
 (865) 982-6345

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 <https://cgis.maryville-schools.org>

2025 Sevierville Rd. Maryville, TN 37804



February 12, 2026

Dear CGIS Parents of Rising 6th Graders,

It is time to begin our program planning for next year, and we want you and your student to have the information you need to choose your child's elective courses. You will have an opportunity to discuss elective choices with your student using the information below and decide together. On Monday, February 23rd, your student will receive an email with a link that will allow him/her to electronically choose his/her electives (1st and 2nd choices) for the 2026-27 school year.

Each 6th grade student will have two elective periods. Students will have their main elective class on either Monday/ Wednesdays or Tuesday/ Thursdays. Students will also have a Friday elective. Also, 6th grade students will have a year-long Physical Education class and a semester-based class with one semester being Computer Science and the alternate semester being Ready 4 Life. Therefore, you have two choices to make. To help with your decision, below are two links to give you more information about your choices.

Informational Video about your Elective choices: [5th, 6th, and 7th Grade Elective Options - Monday to Thursday](#)

Informational Video about your Friday Elective choices: [6th and 7th Grade Elective Options – Friday](#)

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


For the main elective course, students may choose a one year-long course. Every student will choose from the following:


<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Band	Available by staff recommendations only (decisions made in the spring of 2026) <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Academic Success (spring IEP team decision)○ Response to Intervention – Reading & Math○ Study Hall (Admin Selection)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creative Music & Choir	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Orchestra	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• STEM	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Art	

Friday Courses

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

<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Band: Pops (Must be enrolled in above band elective)	Available by staff recommendations only (decisions made in the spring of 2025) <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Academic Success (spring IEP team decision)○ Response to Intervention – Reading & Math○ Study Hall (Admin Selection)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Orchestra: Chamber & Extended Techniques (Must be enrolled above orchestra elective)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Music: Performing Arts	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Art: 3D Design	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ STEM (same as hour-long course listed above; do not choose both)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ PE: Fitness and Wellness	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Library: Hawk Helpers	

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Please discuss these choices with your rising 6th grader. Next Monday, your student will submit his/her choice of electives at school, so please be sure to come to a decision by then. If you have any questions, please contact the appropriate Encore teacher listed below.

Elective Course Descriptions

● **Band** (2nd year): Students will expand and refine the skills and techniques developed in year one, while continuing to advance their individual musicianship. Some students will have the option of switching to a family-adjacent instrument such as oboe, bassoon, bass clarinet, alto saxophone, tenor saxophone, baritone saxophone, French horn, baritone/euphonium, or tuba. Music in the 6th grade will be more advanced and demanding. Note: Since this course is a continuation of the previous year's learning, any students who wish to begin band will need to speak with the director before the end of this school year in order to understand requirements and expectations for success. (Enrollment in summer band camp and private lessons are needed for success.)

Teacher: Erin Whaley, erin.whaley@maryville-schools.org

● **Orchestra** (2nd year): Students will expand and refine the skills developed in year one. New skills involve the development of vibrato and shifting. Individual musicianship and ensemble skills will mature. Note: Since this course is a continuation of the previous year's learning, any students who wish to begin orchestra will need to speak with the director before the end of this school year to understand requirements and expectations for success. (Enrollment in summer orchestra camp and private lessons are needed for success.)


Teacher: Melissa Hathorn, melissa.hathorn@maryville-schools.org


● **Creative Music & Choir**: In this exciting, energetic class students will continue learning and improving their music reading skills, play the ukulele, and become better and more confident singers. This class explores both traditional vocal music and show choir repertoire. Ukulele ensemble is integrated into the curriculum so that students will be able to showcase their ukulele playing and singing skills simultaneously through both informal and formal performances. All these skills will prepare students for performance opportunities such as our school Veteran's Day assembly, community outreach events throughout the City of Maryville, CGIS Art Fest, and Spring Sing in the Smokies. If you want to learn to play the ukulele, this is the class for you! If you enjoy singing, this is the class for you! If you want to be a better singer, this is the class for you! If you think you cannot sing, sign up for this class and let me help you find your singing voice. We will have a great time learning and making music together.

Teacher: Naomi Leichman, naomi.leichman@maryville-schools.org

● **STEM**: In this first Project Lead the Way course, students will expand the STEM understanding and skills as they imagine, design, and test their ideas using advanced modeling software and our 3-D printer. The students will learn and use engineering sketching techniques to communicate final project results. Participants will also be introduced to the Automation and Robotics mechanical systems and building process. The students will be learning in collaborative groups to problem-solve and complete projects.

Teacher: Barbara Taylor, barbara.taylor@maryville-schools.org

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●**ART:** In this general art course, students will survey a wide variety of art making techniques including, but not limited to, painting, drawing, sculpture, ceramics, digital art, and fiber arts. Students will make meaningful connections between arts and their own experiences and be asked to explore personal meaning in their art making. Personal expression and critical thinking skills are the foundation of this course. Students will also be introduced to art history through both historical and contemporary art and artists.

Teacher: Christopher Campbell, christopher.campbell@maryville-schools.org

Friday Elective Course Descriptions

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

Teacher: Erin Whaley, erin.whaley@maryville-schools.org

●**Orchestra: Chamber Orchestra and Extended Techniques:** Designed for the students who want to master the skills needed for Jr. Clinic, Chamber Orchestra, and solo performance. Introduction of arpeggios and 2-octave scales and a variety of ensemble literature will challenge the students to raise their level of musicianship. We will read a new piece every week to improve your sight-reading abilities.

Teacher: Melissa Hathorn, melissa.hathorn@maryville-schools.org

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

Teacher: Naomi Leichman, naomi.leichman@maryville-schools.org

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


Teacher: Christopher Campbell, christopher.campbell@maryville-schools.org


●**STEM: (same curriculum as hour course; cannot take both)**

Teacher: Barbara Taylor, barbara.taylor@maryville-schools.org

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

Teachers: Kristi Dunkel and Ryan Tallent, kristi.dunkel@maryville-schools.org and ryan.tallent@maryville-schools.org

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● **Library: Hawk Helpers:** Love to serve? This class will allow a small number of students the opportunity to provide service to the school as office helpers, library helpers, and other roles throughout the school on Fridays.

Teacher: Katie Voyles, katie.voyles@maryville-schools.org

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

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

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

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