEAL's spring musical. Students then complete a research project on the Metropolitan Museum of Art's annual fashion exhibit, followed by a field trip to see the show. The year culminates in creating an upcycled outfit or accessory to be displayed at the Upcycled Fashion Show during the schoolwide ArtBeat showcase.

English

Graduation Requirement: Four years (four credits)
In small, student-centered learning communities, students explore and analyze texts from diverse literary genres. Through discussion, students enhance their ability to analyze texts, make connections, express themselves clearly, and compare multiple perspectives. At each level, students develop their written expression in workshop-style classes focused on the writing process. They also learn how to format essays with appropriate headings, citations, and textual support. Students compose one formal research paper each year, strengthening their understanding of the research process and improving their ability to evaluate sources,

synthesize original and published ideas, and apply MLA format. As students move from freshman to senior year, they gradually take on more leadership responsibilities and are supported individually in realizing their potential. All English classes are mixed-grade, with instructional groupings suited to learning profile and readiness. A variety of levels, including foundational, college-prep, and honors, are offered each year, with intentional bridges and opportunities for shared conversations and projects among all of the classes.

Each year, the English classes focus on a different theme. Themes are taught in a cycle and include Identity and Power, Coming of Age and Journeys, Conflicts and Resolution, and Heritage and Global Connections.

Foundations English A

Foundations English A is a highly supported, structured course designed to meet students where they are and enhance their academic and real-life literacy skills. In Foundations English A, students demonstrate comprehension by reading and summarizing short passages, using new vocabulary, identifying characters' challenges, making personal connections, and answering literal comprehension questions using text evidence. Additional time is spent sequencing the story, identifying cause and effect, and the problem and solution of each story. Students complete formal writing assignments monthly using the standard writing process of brainstorming, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing. They write paragraphs, guided essays, and personal journals. Students continue to work on their self-monitoring skills when reading, writing, and editing. Creative writing is encouraged through journaling and personal narratives. Texts have included *Who Was Sojourner Truth*, *Locomotive,* and *Tale of Despereaux.* Texts vary from year to year to reflect current themes and class composition.

Foundations English B

Foundations English B is a highly supported, structured course designed to meet students where they are and enhance their academic literacy skills. Students read and discuss each text as a class and in small groups to further their understanding of the theme. Students develop an understanding of how authors use literary techniques such as foreshadowing, imagery, and metaphor through a close reading of the text. Students also work to describe characters' motivations and make personal connections to the characters in the text. In addition to their daily journal writing, students complete a monthly formal writing assignment. These writing assignments are based on central themes and questions explored in class during the reading. Students will develop their ability to craft a thesis and support it with relevant details. Throughout the semester students will engage in persuasive writing, informational essays, and narrative writing. Students will revise and edit their work for correct punctuation, capitalization, spelling, and basic grammar. Texts have included *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*, *The Lightning Thief*, and *Home of the Brave*. Core texts shift each year to meet course objectives and student interests.

Foundations English C

Foundations C supports students in developing essential reading, writing, and critical thinking skills through scaffolded instruction and theme-based literature. Students explore texts that examine themes such as identity, resilience, heroism, and power, engaging with both fiction and nonfiction. Instruction emphasizes reading fluency, vocabulary development, and comprehension strategies, with significant support in organizing ideas and building structured written responses. Students draft, revise, and present arguments and narratives using graphic organizers, outlines, and peer feedback to enhance their writing skills. The course is highly differentiated, providing students with targeted teacher support to promote growth in writing clarity and academic independence. In past years, students have read novels, graphic novels, and allegorical texts that explore both personal and societal struggles. Texts have included *The Lightning Thief*, *Animal Farm*, *The Hunger Games*, and *Kneel*. Texts vary by year and are selected to align with student needs and course themes.

English

This mixed-grade, college-preparatory English course develops students' reading, writing, and analytical skills through thematic units that integrate literary and informational texts. Students build comprehension through close reading, discussion, and vocabulary development as they explore central questions related to society, identity, justice, and culture. Writing instruction encompasses personal narrative, literary analysis, and argumentative writing, with a focus on developing a thesis, utilizing text-based evidence, and revising work. Students are supported through annotation strategies, graphic organizers, and peer and teacher feedback. Emphasis is placed on connecting ideas across texts and deepening critical thinking. In the past, students have studied dramatic texts, global literature, and historical nonfiction. Texts have included *Things Fall Apart*, *Twelve Angry Men*, *The Great Gatsby*, and *A Long Way Gone*. Texts vary from year to year to reflect current themes and class composition.

English Honors

Honors English challenges students to explore complex texts and themes through a critical, discussion-based approach. Students engage in analytical reading and writing assignments that require them to evaluate structure, theme, and argument across diverse genres. Coursework emphasizes close reading, rhetorical analysis, and the development of sophisticated written responses, including literary analysis, research-based writing, and personal reflection. Students build academic vocabulary and strengthen revision skills through frequent drafting and feedback. The course fosters independent thinking and encourages students to draw interdisciplinary connections, engage in Socratic seminars, and participate in collaborative projects. Instruction is rigorous and designed to encourage students to delve deeper into understanding and express their thoughts more effectively. Previous reading selections have included fiction, memoir, and drama that explore themes such as identity, belonging, truth, and justice. Texts have included *The Namesake*, *The Crucible*, *The Glass Castle*, and *The Bluest Eye*. Core texts are updated annually to align with course objectives and student interests.

History and Social Science

Graduation Requirement: Four years (four credits), including two years of World History and two of United States History, with one of those years focused on Economics and US Government

IDEAL's History Department emphasizes historical thinking, research, and writing skills as students study American and World history through a variety of contrasting lenses. Debate and discussion are heavily featured in classes that cultivate student voice and opinion through the examination of various viewpoints, even as students develop their foundational knowledge of the subject matter. All history classes are mixed-grade, with instructional groupings tailored to students' learning profiles and readiness. A variety of levels, including foundational and honors, are offered each year, with intentional bridges and opportunities for shared conversations and projects among all classes.

Civil Rights Research Projects (Grades 9-12)

The annual, schoolwide civil rights research project is an opportunity for every student to examine an aspect of civil rights that resonates with them and stems from the history curriculum. This year-long research process begins in September, with students exploring the focus of their research. In recent years, students have studied women's rights, environmental racism, and the rights of religious and ethnic groups. Students increasingly focus their research on organizations that allow them to take personal agency in supporting initiatives meaningful to them, such as finding solutions to urban food deserts or improving access to clean water. Guided by teachers, students identify research sources and articulate their understanding of the civil rights issue, the stakeholders, potential solutions, and ways young people can have agency in the solution. Students write a research paper and develop a forum to present and share their research on Civil Rights Community Day.

United States History (2025-26, Grades 9-12)

This class examines the history of the United States from its founding to the present. Whether history aligns with the ideals the Founding Fathers envisioned for their new nation is an essential question. Therefore, students first examine what motivated our founders to break away from Great Britain and form "a more perfect union" and then look at the institution of our government and how it upholds those original values. Students analyze the Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution, and the Constitution of New York to determine how these important documents are relevant to the world today. Students examine American history from its founding through the civil rights era and to the present day, paying close attention to marginalized groups whose voices are often left out of history, to see if the original goals of the Founding Fathers extended to them. The focus of the class is on who has belonged to our nation and who has been excluded in different eras. Students employ and develop their research skills through an individualized Civil Rights Research paper, in which they research an area of civil rights that holds personal interest. This course uses *A People's History of the United States* by Howard Zinn.

United States History – Foundations (2025-26, Grades 9-12)

The approach to this course begins with exposure to life in the colonies and understanding how our government came to be, as well as how it evolved through the years. Students study the development of the Constitution, the amendments, and how the laws created by the founders impact our lives today. Major themes of this class include industrialization, urbanization, the emergence of the United States as a world power, the two World Wars, the Cold War, 9/11, and current events. The branches of government and civic responsibility are also essential topics. A multisensory approach helps students to gain an understanding of how and why the history of the United States has evolved and developed into the country they live in today. This course uses *A Young People's History of the United States* by Howard Zinn.

United States Government (First semester 2026-27, Grades 9-12)

In this course, students study the United States government and its evolution from the Revolutionary Era to the present. Students begin by analyzing the U.S. Constitution and the forces that shaped it, including the conflict and balance between federal and state power. Students research the three branches of the federal government, exploring how the legislative, executive, and judiciary branches interact. They analyze some key decisions of the Supreme Court to evaluate how it interacts with and guides the American system. Students also debate the four theories of power in America: pluralist, Marxist, elite, and bureaucratic. Students learn about the electoral process and the impact of special interest groups on the government. Civil rights and liberties are also a focus of this class as students examine interpretations by the courts such as freedom of speech, rights of the accused, and the rights of women. The class moves from the theoretical to the practical as students explore ways in which individuals and groups can participate in government – through voting, protest, and movements, and compare various movements, past and present. Students also develop media literacy skills by evaluating the impact of the media – from print to television and online sources – on elections and movements. As a part of this unit, students research the ownership and influence of contemporary media outlets. For a final project, students research and develop – and, if they choose, implement – a plan to contribute to a movement or political action group that is personally meaningful to them.

United States Government – Foundations (First semester 2026-27, Grades 9-12)

In this course, students study the history of our nation's government, the branches of government and their roles, and how the branches work together to ensure we remain a democracy. Students also learn about the key concepts of the Constitution. The class explores how the Constitution was created, its language, components, and the importance of the Bill of Rights. Students also spend time discussing how this document is important to our country's history and today's society. Students compare and contrast the roles of the federal and state governments and research the three branches of government and the concept of checks and balances. Students learn about the key positions in each branch and research a job that interests them, presenting to the class about the requirements and the role and

responsibilities of those holding this position. As a part of this course, students also develop media literacy skills, evaluating the presentations of candidates and special interest groups on television, in print, and on social media. In addition to learning about how the media influences voters, students learn about the responsibility of voting and the electoral process. For a final project, students select a political figure or movement in recent history to research, write about, and present to their classmates.

Economics (Second semester 2026-27, Grades 9-12)

This course explores the production, consumption, and transfer of wealth throughout the history of our country. Students study how major fiscal crises and events, such as the Great Depression, the Great Recession, and the collapse of the United States housing bubble, as well as drivers like inflation and unemployment, affect the different socioeconomic classes that make up our country. Students research and analyze market cycles, supply and demand, small vs. large businesses, and the stock market to gain insight into the intricacies of the American capitalist system. Activities include comparing primary and secondary sources across various media, as well as engaging in debates and class discussions. Students complete research papers, interviews, and projects as they explore the impact of economics on American history and the daily lives of Americans.

Economics – Foundations (Second semester 2026-27, Grades 9-12)

In the foundational level of Economics, students examine the importance of money and how it is directly tied to the world around us. Core concepts include a comparison of wants versus needs, wealth versus poverty, small versus large businesses, and how key fiscal crises affected these concepts across different socioeconomic classes. Students research, compare, and contrast, and apply critical thinking skills to understand how factors such as inflation, unemployment, and recession affect different economic groups when seeking jobs, homes, clothing, healthcare, and other necessities. Mathematical thinking skills critical to daily living and budgeting are reinforced throughout this course. As a culminating project, students design their own small business, plan a budget, and run and evaluate it.

World History (2027-28, Grades 9-12)

This course focuses on the study of world history through the exploration of ancient and classical civilizations that spread along the east-west latitude in Eurasia, spanning the early dynasties of China to the Muslim empires of the Middle East, to the city-states of Greece, and the Roman Empire. Students study how these empires interacted and what ideas and goods passed along trade corridors like the Silk Road. Students also trace the migrations of people into the Americas to study the great empires of the Olmec, Maya, Aztec, and Inca, as well as learning the great kingdoms and empires of Ghana, Mali, and Songhai. The rise and fall of empires is a central theme throughout World History, as students explore what causes empires and civilizations to flourish and thrive in Golden Ages, what factors lead to their decline, and how power centers have shifted throughout history. The class also explores the roots of two of the world's most practiced religions, Christianity and Islam, to see how they

were integrally connected to the first Abrahamic religion, Judaism. In this course, students learn how to analyze primary sources and compare and contrast differing belief systems, social policies, and political systems to understand bias and diverse perspectives.

World History – Foundations (2027-28, Grades 9-12)

Students at the foundational level study the countries that make up our world. The year begins as students explore how Pangea split into its constituent continents. After that, the class spends the rest of the year learning about each continent and its countries. Students study ancient Greece, Rome, China, South Africa, Australia, Germany, Russia, Brazil, and more. History, language, customs, art, geography, and daily life are the primary aspects of culture that this course immerses students in. Students end the year by completing a presentation on a country of their choice; this project integrates research, writing, speaking, technology, and graphic design skills. Students leave the class knowledgeable about the world around them and ready to explore and continue learning.

World History: Global Civil Rights Movements (2028-29, Grades 9-12)

Beginning with the Enlightenment in Europe, students examine the evolution of concepts related to human rights, liberalism, and the emergence of the secular nation-state. They also examine how other civilizations around the world have contributed to the idea of human rights. Students explore how Enlightenment ideals influenced other civilizations to rise against authoritarian regimes. After examining the revolutions in France and Latin America, the class turns to a different type of revolution: the Industrial Revolution, which led to European colonization of the world. Students take an in-depth look at the impact of colonization on societies around the world, concluding with how these communities achieved independence and created their nations. Many of these societies were able to do this nonviolently. Thus, beginning with Gandhi, the class examines nonviolent political revolutions and the emergence of new nation-states. Ultimately, the class fosters an understanding of a new era in international and political order by examining the two World Wars and the evolution of the United Nations. The class concludes with a study of the Cold War, the emergence of the United States as the primary world power, and finally, the “rise of the rest,” the new political order of emerging economies in an era of globalization.

World History: Global Civil Rights Movements – Foundations (2028-29, Grades 9-12)

The foundational level of Global Civil Rights Movements examines how civil rights movements worldwide impact our lives today. This course begins with a focus on Gandhi – his life, key ideas, and his leadership of nonviolent political revolutions. Gandhi serves as a key figure in this class, as students frequently look back to see how he might have navigated moments of tension around the world. The class examines other revolutions that have occurred around the globe and how each revolution evolved and impacted its nation. With each new country studied, students explore the culture, geography, and traditions that distinguish them. Students analyze, compare, and contrast the countries with America, learning how each is unique and that all peoples and traditions bring a different perspective to the world. The year

concludes with students researching and presenting the history, culture, geography, traditions, and a key movement that led to civil change in a country that interests them. Ultimately, this course gives students a deeper understanding of the world around them and the beliefs and movements that unite and divide nations and peoples.

The Learning Center

The Learning Center is a centrally-located space in which students in all grades can receive specialized support in literacy and/or math. The Learning Center is staffed by a team of learning specialists who provide targeted and individualized academic interventions in one-on-one or small group settings. The goal of the sessions is to develop foundational skills that students rely on to progress and succeed in their classes. Students who require this additional academic support attend sessions one to four times per week depending on their individual needs. Learning specialists utilize a variety of intervention programs, including PAF (Preventing Academic Failure) and the Wilson Reading System (both Orton-Gillingham based programs), *See and Learn*, *Tell Me*, *Quick Reads*, and *WordlyWise 3000*.

Mathematics

Graduation Requirement: Four years (4 credits) of Math

The Mathematics Department strives to foster in all students an understanding of the foundational and algebraic mathematical functions that order our world. Math classes encourage critical analytical thinking, creative and collaborative problem solving, and connections between the curriculum and the world. Students are assessed regularly to be sure they are progressing at an appropriately challenging and supportive pace. Students begin the curriculum as appropriate for their readiness level and progress through multi-grade classes recommended by the department to challenge and support their development.

Real World Math and Topics in Pre-Algebra

These classes are designed to strengthen computation and conceptual mathematics skills while introducing new concepts and enhancing students' functional math skills. Students improve their understanding of the number system and their place value skills. They apply these concepts to real-life tasks such as comparing prices and shopping. Students then strengthen their hard and soft money skills through the identification of coins and bills and their values. They then work on pre-algebra topics such as multiplication, fractions, and introducing variables while strengthening calculating and problem-solving skills through independent and group work. Students apply these calculation skills to concepts such as budgeting, ensuring one has enough money to complete a purchase, and calculating change owed.

Topics of Algebra – Year 1

This class builds on the basic math skills students have learned in previous foundational math classes and applies them to algebraic concepts. The first semester focuses on using

mathematical thinking to solve real-world problems. Through a semester-long inquiry project, students develop budgeting skills and research a career of their choice. During the second semester, students are introduced to algebraic concepts. They learn to identify and simplify the components of algebraic expressions using the distributive property and combining like terms. Students learn how to read and write algebraic expressions and evaluate variable equations to solve for x. Throughout the course, students continue to develop numerical fluency in real-world, inquiry-based problem solving. This course uses the *Common Core Algebra I* program from eMATHinstruction.

Topics of Algebra – Year 2

This class builds upon the essential algebra skills developed in the previous year. Students explore the coordinate plane, plot points, and learn to find the distance between two points. Students expand on their understanding of the structure of expressions and equations to solve more complex real-world problems. Students then make connections between the equations of linear functions and their graphs. The year concludes with the study of quadratic expressions and functions. This course uses the *Common Core Algebra I* program from eMATHinstruction.

Topics of Algebra 2 and 3

This two-year course builds upon topics from Algebra 1 and is designed to strengthen fundamental algebra skills and prepare for higher-level mathematics. The concept of a function serves as the foundation of this course, tying together each unit. Students study linear, exponential, logarithmic, quadratic, and circular functions and equations. This includes the study of complex numbers, trigonometric ratios, and absolute values. These skills are applied to model and solve real-world problems such as compound interest, projectile motion, and architecture. This course uses the *Common Core Algebra II* program from eMATHinstruction.

Algebra 1

In Algebra 1, students develop the skills, knowledge, and vocabulary necessary to perform, express, and communicate mathematical ideas, as well as solve real-world problems using algebra. Students develop algorithms for solving and simplifying expressions, equations, and inequalities. Students work with linear and quadratic functions, in both equation and graph forms, which helps to model their thinking. Through discussions and guided activities, students explore positive and negative exponents, learning how these concepts relate to various areas of study outside of mathematics, including finance, science, and gaming. Students develop techniques for factoring polynomials that will serve them well in future math and science courses. Students also learn how to utilize online graphing applications and TI-83/84 calculators to support their work. This course uses the *Common Core Algebra I* program from eMATHinstruction.

Geometry

Geometry formalizes and extends students' geometric experiences from previous pre-algebra and algebra coursework. Students explore more complex geometric situations and deepen their understanding of geometric relationships, moving toward formal mathematical arguments and proofs. Specifically, this course covers Euclidean geometry, including definitions, postulates, and theorems. Students also learn to complete geometric constructions. Additional areas of study include congruence, parallel and perpendicular lines, similarity, right triangles, and an introduction to trigonometry. Various algebraic techniques are incorporated throughout the year in the application of geometric concepts and while modeling given situations. This course uses the *Common Core Geometry* program from eMATHinstruction.

Algebra 2

This course builds upon topics from Algebra 1 and is designed to strengthen fundamental algebra skills and prepare for higher-level mathematics. The concept of a function serves as the foundation of this course, tying together each unit. Students study linear, exponential, logarithmic, quadratic, and circular functions and equations. This includes the study of complex numbers, trigonometric ratios, and absolute values. These skills are applied to model and solve real-world problems such as compound interest, projectile motion, and architecture. This course uses the *Common Core Algebra II* program from eMATHinstruction.

Precalculus

Students in Precalculus began this year by revisiting polynomials. They practice addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division of polynomials, as well as factoring polynomials when appropriate. Students learn to define domain and range, as well as independent and dependent variables, and the six trigonometric functions, including their ranges and domains. Students graph trigonometric functions, convert between radians and degrees, calculate the length of an arc, and determine the linear speed of an object in circular motion. Students graph sine and cosine functions and determine their periods and amplitudes. They identify the six inverse trigonometric functions and use algebra and identities to simplify expressions. Students solve right triangles and apply problems related to the trigonometric functions. In the second half of the year, students graph trigonometric functions, complete with vertical and phase shifts. They consolidate their understanding of trigonometric ratios, including sine, cosine, and tangent, and apply this knowledge to solve right triangles given one side and one angle. Students use trigonometry to solve real world problems concerning height and distance when one length and the angle are known. By the end of the course, students begin studying conic sections, focusing on parabolas, circles, ellipses, and hyperbolas, and they investigate polar coordinates and vectors.

Statistics

This course provides an introduction to the fundamental principles of statistics, probability, and data analysis. Students explore distributions of data and apply measures of central tendency, variation, and standard deviation, interpreting the information that can be derived

from each measure. In this project-based course, the techniques of analysis will be applied to a range of real-world phenomena including sporting outcomes, the stock market, population dynamics, virus spread, and the statistics of extreme weather events. Students will see applications of the normal distribution and distributions that are asymmetrical. The display of data through a range of graphical means will be explored and interpreted appropriately to a range of data sets. Students will explore the regression analysis of two-dimensional data sets, examining the data for linearity or other functional relationships. This course uses *Statistics and Probability with Applications* (Starnes and Tabor) and *Introduction to Statistics: An Intuitive Guide for Analyzing Data and Unlocking Discoveries* (Frost).

Physical Education

Graduation Requirement: Three credits of PE, taught three days per week in Grades 9-12

The High School physical education program is designed to support the skills and practices that develop a lifelong appreciation for physical fitness and to ensure that students engage in physical activity. Students are introduced to a range of sports, practice teamwork, build stamina, and develop the habit of maintaining an active and engaged lifestyle.

Physical Education

The Physical Education curriculum fosters a holistic approach to physical activity and health. Students are encouraged to make ethical choices in their participation, promoting a respectful and inclusive environment that values teamwork. By engaging in diverse physical activities, participants develop a strong foundation in movement concepts, demonstrating their skills through various practices and games. Personal health habits are assessed, guiding students in adopting behaviors that enhance well-being. Specific techniques, such as rolling, throwing, and dribbling, are refined in traditional and adapted formats, ensuring every student can participate meaningfully. Additionally, students learn essential skills in sports like volleyball and basketball, focusing on proper techniques and maintaining successful rallies. Through these experiences, students not only improve their physical competencies but also build a supportive community that values collaboration and respect.

Health and Wellness

Graduation Requirement: 1 credit of Health and Wellness, taught 1 day per week, during the mid-day advisory block in Grades 9-12

IDEAL's Health and Wellness curriculum is predominantly based on the Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States (SIECUS) guidelines. Key concepts of the curriculum include human development, relationships, personal skills (decision-making, communication, negotiation), drug and alcohol avoidance, and sexuality. Topics for lessons, discussions, and readings are approached in developmentally appropriate ways, where a class may break into smaller groups based on the subject matter and readiness of individuals within it. The curriculum also emphasizes the importance of establishing safe and effective health practices both inside and outside of school. The class will look at the significance of

practicing good nutrition, the world of mental health, and peer-to-peer relationships. Sexual health encompasses discussions of behavior, consent, sexually transmitted diseases, identity, and the role of society and the media. All IDEAL students take a Health and Wellness class once a week during the PE block.

Science

Graduation Requirement: Three years (3 credits), consisting of Chemistry, Physics, and Biology or the corresponding foundational courses

IDEAL's Science Department is dedicated to creating an inquiry-based curriculum that develops students' foundational knowledge of biology, chemistry, and physics, as well as opportunities for elective study. Students learn through hands-on exploration and experimentation. Students also have opportunities to apply their science skills and literacy to examine the planet's most pressing sustainability challenges, particularly those involving human health and environmental issues.

Biology (2025-26, Grades 9-11)

This course explores traditional concepts in biology, including genetics, evolution, and molecular interdependence within the systems of the human body and the planet. The class begins with an introduction to biochemistry and atomic theory, providing an understanding of cell molecules and protein synthesis. Students then explore DNA structure to understand modern genetic engineering, theories of heredity, and evolution. Through experimental design and comparative anatomy dissections, students investigate body systems of several phyla of the animal kingdom, ultimately studying the eleven human systems necessary to maintain homeostasis. Ultimately, students engage in ecological studies to explore and address environmental challenges that impact our planet. This college-preparatory course incorporates inquiry-based learning, laboratory activities, oral presentations, collaborative analysis, and scientific writing to provide a comprehensive approach to learning.

Students in the foundational section focus on connections between the anatomy and physiology of human body systems and healthy lifestyle practices. Inquiry-based learning encompasses the creation of scientific models, laboratory investigations, and a diverse range of hands-on activities. Students are encouraged to develop their presentation skills and work collaboratively to share knowledge and apply their learning in their personal lives. Honors Biology is an intensive course taught at a level equivalent to that of an introductory college biology course. The emphasis is on developing an understanding of biological concepts including cell and molecular biology, genetics, organismal biology, ecology, and evolution.

Chemistry (2026-27, Grades 9-11)

This introductory course in the theories and concepts of modern chemistry is designed to prepare students for college chemistry. Topics are presented to increase awareness and understanding of the role of chemistry in daily life and environmental issues prevalent in our world today. The course emphasizes atomic and molecular structure, chemical bonding,

stoichiometry, properties of gases and solutions, acid-base reactions, and chemical thermodynamics. Students are introduced to organic and nuclear chemistry through inquiry-based learning and independent research initiatives. Laboratory work develops students' reasoning power and the ability to apply chemical principles to current environmental and human health challenges. In Honors Chemistry, students explore topics in additional depth, and extra emphasis is placed on the formal lab report and analysis of data. In Foundations of Chemistry, students are introduced to the study of matter and the practices of scientific investigation. Students learn about the physical properties of solids, liquids, and gases, and they explore changes in states of matter and density. Using the scientific method, students predict, experiment, and observe chemical reactions.

Physics (2027-28, Grades 9-11)

Physics explores the nature of motion, matter, and energy. In this survey course, students study concepts including the fundamental properties of mechanical systems, such as motion, forces, and energy, with their applications to heat, electricity, magnetism, sound, and optics. Students conduct laboratory investigations, which play a central role in consolidating their understanding of the concepts and applications in their lives. Physics provides students with a regular opportunity to apply mathematical skills at every level through estimation, calculation, measurement, and the algebraic application of formulae. Coursework involves laboratory activities, class experiments, data analysis, and independent research that require students to demonstrate problem-solving skills applicable to a wide range of fields, including sports, music, space, Earth dynamics, transportation, and digital technology. Honors physics provides additional emphasis on the mathematical tools necessary to solve more complex problems. Students in the foundational level explore the same topics through a multisensory approach tied closely to real-world phenomena. This course uses the *Experience Physics* text from SAVVAS Realize and *Conceptual Physics* by Paul Hewitt.

Global Languages

Graduation Requirement: Three full years of the same global language or additional support in language arts with permission of the High School Head

Through the study of global languages at IDEAL, students gain confidence in reading, writing, listening, and speaking in the target language. They develop an appreciation for the diverse cultures and communities of native speakers. The arts and experiential learning infuse the curriculum as students explore the rich history of the culture they are studying in New York City and across the globe, applying their knowledge in creative ways.

Spanish

Students explore various aspects of the Spanish language and culture through the Somos Curriculum in this multi-year Spanish course. Instruction is based on the truth that language is inextricably linked to its speakers and their cultures. Instead of teaching about the language, students are strategically introduced to new words and phrases and learn to use them in creative, communicative opportunities, such as conversations, reading, and listening.

The focus is on developing students' ability to communicate effectively in Spanish while engaging with cultural elements from Spanish-speaking countries. Each unit integrates cultural insights to give students a broader understanding of the Spanish-speaking world, with projects designed to apply vocabulary and deepen cultural engagement. As students progress in their Spanish study, they develop more vocabulary, speak Spanish regularly, learn about different Spanish-speaking cultures, and increase their ability to read and write in Spanish.

American Sign Language

This multi-year course emphasizes building vocabulary and the appropriate use of the body and grammatical patterns in American Sign Language. Students become familiar with various ASL communication styles used in the Deaf Community. Students also learn about Deaf Culture and its uniqueness from other cultures. Students create a comprehensive project describing their dream food truck by creating a menu and a business plan. They incorporate vocabulary related to food and dining, utilize classifiers and mouth morphemes for effective descriptions, and incorporate elements of Deaf culture in the context of ordering food. Students also understand the business aspect of operating a restaurant. This project offers an opportunity for students to engage with language and culture meaningfully while fostering creativity and business skills. Additionally, students learn how to construct sentences and narratives using the ASL grammar structure and vocabulary. By the end of the course, students must sign and use receptive skills at least 90% of the time. Students learn to tell time, the days of the week, the months, the states, their ages, expressing needs, animals, fingerspelling, planets, music, where one lives, Wh-word questions, ordering numbers, and describing neighborhoods. Students also complete a zoo project. This research-based project gives hands-on experience in ASL.

Senior Electives

Senior electives are offered to students who have met their three science graduation requirements of biology, chemistry, and physics, or who have met their Spanish language requirement. Students are offered a range of semester-long electives, independent studies, or year-long classes offered by One Schoolhouse. Electives are driven by student and faculty interest.

Recent electives offered include:

Journalism and Media Studies
Culinary Arts
Philosophy
Astronomy and Cosmology
Sustainable Design

Recent Student Independent Studies, include:

The Study of Black Music
Mental Health of Children During the Pandemic

IDEAL Career Exploration Course
Exploration of Arts
Exploration of Sports
Exploration of Education
Exploration of Music
Exploration in Culinary Arts

One Schoolhouse

IDEAL is a member of the One Schoolhouse Consortium. Membership in One Schoolhouse allows us to expand our High School course offerings. Upper-level electives offered through One Schoolhouse include Psychology, Latin 1, Marine Science, This I Believe: Activism in the Age of Disenfranchisement and Extremism. Through One Schoolhouse, IDEAL also offers Advanced Placement (AP) classes including AP Spanish Literature and Culture and AP Studio Art. Summer transition classes include Summer Geometry. Girls can also take single-gender online courses through The Online School for Girls, a subsidiary of One Schoolhouse. Students interested in taking a One Schoolhouse class and who meet the minimum course prerequisites are encouraged to see the Head of School for an application.

One Schoolhouse Classes at IDEAL
IDEAL will provide funding for eligible students to take one class through One Schoolhouse in Grades 9-12. IDEAL supports students in taking One Schoolhouse classes by communicating regularly with the One Schoolhouse administration and checking in with our students. One Schoolhouse classes are offered for credit and will appear on students' transcripts, so this represents a serious commitment on their part. IDEAL students are expected to adhere to all expectations and policies outlined in IDEAL's handbook and the One Schoolhouse Handbook. Please review the withdrawal and refund policies in the One Schoolhouse Handbook carefully. Withdrawal after the deadline will result in a $500 charge to the family.

Summer classes offered by One Schoolhouse (go to www.oneschoolhouse.org to review the course description before selecting):
Geometry
AP Computer Science Principles
Pre-Calculus
World Religions

A sampling of courses offered by One Schoolhouse (go to www.oneschoolhouse.org to review the course description before selecting):
AP Art History
AP Calculus
AP Chinese Language & Culture
AP Computer Science A

AP Computer Science Principles
AP English Literature
AP Environmental Science
AP Human Geography
AP Music Theory
AP Psychology
AP Statistics
AP US Government & Politics
AP Comparative Government and Politics

Art History
Chinese III/IV
Civics, Culture, and Intersectionality Gender and Sexual Identity in America
Latin I, Latin II, Latin III/IV
Marine Science
Neuroscience
Psychology

Leadership, Service Learning, and Social Justice

Working in concert with the academic curriculum, the leadership, service learning, and social justice programs at IDEAL foster the social and emotional development of confident and compassionate young people who can advocate for themselves and others; possess the self-awareness to take healthy risks that lead to growth; and are prepared to contribute their voices and talents to a more just and equitable society.

Leadership

Every Upper School student has the opportunity to lead at IDEAL. Student voices and leadership find expression formally and informally. Student Council provides a forum for students to discuss issues related to life in the Upper School, represent their peers, and plan student-centered community activities and initiatives. Student leaders represent the school regularly as admissions ambassadors and panelists. Clubs provide students with opportunities to lead in a wide range of activities. Upper School students are also paired with Lower School students as buddies.

Advisory

Every High School student is a member of a grade-level advisory group, and each advisory group is led by two faculty members who oversee the social and emotional growth of both the individuals and the group as a whole. Advisory groups gather briefly at the beginning of each day to touch base and strengthen the sense of community before delving into academic classes. Throughout the year, advisory groups also meet for guided discussions on topics related to health, friendship, advocacy, and growth mindset. With guidance from an advisor, weekly time is spent working on navigating the issues and stressors that are important for High School-age children. Students spend time practicing mindfulness techniques, developing frustration tolerance, and exploring conflict resolution strategies, while also discussing issues that may be weighing on them. It is the role of the advisor to know each student as an individual and support both the student and their parents in navigating high school. The advisor serves as the primary point of contact and partner for parents, enabling the school and families to work together in support of each child's full potential.

Service Learning

Aligned with IDEAL's mission to build a more just and equitable world, the High School Service Learning Program builds on the foundations laid in the Lower and Middle Schools. In Grades 9 and 10, students survey a range of service organizations and identify a few that particularly resonate with their interests. Designated service learning days offer students opportunities to engage in service experiences with a variety of organizations. With the guidance of a faculty mentor, Grade 11 students focus their service on a specific organization, learning more about its mission, operations, the population it serves, and its organizational needs. As seniors, each student develops and undertakes a capstone project designed to serve their organization over the year, presenting to the IDEAL community during the closing weeks of school, before graduation. High School students are required to serve community organizations for a minimum of 15 hours per year.

Social Justice Curriculum

IDEAL's anti-bias and multicultural values are woven into the fabric of our curriculum and school. The school supports each student's positive identity and attitude development by directly addressing during Community Time the impact of stereotyping, bias, and discriminatory behavior; encouraging cooperative learning; and teaching conflict resolution. Students compare multiple perspectives in all of their classes as they develop empathy, voice, and self-advocacy skills. Social justice topics are also woven into the advisory program. Inclusive education provides students with an excellent academic foundation, empowering them to succeed in a truly diverse society with self-confidence, acceptance, and compassion.

Senior Leadership – Senior Speech

Seniors are leaders in the school. As they prepare for postsecondary life, every senior will work on a Senior Speech, drafting, editing, and refining a speech on a meaningful topic of their choice. The senior speech draws deeply on the senior's experience and growth through IDEAL as well as their aspirations for making an impact in their world. The speech is presented to the community during a special Senior Speech assembly that meets approximately once a month from October to April.

Senior Leadership – Senior Career Exploration

The Senior Project is a work experience that allows seniors to engage in shadowing and supported internships in careers they are interested in. Students work with a mentor to identify, research, discuss, and explore their passions and future goals. The student is supported in this process, connects with the organization, and engages with professionals in the profession of their interests. After the work period, each senior makes a presentation to the community to share their experiences and what they learned.

College and Postsecondary Guidance

IDEAL's College and Postsecondary Guidance Program partners with families to develop a student-centered, individualized plan that encourages students to take appropriate ownership of their postsecondary process. Throughout the academic year, families have the opportunity to receive information through college nights and intimate panel discussions with college and postsecondary access experts. The process begins in Grade 9 by beginning discussions about postsecondary hopes and plans and continues with increasing focus throughout their High School years. Through one-on-one conferencing and a year-long College Research and Exploration course, Grade 11 and 12 students establish goals and reflect on how they learn best. This weekly preparation class includes a personal statement writing workshop, financial aid overview, interview preparation, and how to request letters of recommendation from teachers. Students in Grade 11 also have the opportunity to enroll in a four-month SAT preparation course on the IDEAL campus with the external prep company Empire Edge, through which they receive individualized weekly feedback and coaching. Families meet with IDEAL's College and Postsecondary Counselor to help them identify an appropriate range of options that best suit the student's aspirations and chart a course through the application and financial aid process. Grade 12 students and their families are supported through all the steps of applications, including financial aid applications, evaluation of offers, and connecting with specific programs.

One Schoolhouse Online Course Application

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Title of the online class you are applying to take _____
Please be sure that you meet the prerequisites for this course.

Please respond to each question in three to five sentences (type or use the back of the page if necessary):

1. Why do you want to take a One Schoolhouse class?

2. What challenges and opportunities might this course present?

3. How have you demonstrated the independence and grit (perseverance and passion) required for success in an online class?

Signatures – Required
I understand that by enrolling in a One Schoolhouse online class, I am undertaking a commitment with expectations that are similar to the expectations for my IDEAL classes. I will complete my work in a timely manner and communicate regularly with my online teacher and IDEAL advisor about my progress. My online course grades will appear on my IDEAL transcript. I am required to comply with all One Schoolhouse policies and procedures, including course withdrawal policies. Withdrawal or failure in a course after the course withdrawal deadline will result in a $500 charge to the family and will appear on my academic transcript.

Student Signature _____ Date_____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date_____