

Liberty Common Junior High School
Grades 7–8
Curriculum Guide
2026–2027

Revised 11/2025

Dear Friend of Liberty:

The most important factor in determining a student's academic success is the support and guidance received from parents. The next most important factor is the strength of the school's curriculum.

On behalf of our Board of Directors, our school's faculty, staff, and administration, thank you for your interest in Liberty Common Junior High School's robust curriculum. We have carefully aligned our course offerings with the school's Core Knowledge Sequence undertaking to equip each LCJHS student with the knowledge, skills, and study habits required for high-school success.

Liberty's sustained track record of extraordinary academic achievement is predicated upon a rich curriculum expertly delivered by truly professional classroom instructors. The coursework for Liberty Common 7th- and 8th-grade students is ambitious. The pacing, exhaustiveness, and precision of Liberty's curriculum is informed and guided by the exacting specifications of the Core Knowledge Foundation. Course content at Liberty also reflects our institutional philosophy toward character education, leadership, informed citizenship, and freedom.

Again, thank you for your interest in the subjects and organizational delivery of the most apposite academic content taught at Liberty Common Junior High School. Should you have any comments or questions about any of the materials described in this Curriculum Guide, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Very truly yours,

Bob Schaffer, Headmaster
Liberty Common Schools

Academic Philosophy of LCJHS Grades 7—8

The mission of Liberty Common Junior High School is to provide excellence and fairness in education for school children through a common foundation by successfully teaching a contextual body of organized knowledge, the skills of learning including higher order thinking, and the values of a democratic society. Liberty recognizes the value of inclusiveness, or providing access to a broad cross-section of the community, so that students from all backgrounds can benefit from Liberty's educational offering. Liberty acknowledges the leadership of teachers in the classroom, and recognizes the responsibility of each student for his/her academic effort.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

Children yearn for meaning and require a basis of solid contextual common knowledge for the development of mature literacy and critical thinking, for growth and communication in a diverse society.

1. The educational "playing field" between students of differing backgrounds should be level to provide all students a basis to the greatest degree practicable, upon which they can build further knowledge and to develop the skills necessary to communicate and succeed.

2. The skills of learning—reading, writing, speaking, calculation, and higher order thinking—are most meaningfully learned from a combination of the knowledge or content of the curriculum, modeling, coaching, and sensible practice.

3. To thrive in work, citizenship, and personal growth, children must be taught the values of a democratic society. These values include: respect for others—their property and rights; responsibility for actions, honesty and social justice; resourcefulness—being ready to learn, to serve, and to share.

4. Inclusiveness is fundamental in responding to the diverse needs of children and raising academic standards. All parents, regardless of economic status, should be free to choose this educational program for their children.

5. Teachers are professionals, which implies considerable autonomy, mastery, and independence. Having accepted the academic and philosophic mission of a school, the teacher needs to be free to exercise informed judgment in order to fulfill his/her primary role as an educator.

6. The principal determinants of individual academic success are individual ability and effort. The policies of Liberty (grading, discipline, homework, teaching) must support the student's adoption of a personal quest for academic growth using the clearly marked path of expectations in knowledge, skill, and character. The guiding philosophy of Liberty acknowledges that children can and should be held accountable for their own schoolwork and behavior with the support of teachers and parents.

Liberty's curriculum, the Core Knowledge Sequence, encompasses language arts, mathematics, science, history, geography, and fine arts. The curriculum is characterized by knowledge that is

- Solid—lasting, unchanging knowledge such as important events of world history;
- Sequenced—a planned progression building on students' previous knowledge and eliminating excessive repetition and gaps;
- Specific—clearly defined knowledge at each grade level ensuring fairness for all students;
- Shared—providing all students, regardless of background, with the shared knowledge they need to be included in our national literate culture.

The classical approach to education can be described as a journey to meaning. It begins with students acquiring knowledge through a wide familiarity with literature, history, science, math, music, arts, people, and places. Liberty's purpose is to lead young people on an odyssey of the mind and heart, which will steer them toward self-reliance.

Travel Guide for the Junior-High Journey: For Students and Parents

Welcome to 7th or 8th grade! You are starting an amazing new adventure with greater challenges but also greater rewards. Successful journeys where you reach the destination AND enjoy the trip require planning and preparation, so please use this guide to help you as you transition into junior high school. Think of your junior-high years as reaching new mountain summits and remember to **H.I.K.E.**

H. **H**onor the Learning Journey

A wonderful two-year journey of vast learning opportunities awaits. Students, to **Honor** this journey means you:

- Trust and respect your teachers as the expert trail guides for your journey. They love their subjects and are passionate about teaching you to love (or at least appreciate) those subjects also.
- Don't settle for passing the class. Aim to grow and be transformed and conquer the mountains!
- Remember that struggles, challenges, and even failure are valuable because you will grow more. Spectacular mountaintop views and mastery of learning both require hard climbing and striving; it's worth it.

I. Growing in **I**ndependence

Parents, please continue to support your student, but the junior-high years are a time to encourage your student to transition into full ownership of his/her education. Students, **Independence** looks like this:

- You, not your mom or dad, communicate directly with your teachers with any questions or concerns, either talking to them in person before or after class or during E.A.G.L.E. time, or emailing them.
- You read your email regularly— several times a week—to stay on top of important school information.
- You check your PowerSchool account—at least once a week—to track your grades and any missing work.
- You are responsible for making up missing work when you are absent from school due to illness, appointments, sports, etc., and you take the initiative to talk to your teachers about what you missed.

K. **K**eep your Stuff Organized…so you can find it when you need it!

Hikes are less fun without the right gear: e.g., getting soaked because you lost your rain jacket or getting tons of bug bites because you forgot bug spray. Learning is less fun when you don't have the materials you need. Students, **Keep**ing your stuff organized means you:

- Use your planner. Your planner is like your trail map for the journey. You have 7-8 different classrooms and teachers. You will likely forget assignments and other things if you don't write them all down.
- Organize your binders with the teacher-recommended divider, and then put your papers where they belong. Shoving papers loosely into binders leads to wasted time trying to find notes and homework.
- Maintain a tidy locker and backpack. These are like your basecamp, and you need an orderly one to easily locate the right gear (books, binders, school supplies) for a successful journey.

E. **E**ngage With Your Learning

Students, to **Engage** with your learning, you actively participate:

- Pay attention to teachers during class instruction, take notes, and do homework. Your teachers' lectures and homework are like the amazing scenic views they want to show you. Don't ignore them and miss out.
- Study intentionally; you may have to try different study strategies to successfully conquer that quiz or test.
- Ask your teachers for tips and advice if you are struggling. Remember that they are the expert travel guides for your learning journey and they want to help you. Use the resources they provide you, including Google Classrooms and E.A.G.L.E. time.

All of us here at LCJHS are excited to go on this journey with you. Let's H.I.K.E.!

Order System

The LCJHS Order System is a student-organizational structure designed to assist LCJHS students in achieving specific academic and student-life objectives. The system supplants the traditional student council governing structure by creating smaller integrated communities of students (~30-35 students per Order, ~15-18 from each grade) within the school, thus providing a framework for student governance allowing greater opportunity for development of meaningful leadership.

Purposes

1. To increase institutional and peer-to-peer support for each student.
2. To ensure individual care for each student by the order deans who will monitor and support the academic, social, moral, and behavioral growth of each LCJHS student.
3. To multiply occasions to build strong, healthy student relationships.
4. To develop leadership skills in every student.
5. To enhance recruitment of new students.

Organization

- Orders consist of thirty to thirty-five students in the 7th and 8th grades.
- Each Order has two faculty members who serve as Order Deans.
- The Orders are led by elected students who serve as Order Captains and Executive Officers.
- Order assignments are made by the Order Director and school administration.
- Each Order is responsible for organizing and running various special events and activities.

Unique Outcomes for LCJHS:

1. Enhanced school-family spirit in the 7th and 8th grade classes.
2. More robust opportunities for LCJHS students to be trained as leaders through hands-on service, gaining meaningful and valuable leadership experience.
3. Stronger interpersonal relationship skills for each LCJHS student.
4. More focused support internalizing LCJHS character development.

Junior High Athletics

Fall Sports	Winter Sports	Spring Sports
Girls' Volleyball	Boys' Basketball	Track and Field (Co-ed)*
Boys' Soccer*	Girls' Basketball	Girls' Soccer*
Cross Country (Co-ed)*	Wrestling*	

LCJHS (6th*–8th Grades) competes in the Northern Plains Middle Level Association.

E.A.G.L.E. Time

EAGLE Time stands for **E**xtended **A**cademic **G**uidance and **L**eadership **E**ndeavors. Liberty Common Junior High Students will participate in EAGLE Time daily, and each day has a distinct focus. EAGLE Time is part of the academic day, and thus the expectation is that all students attend EAGLE Time every day.

Monday—Advisory
Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday—Extra Help/Study Hall/Club
Wednesday—Order Time

LCS Foundation Stones and Capstone Virtues

The goal of character education at Liberty Common Junior High School is to instruct students as they refine the foundational character traits they learn in the elementary school. Students will begin to live out these foundation stones as the classical and robust virtues that define student life at the high school level.

Foundation Stones

- **Respect:** Showing consideration for the rights and wellbeing of others and ourselves; treating all with due esteem and honor.
- **Responsibility:** Keeping our commitments, being accountable for our actions, being dependable stewards of ourselves, our families, our property, and our community.
- **Self-Control:** Being proper in words and deeds, relying upon ourselves to correctly regulate our own thoughts and behavior.
- **Perseverance:** Being steadfast in our duties, responsibilities, and in achieving worthy goals despite adversity.
- **Cooperation:** Exchanging with others ideas, effort, and virtue toward achieving a noble goal; uniting talents in pursuit of positive outcomes.
- **Integrity:** Knowing right from wrong and having the courage, in every situation, to do what is right.
- **Citizenship:** Leading a community by loving our family, being loyal to friends, promoting liberty and justice for all, being self-reliant, courageous, and living with honor.

Capstone Virtues[1]

- **Prudence:** Predicated upon practical reason, prudence entails discernment of the true good surrounding every situation and the moral means of achieving it.
- **Temperance:** Restraint in passions of ambition and pleasure. Temperance places intellect, balance, and reason above impulsiveness setting limits in order to attain that which is honorable.
- **Justice:** Balance between self-interest and the rights of others. Justice entails a mature appreciation of what is due another whether among equals, superiors, or subordinates.
- **Fortitude:** Includes forbearance, endurance, and ability to withstand fear, uncertainty, or intimidation.
- **Gratitude:** An inclination to express thankfulness and gratefulness to others for their gifts and gestures of kindness.
- **Patriotism:** Devotion and dedication to the country—allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

[1] With regard to Prudence, Temperance, Justice, and Fortitude, Plato identified these virtues with the classes of the city described in The Republic and with the faculties of man. They are also known as the "cardinal virtues," indicating "the hinges upon which the door of the moral life swings."

Liberty Common Junior High and High School Curriculum Progression

2026-2027

			Junior High		High School			
Period	**Course Type**	**Credits per Year**	7th Grade	8th Grade	9th Grade	10th Grade	11th Grade	12th Grade
1	**Math**	10	See Flow Chart	See Flow Chart	See Flow Chart (Algebra 1 or Higher)	See Flow Chart (Algebra 1 or higher)	See Flow Chart (Algebra 1 or higher)	See Flow Chart (Algebra 2 or higher)
2	**Science**	10	Science 7	Science 8	Biology	Chemistry or Conceptual Chemistry & Physics (CCP)	Physics or Chemistry	Science Elective(s) or Physics
3	**English**	10	English 7	English 8	Western Literature	British Literature	American Literature	English Elective
4	**History**	10	History 7	History 8	Western Civilization	World History	AP US History or US History	American Government / Personal Finance
5	**Other Required Courses**	5	Computer Essentials	Composition 1	Economics	Intro to Engineering	Composition 2 or AP Language & Composition (2 semesters)	Fine Arts
		5	Art 7	Art 8		Composition 2	PE/Health	Elective
6	**Foreign Language**	10	Latin 1	Latin 2 (May add Spanish 1 or French 1)	Latin 3 Spanish 1 or 2 French 1 or 2 Latin 1 Ancient Greek 1	Latin 4 Spanish 2 or 3 French 2 or 3 Latin 2 Ancient Greek 2	Latin 5 or AP Spanish 3 or 4 French 3 or 4 Latin 3	Latin 6 or AP Spanish 4 or AP French 4 Latin 4
7	**Music Physical Education Elective Study Hall**	20	Choose from Option A Or Option B Or Option C Or Option D	Choose from Option A Or Option B Or Option C Or Option D	Elective	Elective	Elective	Elective
					Elective	Elective	Elective	Elective
8					Elective/SH	Elective/SH	Elective/SH	Elective/SH
					Elective/SH	Elective/SH	Elective/SH	Elective/SH

	Option A	Option B	Option C	Option D
7th Grade	Music 7 - Choir (3x per week) Physical Education 7 (2x per week) Elective or Study Hall (5x per week)	Study Hall (3x per week) Physical Education 7 (2x per week) Music 7 - Choir, Band, or Orchestra (5x per week)	Music 7 - Choir (3x per week) Study Hall (2x per week) Physical Education 7 (5x per week)	Music 7 - Choir, Band, or Orchestra (5x per week) Physical Education 7 (5x per week)
8th Grade	Music 8 - Choir (3x per week) Physical Education 8 (2x per week) Elective or Study Hall (5x per week)	Study Hall (3x per week) Physical Education 8 (2x per week) Music 8 - Choir, Band, or Orchestra (5x per week)	Music 8 - Choir (3x per week) Study Hall (2x per week) Physical Education 8 (5x per week)	Music 8 - Choir, Band, or Orchestra (5x per week) Physical Education 8 (5x per week)

*8th grade students wishing to begin a modern foreign language in addition to Latin 2 may request a waiver for Composition. Please see the waiver requirements listed on page 11 of this guide.

**Junior High students may have only one Study Hall per semester.

***Latin 2 Requirement:**

- Latin 2 is an 8th- grade core requirement.
- Latin 2 is also an LCHS high school graduation requirement.
- Students who complete Latin 2 in 8th grade will fulfill the Latin 2 LCHS high school graduation requirement. They will have the option to have the grade recorded on their high-school transcript, but the grade will not count towards their high school GPA.
- All LCHS high school students are required to earn a minimum of 20 foreign language credits during high school beyond any classes taken in Junior High (grades 9–12).
- 8th-grade students who wish to begin a modern foreign language in addition to Latin 2 may request a waiver for Composition 1.

***Composition I Waiver**

8th grade students wishing to begin a modern foreign language in addition to Latin 2 may request a waiver for Composition I. Please note the requirements below:

- Must have an A in 7th grade Core English (1st and 2nd semester percentage averaged)
- Must have an A average on *all* essays combined.
- Score a 245 or better on the most recent NWEA language usage test.
- Earn the recommendation of the 7th grade Core English teacher(s)—based on the student's participation, character, and other relevant factors.
- *Ultimately, the administration will make the final decision.*

(Students wishing to free up time in their schedules for an additional elective other than a second foreign language may take Composition I over the summer.)

Student Fees

Liberty Common School Administration charges an annual student-activity fee of $50 per student (k-12) to help offset the cost of special events throughout the year. A few expenditures include, but are not limited to: field trips, Eagle Games, and House/Order t-shirts.

Additionally, LCJHS charges an academic fee once per year. This fee covers consumable materials such as art supplies, sheet music, or 3D-printer filament as well as the physical-education uniform purchase. LCJHS students will be assessed a single $30 academic fee at the beginning of the school year.

Students may incur additional charges for lost or damaged items including, but not limited to, damaged textbooks and lost physical-education uniforms. The academic fee covers the cost of one physical education uniform per year. If an additional uniform is issued, a replacement fee will be assessed. Students are encouraged to reuse physical education uniforms from previous years if they still fit and are in good condition.

Junior High Core Course Descriptions

Core Knowledge English

ENGLISH 7

Seventh-grade core English is part of the Core Knowledge curriculum. This class introduces students to Naturalist, Romantic, Realist, and Modernist short stories and novels. Literature is studied from a historical, cultural, and literary perspective. The class looks to other disciplines, like history and art, to understand literature in context as well as looking inward to learn moral lessons from books. Students are exposed to a variety of poetry spanning hundreds of years. Grammar and mechanics are taught and practiced throughout the year along with literary devices and concepts. One of the greatest hurdles in this course is the transition to analytical writing. Students read one hundred and fifty minutes of a book from the required reading list outside of class and also learn a new list of etymological Greek and Latin roots each week. In addition to writing daily, students will also practice public speaking and academic discussion.

ENGLISH 8

Eighth-grade core English is the culminating year of literature studies in the Core Knowledge sequence. Beginning with an intensive grammar unit, the class introduces its study of literature with the American classic *To Kill a Mockingbird*. This book sets the stage for the study of literature and writing about literature for the rest of the year. Understanding not only narrative elements, students will learn how literature is *crafted*, and as such, will learn to analyze literature. Shakespeare, poetry, short stories, and George Orwell's *Animal Farm* are among the great pieces read. Throughout the year Latin and Greek roots are studied alongside further grammar instruction.

COMPOSITION 1

Note: This course is offered during LCHS Summer Session.

All writers face three problems every time they write: how to come up with something to say, how to arrange what they have to say, and how to express what they have to say. Using the curriculum of *The Lost Tools of Writing*, students will learn classical tools of rhetoric that will help them with each of the three problems. Over a series of essays, students will learn the Five Topics of Invention, the Complete Persuasive Essay Template, and a variety of schemes and tropes such as Parallelism, Antithesis, Simile, and Metaphor. Students who graduate Composition I will be prepared not only for high school writing but for any future writing they will do.

Mathematics

PRE-ALGEBRA

This course prepares students for a successful transition into Algebra 1. Pre-algebra introduces basic concepts for algebraic equation solving. It also includes expressions, linear equations and graphs, inequalities, percent, and data display. Topics from geometry and statistics are introduced as well.

INTRODUCTORY ALGEBRA
This course will bridge topics from Pre-Algebra and Algebra 1. Topics will include: operations and word problems involving whole numbers, decimals, fractions, percentages, rates and ratios, exponents, expressions, simple two-step equations, roots, area and volume of polygons and solids, linear graphs, graphing (x, y) coordinates, box-and-whisker plots, bar graphs, and pie graphs.

ALGEBRA 1
Prerequisite: Pre-algebra
This course introduces basic concepts for algebraic equation solving. It includes expressions, linear equations and graphs, inequalities, systems of linear equations, and quadratic equations and graphs. Topics from geometry and statistics are introduced as well.

GEOMETRY
Prerequisite: Algebra 1
This course provides a thorough knowledge of the main topics of classical plane and solid geometry. Students learn how a large body of results may be deduced from a comparatively small number of assumptions. Through regular practice, students are trained to present an argument in a clear and orderly fashion using classical geometric definitions, postulates, and theorems. Finally, students are introduced to coordinate geometry and the geometric aspect of trigonometry.

Computer Science

COMPUTER ESSENTIALS
Note: This course is offered during LCHS Summer Session.
This course is an introduction to the computer. Students will learn proper typing; file management; and word processing, spreadsheet, and presentation software.

Core Knowledge Science

SCIENCE 7
This course introduces students to basic chemistry, cells and genetics, and the history of earth and life forms. Students learn how the models for atomic structure have changed from the early Greek theory to current theories along with the development of the periodic table. Chemical bonds and reactions are studied to include ionic and covalent bonds, chemical formulas, chemical reactions and balancing chemical equations. Basic cell structure and the two types of cell division (mitosis and meiosis) are presented along with how changes occur from one generation of living organisms to the next. Gregor Mendel's experiments with plants, dominant and recessive genes, and Punnett squares are learned. Students study how DNA was discovered and by whom, how DNA makes new DNA and how DNA is modified through genetic engineering. The Paleontology unit introduces fossils as a record of Earth's history and past life forms. Geologic time and plate tectonics are studied to show how life has changed over time and how the Earth's surface is still changing. The last unit deals with the theory of evolution and natural selection. Students will study how Charles Darwin developed the concept of the theory of evolution and the evidence that supports that theory. Extinction and the environmental changes involved with extinction and speciation are also covered.

SCIENCE 8

This course is an introduction to physics. After reviewing the scientific method and metric system, students are introduced to one-dimensional motion involving speed and velocity. Newton's laws of motion will show how balanced and unbalanced forces affect how an object moves. Density and buoyancy are presented to show how fluids affect objects. The physics definition of work, energy and power are used to solve various problems associated with each. Electricity and magnetism are the next units. Students learn about magnetic fields and how magnetism and electricity are related. They build electric circuits, measure voltage, current, and resistance, and solve problems involving parallel and series circuits. The electromagnetic spectrum is studied and how light is reflected and refracted. Both light and sound waves are discussed and demonstrated. The final unit presents how energy is obtained from food through respiration and the chemical processes of photosynthesis and respiration are covered.

Core Knowledge History

HISTORY 7

This yearlong course is part of the Core Knowledge history sequence. Its primary focus is on United States history from 1898 to 1945. The course is naturally framed by three events of overarching significance: World War I, the Great Depression, and World War II. In addition to the base in US history, the course includes a substantial unit on the Russian Revolution. The history curriculum is grounded in the study of important primary sources and also includes a significant focus on understanding the geography relevant to its subject matter.

HISTORY 8

This yearlong course is the final year in the Core Knowledge history sequence. Its primary focus is on United States History from 1945 to the present including major political, cultural, foreign policy, and military issues. In addition to the base in U.S. History, the course includes units on European Imperialism, the history of the Middle East, and U.S. Civics and Government. The history curriculum is grounded in the study of important primary sources and also includes a significant focus on understanding the geography relevant to its subject matter.

Latin

LATIN 1

This course covers the first sixteen chapters of *Wheelock's Latin*. It is designed not only to fully prepare students to continue their study of Latin in higher-level courses, but also to cover the historical and cultural achievements of the Romans and how they affect Western Civilization. The course also emphasizes English vocabulary that comes from Latin roots and the study of both Latin grammar and English grammar.

LATIN 2

Prerequisite: Latin 1

This course starts with an extensive review of Latin 1 and expands into further development of the students' skills with an emphasis on preparing the students with the knowledge necessary to move on to Latin 3. The course covers the first thirty-two chapters of *Wheelock's Latin*.

Core Knowledge Music 7th Grade

All students in 7th grade must be enrolled in one (1) of the courses listed under this heading. Each course listed below is performance-based while fully incorporating the Core Knowledge Sequence for 7th grade, including Music Theory, Music of the Romantic period, and Opera. While the band has both an Intermediate and Concert track, the 7th grade choir and orchestra only offer intermediate options.

MUSIC 7 - BAND
This is a full-year course which meets every day. This course is open to all students who wish to play wind, brass, or percussion instruments regardless of prior experience. Students will learn and develop the skills of playing in an ensemble and playing individually. Students will be graded on participation/behavior in class, public performance, thoughtful reflections on their performances, individual in-class performance of musical scales, weekly practice logs, and unit exams on the Core Knowledge content. There will be both an Intermediate Band and Concert Band, and the level of students will be determined by recommendations of current instrumental teachers and auditions. The Concert Band will perform more challenging repertoire than the Intermediate Band and will have more rigorous performance/practice requirements for individual players. Placement is based on director assessment of student playing.

MUSIC 7 - ORCHESTRA
This is a full-year course which meets every day. This course is open to all students who wish to play the classical string instruments (violin, viola, cello, double bass) regardless of prior experience. Students will learn and develop the skills of playing in an ensemble and playing individually. Students will be graded on participation/behavior in class, public performance, thoughtful reflections on their performances, individual in-class performance of musical scales, weekly practice, listening assignments, and unit exams on the Core Knowledge content.

MUSIC 7 - CHOIR
This is a full-year course which can meet every day or three times per week. With the voice as their primary platform, students will approach the great works of the Core Knowledge Sequence and cultivate cultural literacy by receiving, engaging with, and passing on choral traditions from around the world. Students will continue the road toward technical mastery, musical independence, and true citizenship by building on the foundations of vocal technique established in elementary school within the context of a dynamic community. There will be a greater emphasis on performance for students opting for five days per week of choir instruction, with more opportunity to refine their vocal talent and technical mastery.

Core Knowledge Music 8th Grade

All students in 8th grade must be enrolled in one (1) of the courses under this heading. Each course listed below is performance-based while fully incorporating the Core Knowledge Sequence for 8th grade, including continued mastery of Music Theory, exploration and analysis of non-western music, Classical music of the 20th century, and the development of American Musical Styles. While the band has both an Intermediate and Concert track, the 8th grade choir and orchestra only offer intermediate options.

MUSIC 8 - BAND

This is a full-year course which meets every day. This course is open to all students who wish to play wind, brass, or percussion instruments regardless of prior experience. Students will learn and develop the skills of playing in an ensemble and playing individually. Students will be graded on participation/behavior in class, public performance, thoughtful reflections on their performances, individual in-class performance of musical scales, weekly practice logs, listening assignments, and unit exams on the Core Knowledge content. There will be both an Intermediate Band and Concert Band, and the level of students will be determined by recommendations of current instrumental teachers and auditions. The Concert Band will perform more challenging repertoire than the Intermediate Band and will have more rigorous performance/practice requirements for individual players. Placement is based on director assessment of student playing.

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Core Knowledge Art History/Appreciation

ART HISTORY/APPRECIATION 7

This one-semester course is part of the Core Knowledge Art Appreciation sequence. The primary focus is on the story of Modernism in art beginning with Impressionism and following its evolution through European abstraction. We also cover American artists' reactions to European developments in art and touch on the origins of Postmodernism and Institutionalism. This course is primarily art history, but we complete a few art projects related to the artistic periods covered.

ART HISTORY/APPRECIATION 8

This one-semester course is the final chapter of the Core Knowledge Art Appreciation sequence. In this course we study the history of art from the mid-1800s to contemporary times. We emphasize sculpture, architecture, photography, and post-WWII painting. This course is primarily art history, but we will cover artistic and aesthetic analysis and there is a final studio project at the end.

Physical Education

PHYSICAL EDUCATION 7

This is a full-year course which can meet every day or two times per week. This course is an introduction to a variety of Physical Education sports. Students learn the rules, history, and skills associated with each sport. Students then move to playing games in a variety of teams for that specific sport. The students are assessed on information covered at the end of each unit, including health-related components of physical fitness and other fitness terminology. There will be a greater opportunity for competition and play for students opting for five days per week of physical education, with additional time for increased skill training and physical fitness.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION 8

This is a full-year course which can meet every day or two times per week. This course is an extension of 7th grade Physical Education through continued game play. Students learn about more of the fitness-related principles associated with Physical Education. Circuit training, health-related components of physical fitness, and fitness vocabulary are covered in depth. There will be a greater opportunity for competition and play for students opting for five days per week of physical education, with additional time for increased skill training and physical fitness.

Junior-High Elective Course Descriptions

Please note, these selections are subject to change.

Art Electives

CORE KNOWLEDGE STUDIO 7

Grade: 7

This is a one-semester course that supplements the art history component of the Core Knowledge curriculum. Students will have the opportunity to deepen their appreciation of masterworks by exploring their media, processes, and concepts in art history-oriented studio projects. The content for each of these projects will directly coincide with the portion of the art history timeline covered in 7th grade: mid 1800s-late 20th century. The 7th- grade art history curriculum emphasizes the development of Modernism in Europe, artistic reactions to the World Wars, and 20th century art in North America. The studio projects in CK Studio 7 will illuminate these lessons for the students through intentional artmaking. Students will also learn how to write about their work clearly and eloquently through lessons in writing artist statements.

CORE KNOWLEDGE STUDIO 8

Grade: 8

This is a one-semester course that supplements the art history component of the Core Knowledge curriculum. Students will have the opportunity to deepen their appreciation of masterworks by exploring their media, processes, and concepts in art history-oriented studio projects. The content for each of these projects will directly coincide with the portion of the art history timeline covered in 8th grade: 1700-present. The 8th-grade art history curriculum has a strong emphasis on discovering the modern story of architecture, photography, and sculpture in addition to painting; it also ties firmly into the visual expression of major world events of the 20th century. The studio projects in CK Studio 8 will illuminate these lessons for the students through intentional artmaking. Students will also learn how to write about their work clearly and eloquently through lessons in writing artist statements.

Computer Electives

COMPUTER SCIENCE EXPLORATIONS

Prerequisite: Computer Essentials
Grades: 7-8
This one-semester course introduces coding and computer science by way of making and design, using the micro:bit microcontroller board. Students will learn about fundamental computer science concepts such as variables, conditionals, iteration, coordinates, bits, bytes, binary, radio communications, and array through the act of making programming physical objects. Students will make many engaging, creative digital projects such as digital pets, motorized creatures, scorekeepers, digital wallets, games, animations, alarms, cash registers and counters, interactive art, physical activity monitors, and musical instruments.

When students complete this course, they will have a good understanding of many computer science concepts that can serve as a foundation for future study. They will develop powerful design skills that they can use in future projects of all types, whether they are creating apps that serve a real-world purpose for designing projects for the pure joy of making, reasoning, and learning.

Foreign Language Electives

FRENCH 1

Grades: 8–12
This course focuses on introductory French, covering language skills emphasized through basic reading, listening, speaking, and writing. Emphasis is placed on practical vocabulary in written and oral use of the language along with proper use of grammar and cultural information. Lessons cover the varied use of the present tense for verbs. The simple past tense is introduced after students have had significant practice with the present tense. Students are exposed to various cultural themes relevant to French-speaking countries. Some literature is introduced as fits the curriculum and class readiness. The teacher consistently uses French in class and encourages students to speak in French as much as possible.

SPANISH 1

Grades: 8–12
This course focuses on introductory Spanish, covering language skills emphasized through basic reading, listening, speaking, and writing. Emphasis is placed on the proper use of grammar, practical vocabulary in written and oral use of the language, and cultural information. Lessons cover the varied use of the present tense for verbs. The simple past tense is introduced after students have had significant practice with the present tense. Students are exposed to various cultural themes relevant to Spanish-speaking countries. Some literature is introduced as fits the curriculum and class readiness. The teacher consistently uses Spanish in class and encourages students to speak in Spanish as much as possible.

Science Electives

ENGINEERING EXPLORATIONS

Grades: 7–8

This project-based semester course will introduce fundamental engineering principles for mechanical, electrical, civil and aerospace disciplines. It will focus on the engineering method which will be demonstrated through iterative problem-solving cycles. This course will serve as a good foundation to the Intro to Engineering Course offered in tenth grade.

THE SCIENCE IN SCIENCE FICTION

Grades: 7–8

Note: This course is not always offered.

Science Fiction captivates our imagination and takes us on adventures to strange worlds. Detective mysteries invigorate our curiosity and our desire to discover truth. It is fiction, but there are science facts to be learned and knowledge that increases our sense of wonder. The Science of Science Fiction is a one-semester class discovering the wonder that can be found traveling *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* in a submarine, in rockets that take us to Mars, and in the laboratory and investigations of Sherlock Holmes. Excerpts from the works of Jules Verne, Ray Bradbury, H.G. Wells and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle will be read to investigate the science of submarines, marine life, rockets, space travel and crime scene forensics. Topics to be studied include Archimedes Principle, desalination and distillation, ocean life and geology, rocketry, space missions, fingerprint and fiber and chemical analyses. The course will involve laboratory experiments, research and writing.

NATURAL DISASTERS

Grades: 7–8

Note: This course is not always offered.

This semester course is designed to give students an understanding of the events that lead up to natural disasters that impact not only the victims but also the rest of society. The three main categories are Meteorology, Geology, and Astronomy along with some of the natural disasters that fall in those categories. The Meteorology unit covers floods, severe thunderstorms, tornadoes, hurricanes, and major snow storms. The Geology unit introduces students to the Theory of Plate Tectonics and evidence from earthquakes and volcanoes that support that theory along with other events like tsunamis and mudslides. The Astronomy unit starts with the Solar System and star evolution, then moves out to the Milky Way and galaxies and the universe. The students gain a basic understanding of the principles of each category so they can see how the disasters come about. The class also includes individual and/or group projects to enhance understanding.

Performing Arts Electives

MUSICAL THEATRE PRODUCTION

Grades: 7–8

This semester class is designed to develop skills in various aspects of producing a musical. It is open to students with a variety of interests including singing, acting, and dancing. The performance will be in December. Auditions will be held during the first weeks of class. Participants will be required to attend the final performances and additional rehearsals and meetings beyond regular class time. Please note there will be evening rehearsals prior to the show, and full participation is mandatory.

Other Electives

SILENT STUDY HALL

This semester course is a quiet study hall. Students are expected to complete schoolwork or read silently. Computer access is not guaranteed in study hall. Students are allowed one study hall per semester.

At-Home Recommendations for Junior High Success

Environment

Choose a homework area that is quiet, low traffic, and well-lit.

Reduce the number of visual distractions. Move away from windows and doors.

Remove distractions from the homework area:

TV, internet, radio, cell phones, computer, internet, music, etc.

*Best practice—place your cell phone away from study area.

Provide a table or desk. Help keep that work surface uncluttered.

Have a few extra supplies in the homework area (pens, pencils, paper, dictionary, etc.).

If there is no environment in the home conducive for completing homework, check out the library or community center.

Homework Plan

Check planner or electronic planner and post quizzes, tests, and projects for the next week.

Set simple homework expectations: stay on task, finish task, and meet task requirements.

Students bring all work home each day, completed and not completed.

Allow the student to take short breaks between tasks when necessary. Snacks may be appropriate.

Set a consistent time for completing homework and stick to it every day.

Even when your child doesn't have homework, make homework time an academic time. Have the child read, review class notes, study for Latin or Word Day or get extra practice with math concepts.

Have a designated area in students' binder to place completed class assignments to be returned to school.

Parent's Role

Teach your child to organize homework by subject, according to a plan.

- If your student struggles to begin homework, work from easiest subject/task to hardest subject/task.
- If your student struggles with endurance, then work from hardest subject/task to easiest subject/task.
- Or alternate between hardest and easiest subjects/tasks.

Encourage the student to follow a less desirable task with a more desirable task. Make completion of the first task necessary to perform the second task.

Encourage students to do their homework independently. Monitor from a distance.

Be mindful and present to assist when needed or prompt your student to stay on task.

Set a consistent deadline or time in the evening for homework completion.

Provide authentic verbal praise when your child completes a task, answers a question correctly, figures out a difficult problem, or shows improvement in penmanship/typing speed, etc.

Provide a tangible award for completion of homework. Awards can be nightly or weekly, depending on the child.

Review finished homework for completeness and accuracy.

Create rewards for meeting homework goals.

Communication

Compare work with student planner to determine which work needs to be completed.

Check your child's planner to see if the teacher wrote a note. Respond when appropriate.

You can contact teachers directly by getting their email addresses from the school's website.

PowerSchool

PowerSchool is an excellent resource for checking on grades and missing/late work. If you do not have your parent login, please contact the front office for assistance.

Planner Plan

All LCJHS Student are expected to use a planner to keep track of assignments. If your student is not keeping an accurate planner there are a few things you can do.

Some teachers create weekly assignment lists. If you email them directly, they are usually happy to share those with you. You and your student should also check Google Classroom using your student's Google log-in.

If your student does not record the assignments for a specific class or two, then putting him/her on a planner plan can be helpful. You can initiate a planner plan by yourself at any time; however, it helps to notify the teacher as well.

- Student will accurately fill out the planner for the class and show it to the teacher by the end of class.
- Teacher will initial it to verify accuracy.
- Parent checks planner at home. This seems to work best when there are at-home rewards and consequences attached.
    - For example, if the student got a teacher initial s/he earns a reward (snack, screen time, etc.) If s/he did not get the signature there could be a consequence (chores, email teacher to ask for assignments, no rewards, etc.)

*The large sized planners (11 in. x 8 in.) provided through LCJHS hold more information and are less likely to be misplaced.

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