

ELLEN FLETCHER MIDDLE SCHOOL

Program of Study



**PALO ALTO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
Ellen Fletcher Middle School**

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Ellen Fletcher Middle School



Program of Study

Grades 6, 7, 8

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Because of generous donations to Palo Alto Partners in Education (PiE), we are able to offer a wide variety of electives for our students so each child can find one (or many) that spark their interest and inspire them to explore new subjects. Thank you, PiE donors, for making the choices listed here possible.



INTRODUCTION

MIDDLE SCHOOL COURSE OVERVIEW

Required Courses

Required Courses		
Grade 6*	Grade 7*	Grade 8*
English/Language Arts History/Social Studies Mathematics Science Flex Period** Physical Education/Music (<i>alternate days</i>) Exploratory Wheel	English/Language Arts History/Social Studies Mathematics Science/Life (<i>Adolescent Skills</i>) Physical Education Elective Elective	English/Language Arts History/Social Studies Mathematics Science/Physical Science Physical Education Elective Elective

* All students will have PRIME every Wednesday.

* Teacher Office Hours are offered and available every Monday and Wednesday afternoon.

Please note: Budget and staffing decisions made after the publication of this catalog may affect what classes can be offered. Although we hope to offer all of these classes, we may have to cancel some. We will cancel any which do not have sufficient enrollment. It is **very important** that students indicate their first seven choices in the order desired. Classes may be canceled due to enrollment.

NOTE: Students and their parents have several important decisions to make in planning a school program. No catalog can answer all of your questions, so don't hesitate to speak to your teacher or counselor to get more information or assistance (650) 856-9810

****Flex/Core Period.** Class period in our sixth-grade program called "Flex/Core Period". During this class period, students who have academic services take their classes. All other students remain with their homeroom teachers for support and enrichment opportunities. Flex Period course offerings for sixth grade (*subject to change) • Academic Communication • Academic Language Development • Academic Planning • Math Intervention • Literacy Intervention • Human Movement and Wellness • Nature Journaling • Introduction to Science • Note Taking • Research Skills • Current Events • Design Thinking

6th Grade Required Courses

Sixth grade core (five periods of the day) covers the subjects of English/Language Arts, History/Social Studies, Science, and Math, and includes one Flex period. Teachers are grouped in two- or three-member teams. These teams share responsibilities for curriculum in different ways.

English 6

Following the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), sixth-grade students build their skills in the areas of reading, writing, listening, speaking, and language. Students read and analyze texts of varying complexity, which may include novels, nonfiction books, articles, poetry, short stories, and plays. Students will also view and analyze multimedia sources. Throughout the school year, students write argumentative, narrative, and informative pieces (including literary analysis) with a focus on the organization of structured paragraphs. Students are introduced to responding to literature with clear claims, textual evidence, proper citation, and commentary/analysis. Students practice speaking and listening skills through structured class discussions, and individual and group presentations. Grammar and mechanics are taught within the context of writing. When writing or speaking, students will practice crafting effective phrases, clauses, and sentence structures and use vocabulary that suits the audience and purpose.

Social Studies 6

The sixth grade program focuses on the history and geography of ancient civilizations. The units of study commence with early humans and then transition from a hunter-gatherer lifestyle to permanent settlements, and eventually to the building of ancient empires. The curricular units of study address the civilizations of Mesopotamia, Egypt, Kush, Israel, India, China and Greece. Students will learn about the geographic, social, political, religious, and economic systems of these cultures. Students will investigate past to present connections as they learn that contemporary cultures are the descendants of earlier civilizations. By studying the characteristics of these civilizations, students will become more aware of, and learn to appreciate the ethnic and cultural diversity in our own society, and the contributions these diverse civilizations have made to our modern world. Following Common Core Standards, students will use a variety of activities to examine the content and build study skills, while simultaneously practicing historical thinking, inquiry, and writing skills.

Foundational Mathematics

FOUNDATIONAL MATHEMATICS is the first year in a three-year accelerated math course sequence preparing students for Algebra 1 in 8th grade. It extends student understanding and skill to compute rational numbers (decimals, fractions, integers) and introduces algebraic and proportional reasoning. Many of the concepts and skills will have further reinforcement in a context requiring statistical and geometric reasoning.

The content of this course is a combination of California's Common Core Content Standards from Grade 6 and Grade 7. The areas of content focus are: number system, expressions and equations, ratios and proportions, geometry, and data analysis and statistics. Instruction is guided by *The 8 Mathematical Practice Standards*: make sense of problems and persevere in solving them; reason abstractly and quantitatively; model with mathematics; attend to precision; use appropriate tools strategically; look for and make use of structure; and look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning.

In this course, students are heterogeneously grouped. Extension and enrichment opportunities are available to all students. Information about the math pathways can be found at the district website.

Science 6: Earth and Space Science

This is a year-long, activity-based science course following the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) for Middle School. The course focuses on these NGSS topics: investigation and experimentation, Earth's Place in the Solar System, Earth's Systems (geology, weather, climate), and Earth and Human Activity. There is an emphasis on expository writing through individual and group work. In addition to the disciplinary core ideas, the NGSS

cross-cutting concepts and science & engineering practices are explored.

Physical Education and Music

During one period, sixth grade students have Music and Physical Education. Students make their music selection (band, choir or orchestra) during the spring of their fifth-grade year. Sixth grade music students continue to develop as musicians and performers. There is a focus on building a strong foundation using proper posture, breath control, tone production, and reading music. In addition, students perform several times a year.

The California Physical Education Model Content Standards emphasize working cooperatively to achieve a common goal, meeting challenges, making decisions, and working as a team to solve problems.

Fletcher sixth grade students are provided an introductory exposure to a wide variety of activities, including team sports, individual & dual sports, rhythms and aquatics. Additionally, students will focus on developing an appreciation for one's own physical fitness for lifelong recreational purposes. They will focus on sport-specific movement patterns and skills through cooperative activities and develop and maintain a level of physical fitness to improve health and performance. Students in sixth grade will be provided a minimum of 200 PE instructional minutes every 10 school days.

Exploratory Wheel

The remaining period for 6th graders is the Exploratory Wheel. Students receive approximately five to six weeks of instruction in Art, Computer Applications, Drama, Sustainability, Foods and Nutrition, Industrial Technology. These courses will provide students with an introduction to courses which they may choose as semester long electives in 7th and 8th grade. **rotations are subject to staffing availability and may change*

Art

The curriculum is an introduction to the 7th and 8th grade Art, Multimedia and Ceramics/Sculpture art classes. Students will create original artworks using a variety of materials and will bring home a portfolio of their work that will include:

- Proportional Figure Painting Students learn figure proportion and apply it to make a dynamic watercolor painting.
- Still-Life Drawing Impressionist still-life drawings in oil pastel
- Sculpture Students create an expressive figure sculpture in Paper mâché

Computers

The Computer Wheel is designed as an introduction to the computer courses offered at Fletcher: Web 1A, Computer Application. Units may include:

- Ergonomic Issues related to computer use health and safety
- Online Safety and Personal Security Issues
- Touch Typing Techniques
- Computer Graphics (Photoshop)
- The Study of Animation
- Introduction to Web Design (using HTML coding)
- Introduction to Computer Programming
- Introduction to Robotics
- Basic Computer Troubleshooting and Problem Solving
- Tour of the Video Broadcast Studio

Drama

Through focus, improvisation, and collaboration, students develop as performers, writers and directors while they learn to use the lessons in class to produce shows of their own. Units include:

- Elements of the narrative "CROW"
- Basic stage terms and directions
- Audience awareness
- Character development
- Elements of conflict
- Working with sound, lights, props and costumes

Industrial Technology

The Industrial Technology Wheel rotation introduces students to the Engineering Design Process with design and build challenges. Among other things, students learn teamwork, communication, problem solving and safe work habits. This course gets students ready for the Tech 1A elective course available to 7th and 8th graders.

Build activities include:

- Tropical hut
- Egg drop
- Ball Run
- Volleyball machine

Introduction to Foods

Students will explore the introduction to foods and nutrition. Students will learn basic measuring, introductory skills to the cooktop, ovens, and other devices.

Introduction to Sustainability

Introductory entry level to understanding the relationship between humans and the Earth. Deeper level learning and understanding will take place in our semester class. The Wheel Course may focus on the following:

- Human Impact
- Pollution
- Food Waste
- Water

Flex/Core Period

Class period in our sixth-grade program called “Flex/Core Period”. During this class period, students who have academic services take their classes. All other students remain with their homeroom teachers for support and enrichment opportunities. Flex Period course offerings for sixth grade (**subject to change*)

- Academic Communication
- Academic Language Development
- Academic Planning
- Current Events
- Design Thinking
- Fun with Literacy
- Human Movement and Wellness
- Introduction to Science
- Math Intervention
- Nature Journaling
- Note Taking
- Research Skills
- Writing Mechanics

Advisory (PRIME)

Personal, **R**eteaching, **I**ntervention, **M**entoring, and **E**nrichment. All students attend grade-level PRIME/Advisory class 1x weekly. PRIME/Advisory creates time and space for: team and community building, school-wide service projects, study skills lessons, teacher conferencing assessment retakes, digital citizen retakes, social-emotional competency building, health and wellness activities, and schoolwide surveys and assessments.

7th Grade Required Courses

English 7

Following the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), seventh-grade students continue to build their skills in the areas of reading, writing, listening, speaking, and language. Students read and analyze texts of varying complexity, which may include novels, nonfiction books, articles, poetry, short stories, and plays. Students will also view and analyze multimedia sources. Throughout the school year, students write argumentative, narrative, and informative pieces (including literary analysis) with a focus on the organization of structured paragraphs with clear claims, textual evidence, correct MLA citation, and commentary/analysis. Students practice speaking and listening skills through structured class discussions, individual and group presentations. Grammar and mechanics are taught within the context of writing. When writing or speaking, students will practice crafting effective phrases, clauses, and sentence structures and use vocabulary that suits the audience and purpose.

Social Studies 7

The 7th grade program will build upon previous studies of ancient world history by connecting it to the Medieval Period. This course will examine selected civilizations in Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Americas from approximately 500 BCE to 1700 CE. Students will learn about the rise and fall of empires as well as the social, political, religious, and economic systems that each civilization established. Additionally, the course will examine how sites of encounter facilitated the diffusion of religions and languages, along with the vast movement of people and ideas. Studying the development of these world cultures will encourage students to become more aware of, and learn to appreciate and value, the ethnic and cultural diversity in our own society and the modern world. Following Common Core Standards, students will use a variety of activities to examine the content and build study skills, while simultaneously practicing historical thinking, inquiry, and writing skills.

Concepts in Mathematics

CONCEPTS IN MATHEMATICS is the second year in a three-year accelerated math course sequence preparing students for high school Algebra in 8th grade.

This course deepens student mastery of the rational number system while introducing the foundational concepts of algebra, geometry, and data analysis required for high school mathematics. Students refine their fluency with rational numbers to solve complex, multi-step equations and inequalities. The curriculum emphasizes proportional reasoning, percent applications, probability, angle relationships, surface area and volume, transformations, Pythagorean Theorem, and exponents. The content of this course is a blend of California's Common Core State Standards for Grade 7 and Grade 8, specifically designed to prepare students for advanced algebraic thinking. Instruction is guided by *The 8 Mathematical Practice Standards*: make sense of problems and persevere in solving them; reason abstractly and quantitatively; model with mathematics; attend to precision; use appropriate tools strategically; look for and make use of structure; and look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning

In this course, students are heterogeneously grouped. Extension and enrichment opportunities are available to all students. Information about the math pathways can be found at the district website.

Physical Education

The California Physical Education Model Content Standards emphasize working cooperatively to achieve a common goal, meeting challenges, making decisions, and working as a team to solve problems.

Fletcher seventh grade students are provided an introductory exposure to a wide variety of activities, including team sports, individual & dual sports, rhythms and aquatics. Additionally, students will focus on developing an appreciation for one's own physical fitness for lifelong recreational purposes.

Students will focus on refining sport-specific skills through individual and dual sports and work cooperatively in

small groups. They will also develop and maintain a level of physical fitness to improve health and performance. Students in seventh grade will be provided a minimum of 400 PE instructional minutes every 10 school days.

Science 7: Life Science

This is a year-long, activity-based science course following the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) for Middle School. The course focuses on these NGSS topics: investigation and experimentation, the structure and process from molecules to organisms; interactions, energy flow and dynamics of ecosystems; inheritance and variation of genetic traits; and the diversity of biological evolution. This course will address the expectations for instruction outlined in the California Healthy Youth Act. This course also supports scientific practices through experimentation, emphasis on scientific reading, writing, and communication, collaboration, and engineering skills through design and testing. In addition to the disciplinary core ideas, the NGSS cross-cutting concepts and science & engineering practices are explored.

Advisory (PRIME)

Personal, **R**eteaching, **I**ntervention, **M**entoring, and **E**nrichment. All students attend grade-level PRIME/Advisory class 1x weekly. PRIME/Advisory creates time and space for: team and community building, school-wide service projects, study skills lessons, teacher conferencing assessment retakes, digital citizen retakes, social-emotional competency building, health and wellness activities, and schoolwide surveys and assessments.

8th Grade Required Courses

English 8

Following the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), eighth-grade students continue to build their skills in the areas of reading, writing, listening, speaking, and language. Students strengthen their critical thinking skills through the study of novels, graphic novels, short stories, nonfiction texts, poetry, and plays. Students also view and analyze multimedia sources. Throughout the school year, English 8 students write argumentative, informative/explanatory, and narrative pieces with a focus on the organization of structured paragraphs and multi-paragraph essays. Students introduce and support thesis statements and claims with logical reasoning and evidence, use Modern Language Association (MLA) citation and format style, and develop their commentary/analysis skills. Grammar and mechanics are taught within the context of writing. Students practice speaking and listening skills through structured class discussions, group presentations, individual presentations, and/or group work. When writing or speaking, students craft effective, varied sentence structures and use vocabulary that suits the audience and purpose.

History / Social Studies 8

The 8th grade program will have students connect their past exploration of the Colonial and Revolutionary eras of American history to the study of the foundations and beginnings of the new Republic through the social, political, economic, and geographical growth of the nation. Students will learn about the creation and structure of the Constitution and Bill of Rights, the conflicting forces that led to the growth of political parties and sectionalism, early foreign policies and conflicts with other nations, the Westward Movement (“Manifest Destiny”), the institution of slavery, the Civil War and Reconstruction. By studying the ethical, social, political, and economic questions Americans have dealt with historically, students will be more aware of, and sensitive to, the issues facing America today. Following Common Core Standards, students will use a variety of activities to examine the content and build study skills, while simultaneously practicing historical thinking, inquiry, and writing skills.

Algebra 1

The fundamental objectives of this Common Core-aligned course are to formalize and extend the mathematics students learned in their previous two courses in middle school. The course includes the study of both linear and non-linear functions. Topics covered include introduction to the concept of a function, solving algebraic equations, solving and graphing linear inequalities, graphing linear equations, writing linear equations for a variety of contexts, solving systems of linear equations, simplifying exponential expressions, graphing exponential functions, factoring quadratics, solving and graphing quadratic functions, applications of quadratic and exponential functions, and simplifying irrational and exponential expressions. Instruction is guided by The 8 Mathematical Practice Standards: make sense of problems and persevere in solving them; reason abstractly and quantitatively; model with mathematics; attend to precision; use appropriate tools strategically; look for and make use of structure; and look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning.

The course will prepare students for one of the Geometry courses offered, when entering high school.

Physical Education

The California Physical Education Model Content Standards emphasize working cooperatively to achieve a common goal, meeting challenges, making decisions, and working as a team to solve problems.

Fletcher eighth grade students are provided an introductory exposure to a wide variety of activities, including team sports, individual & dual sports, rhythms and aquatics. Additionally, students will focus on developing an appreciation for one’s own physical fitness for lifelong recreational purposes.

Students will focus on refining sport-specific skills through individual and dual sports and work cooperatively in small groups. They will also develop and maintain a level of physical fitness to improve health and performance. Students in eighth grade will be provided a minimum of 400 PE instructional minutes every 10 school days.

Science 8: Physical Science

This is a year-long, activity-based science course following the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) for Middle School. The course focuses on these NGSS topics: investigation and experimentation, matter and its interactions, forces and interactions of motion and stability, energy, waves and information technology. Students build their understanding of science phenomena and practice data analysis, math computation, reading, writing and communication skills. In addition to the disciplinary core ideas, the NGSS cross-cutting concepts and science & engineering practices are explored.

Advisory (PRIME)

Personal, **R**eteaching, **I**ntervention, **M**entoring, and **E**nrichment. All students attend grade-level PRIME/Advisory class 1x weekly. PRIME/Advisory creates time and space for: team and community building, school-wide service projects, study skills lessons, teacher conferencing assessment retakes, digital citizen retakes, social-emotional competency building, health and wellness activities, and schoolwide surveys and assessments.

Fletcher Support Programs

Fletcher offers the following programs to assist students with academic success. All of the courses below would be taken in place of an elective course. They may be taken for more than 1 semester. Each class has designated criteria. Please consult with your child's counselor for questions and clarification.

Academic Language Development (ALD)

This year-long course is designed for students who have reached advanced English language proficiency. The class focuses on argumentative, expository, and narrative reading and writing, vocabulary development, grammar instruction, and the use of spoken language in core content areas. Effective organization and study skills are integrated into the curriculum. This course prepares students for success in high school by teaching listening, speaking, reading and writing skills that can be transferred into their core classes. This class takes the place of one elective course (7th/8th grade).

Focus on Success

7th – 8th grade This class is for 7th or 8th grade students who need help staying organized and completing homework assignments. It is designed to help learners by teaching study skill strategies. Placement is based on counselor and teacher recommendations. Parents should consult with their child's counselor for further information.

Math Workshop*

This class is intended for students who would like extra help in order to be successful in their math classes. In a supportive environment with no more than 15-18 students and a math teacher who is familiar with their respective grade level program, students will learn how to succeed in math through individual and small group tutoring, organizational help, projects, games, and computer programs. This class is intended for students who are performing below grade level in math and have been recommended by their teacher and/or guidance counselor.

Special Education

Students with an Individual Education Plan (IEP) will be enrolled in special education middle school instructional programs pursuant to their IEP. Parents should consult their child's counselor/case manager for more information. Instructional programs taught in special education at Fletcher include:

- Academic Communication
- Academic Planning
- Academic Math
- Academic Enhancement (ELA)
- Extensive Needs Program
- Therapeutic Services

Co-Taught Classes*

Co-Taught classes is defined as an instructional delivery approach in which general and special education educators share the teaching and learning responsibilities to assist students with accessing content material in the general education courses (ELA, Math, Science). General and special education teachers work in a collaborative and coordinated effort to support learning within the instructional environment. Co-teaching involves the joint-teaching of academic and behaviorally heterogeneous groups of students in integrated settings.

Team-Taught Classes with a Reading Focus (Social Studies/Science)*

These classes are instructed by two general education content or reading specialist teachers and are intended for students who would benefit from extra reading instruction and skill in order to be successful in their academic classes. It has a specifically designed, research-based, curriculum to assist learners with reading strategies through the Reading Apprenticeship Learning Model.

The Reading Apprenticeship model is integrated into subject-area teaching and developed through metacognitive conversation that explores students' thinking processes. Students think and talk about *how* they learn as well as what they learn. This collaborative work takes place within the context of extensive reading — increased in-class opportunities for students to practice reading in more skillful ways. These classes will focus on increasing comprehension and vocabulary through a combination of reading, writing, and phonics/word study. Students will learn to pay special attention to genre and the features of fiction and nonfiction texts through disciplinary reading.

**Based on staffing, funding, and student need*

After School Academic Supports

Homework Habitat (Tues/Thurs 3:30-4:30p)

Homework assistance is provided by staff in the library on Tuesdays and Thursdays after school. No registration is necessary but students are required to remain in the library once they have entered until 4:30 unless they are signed out from the library by parents or guardians.

Pathwise

Pathwise (formerly DreamCatchers) is Palo Alto's only free, non-profit, after-school enrichment program, preparing middle-schoolers to thrive in high school and beyond. Sessions run twice a week for 2.5 hours, immediately after school. Please contact them at [Pathwise](#) for more information.

Fletcher List of Electives 7th & 8th Grade Students

LIST OF ELECTIVES	
FULL-YEAR ELECTIVES	SEMESTER ELECTIVES
<p>MUSIC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7th Grade Advanced Band, (AdvBand) • 8th Grade Symphonic Band, (SymphBand) • Choir • Orchestra <p>WORLD LANGUAGE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • French 1A/1B • Spanish 1A/1B • Spanish for Spanish Speakers 1 (Span Speak) <p>UNIQUE COURSES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AVID • Focus on Success <p style="text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;">() as listed in Infinite Campus</p>	<p>ART</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art A • Sculpture & Ceramics : <i>3D Emphasis</i> (Ceramics/sculpture) • Multimedia Art : <i>Technology Emphasis</i> (MediaArt) <p>CAREER TECHNOLOGY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Architectural Drawing • Industrial Tech 1A • Industrial Tech 1B <p>COMPUTERS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broadcast Media (Broadcast - Tiger News Network - <i>TNN</i>) • Computer Programming (CompApp/PGM) • Web Design <p>DRAMA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drama 1A • Drama 1B • Musical Theatre (Music Thea) • Introduction to Stage Tech <p>FAMILY and CONSUMER STUDIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home Economics (Foods Nutr) <p>UNIQUE COURSES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creative Writing (Cr Writ) • Introduction to Sustainability • Leadership (Lead/Pubspk) • Marine Biology • Money Matters • School Service (SchServ)

IMPORTANT NOTICES

Every effort is made to schedule your first “Elective” preferences, but often that is not possible. **It is important that you fill out elective requests and alternate electives in rank order. Please keep in mind that Fletcher reserves the right to place your child in electives to make a complete school schedule.** Please note that only those classes with sufficient enrollment are offered. Electives cannot be changed during the school year.

Please note that there are no elective changes requests accepted during the school year. All elective classes are created based on student input and requests.

Full-Year Electives 7th & 8th Grade

MUSIC

Advanced Band - 7th Grade

The 7th grade Advanced Band performs a variety of styles of music at formal concerts, assembly programs, parades, festivals, march in the May Fete Parade, and other special events. Daily rehearsals focus on the development of fundamental skills, reading music notation, and playing together as an ensemble while utilizing technology for a multimedia approach to music. Opportunities exist for solos and small ensembles, as well as special collaboration with Paly, Gunn, and JLS bands. Students are expected to attend possible after-school rehearsals and all evening performances. Advanced Band students are eligible to audition for Jazz Ensemble or Jazz Band. Both ensembles will perform music from a variety of musical styles and periods including Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic, Folk Songs from different cultures, Rock, Popular, Jazz, Broadway and Movie Music.

Symphonic Band - 8th Grade

The 8th grade Symphonic Band performs a variety of styles of music at formal concerts, assembly programs, parades, festivals, march in the May Fete Parade, and other special events. Eighth grade rehearsals dive deeper into developing intermediate instrumental technique, reading proficiency, and ensemble skills while utilizing technology. Opportunities exist for solos and small ensembles, as well as special collaboration with Paly, Gunn, and JLS bands. Students are expected to attend possible after-school rehearsals and all evening performances. Symphonic Band students are eligible to audition for Jazz Ensemble or Jazz Band. Both ensembles will perform music from a variety of musical styles and periods including Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic, Folk Songs from different cultures, Rock, Popular, Jazz, Broadway and Movie Music.

Choir

This class is for students who love to sing! In 7th and 8th grade choir, students will develop and improve their natural instrument of the voice, continue to learn to read music and increase their musicianship skills, perform together in a supportive environment, and create a community of friends through music making. The choir will perform a wide variety of choral music, including music of different styles, languages, and cultures – we sing classical, Broadway, pop, and music in many languages. There will also be opportunities for solo and ensemble singing for those who are interested. In addition to music learning and games in class, the choir will perform in concerts, festivals, elementary school tours, and other events in the school and local community. Overnight tour travel opportunities and an audition early-morning ensemble may be available to choir members.

Orchestra

The Fletcher String Orchestra learns and performs a wide variety of music at a faster pace from the 6th grade curriculum. In addition to learning more advanced orchestral skills, students in the 7th/8th orchestra will develop individual string technique in preparation for high school programs. Prior study on a stringed instrument is required. A wide variety of music is selected to expose students to different styles, musical periods, and cultures as well as to advance technique and explore musical expression. The Fletcher String Orchestra performs several times during the school year and participates in area festivals and tours. Students enrolled in String Orchestra are also eligible to audition for the All-State Jr. High School Orchestra as part of the annual California Music Educators Association state festival. Overnight tour travel opportunities may be available. Members of the orchestra are expected to attend all evening concerts and attend occasional after school rehearsals. Students enrolled in 7th and 8th grade Orchestra can also have the opportunity to audition for the advanced Chamber Orchestra if they would like.

Full-Year Electives 7th & 8th Grade

WORLD LANGUAGES

World Languages	
Grade 7*	Grade 8*
French 1A Spanish 1A	French 1B Spanish 1B
Spanish for Spanish Speakers (combined 7th/8th)	

IMPORTANT NOTE: Level I World Language classes are designed for students who have **NO** prior knowledge or exposure to the target language. These courses are not open to native and heritage speakers.

- **Two languages** are currently offered to students – **French**, and **Spanish**. The number of students enrolled will determine whether the class ultimately will be available.
- 7th graders enroll in the 1A course. 8th graders continue with the 1B course. Students who successfully complete their studies in middle school move directly into level 2 as freshmen.
- **Spanish for Spanish Speakers** is a heritage speaker course designed for students who are native speakers of Spanish and is composed of 7th and 8th graders. It is to give students knowledge and appreciation of Latino and Spanish culture. They will learn to distinguish and value the difference between colloquial and academic language. They will perfect their writing as well as their speaking ability in Spanish. This is a project-based course that is offered entirely in Spanish.

General Foreign Language Course Description

The curriculum prepares students to: perform interpersonal, interpretive and presentational communicative tasks within the novice range of the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines. Themes may include family, friends, activities, school, food, customs, clothing, geography and travel.

Students will:

- interpret, exchange, and present information and concepts within the classroom and beyond on a variety of topics including connections to other subject areas.
- understand the relationship among the products, practices and perspectives of the target culture(s) and other cultures.
- develop insight into their own language and culture.

California World Language Standards (2019)

Communication Standard 1: Interpretive Communication (listening and reading)

Novice: Demonstrate understanding of the general meaning and some basic information on very familiar common daily topics. Recognize memorized words, phrases, and simple sentences in authentic texts that are spoken or written.

Communication Standard 2: Interpersonal Communication (speaking and writing)

Novice: Participate in real-world, spoken, or written conversations on very familiar topics. Use memorized words, phrases, and simple sentences, and questions in highly predictable common daily settings.

Communication Standard 3: Presentational Communication (speaking and writing)

Novice: Present information in culturally appropriate ways on very familiar common daily topics using memorized words, phrases, and simple sentences through spoken or written language, using the most suitable media and technologies to present and publish.

Unique Offerings

AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination)

Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) is designed for students who are in the academic middle. Students will work on enhancing their study skills with the goal of successfully participating in college preparatory classes and eventually attending a four-year university. Students will learn how to advocate for themselves in academic and non-academic situations, which will help them gain access to more educational opportunities. Students will be able to obtain direct assignment assistance, study skills, curricular enrichment, participate in once a week tutorials, and personal empowerment to feel validated and recognized in the school setting. Students are recommended for placement in AVID based on specific criteria. Final placement is a decision by the teacher, parents, and the student. This course is not listed in the elective section. Interested students should speak to their counselor.

Semester Electives (7th & 8th Grade Students)

Please note that some courses have prerequisites. Prerequisites are determined to provide for student success in successive classes. Exemptions from prerequisites will be considered on a case-by-case basis and will be determined by the administration in consultation with the counselor and teacher.

ART

Art 1A

Prerequisite: None
Semester

Art 1A is an exploratory course in the visual arts that uses the elements and principles of design as a foundation for instruction. The focus is on developing an artistic mindset that nurtures technique, creativity and a greater awareness of the world as it relates to art. In this class, emphasis is on drawing and painting. Lessons are in accordance with PAUSD Standards as well as California Standards for Visual Art. **projects subject to change or rotate*

Sculpture and Ceramics (3-D Emphasis)

Prerequisite: None
Semester

Sculpture and Ceramics is an exploratory course in the visual arts that uses the elements and principles of design as a foundation for instruction. This art class focuses on 3-D construction including learning the basics of clay hand building techniques and pottery making, as well as mixed media and found object sculpture projects. The focus is on developing an artistic mindset that nurtures technique, creativity, and a greater awareness of the world as it relates to art. Lessons are in accordance with PAUSD Standards as well as California Standards for Visual Art.

Multimedia Art (Technology Emphasis)

Prerequisite: None
Semester

Multimedia Art is an exploratory course in the visual arts that uses the elements and principles of design as a foundation for instruction. Students will work with different Adobe software, Photoshop and Procreate to learn the basics of photo editing and manipulation and create digital art. Students will have the chance to create projects using digital photography, digital painting/drawing, and digital manipulation.

CAREER TECHNOLOGY

Architectural Drawing

Prerequisite: None
Semester

In this course you will learn how to use the SketchUp 3D computer modeling program to design and create multiple projects including a miniature golf course, a Greek temple, an ice cream shop and other fun projects. Residential drafting and design are also studied in this course and practiced using this program.

Exploring Technology 1A (Ind Tech 1A)

Prerequisite: None
Semester

The Industrial Tech 1A class will be a hands-on, project-based course focusing mostly on two areas of industrial technology:

- The engineering design process.
- Fabrication techniques including the use of woodworking machinery.

Industrial Technology 1A is designed to excite and challenge **all** students. The class is meant to acquaint students with various aspects of technology with emphasis on hands-on experiences. This class exposes students to both the practical skills as well as more theoretical learning.

Each unit of study will introduce basic tool skills and their related safety issues along with applied math and science concepts. Some of the larger issues discussed include the social and environmental impact related to technology and manufacturing, possible career opportunities, and the engineering design process. Students will be given design challenges in which they will design products that will solve that challenge. They complete the process by building a prototype of their solution. Challenges include paper structures, designing and creating a cardboard pinball machine, mousetrap cars, a model trebuchet and more.

Exploring Technology 1B (Ind Tech 1B)

Prerequisite: Exploring Technology 1A (Ind Tech 1A)
Semester

The Industrial Tech 1B class will be a hands-on, project-based course focusing mostly on two areas of industrial technology:

- The engineering design process.
- Fabrication techniques including the use of woodworking machinery.

Industrial Technology 1B is designed to excite and challenge **all** students. The class is meant to expand upon the skills and lessons learned previously in Industrial Tech 1A while teaching new industry standard concepts in design and fabrication. Each unit of study will reinforce prior knowledge of basic tool skills and their related safety issues including applied math and science concepts. We will continue to discuss the social and environmental impact related to technology and manufacturing, possible career opportunities, and the engineering design process. Students will be given design challenges in which they will design products that will solve that challenge. They complete the process by building a prototype of their solution. Challenges include CO2 dragsters, lathe turned pens and pencils, various woodcraft selections, advanced trebuchets, structural builds and more.

COMPUTERS

Broadcast Journalism (Broadcast - Tiger News)

Prerequisite: None
Semester

Broadcast Journalism students will investigate techniques of video production from pre-production (planning), to production (videotaping), and post production (editing). Students in Broadcast are responsible for the production of Tiger News - a daily five minute news program produced by students, for students. Students learn the grammar of film production and the power of the media through journalism as they study different areas of filmmaking including PSA's (Public Service announcements), commercials, news segments, magazine format stories, and documentaries. There will be hands-on training in video production skills including scripting, shot set

up, interview techniques, lighting, sound, music, and editing. The fundamentals and safety of operating a camcorder, tripod and editing equipment will be stressed.

Computer Applications and Programming (CompApp/Pgm)

Prerequisite: None

Semester

Computer Applications and Programming is a class where students will practice Computational Thinking skills including decomposition, pattern recognition, abstraction, and algorithm design. Students learn computer programming using Python, JavaScript, and Java. Text and block-based programming are used. Special emphasis on video game development. Exploration of Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence to make decisions and predictions. Design, development and testing of Android apps for mobile devices. Physical computing using programmable circuit boards and VEX robotics are explored. Principles of digital graphic design and digital animation are studied using Adobe Photoshop, Illustrator, and Animate.

Web Design (Webpage 1A)

Prerequisite: Computer Applications

Semester

Web Design introduces students to the design, programming, and revision process applied throughout the development of web pages and websites. Learning the purpose of websites and identifying elements that contribute to an effective website are studied. Students develop web pages using HTML5, CSS3, JavaScript, API's, and jQuery. Use of JSON and AJAX are employed for connecting to a server and transferring data. Configuring color and text with CSS, visual elements and graphics, page layout and navigation are explored. Focus on responsive design to accommodate mobile website access. Development, style, and server-side form processing are practiced. Web standards, accessibility, and universal design for the web are also emphasized.

DRAMA

Drama 1A

Prerequisite: None

Semester

Drama 1A is a beginning theatre course that offers a more in-depth exploration of theatre skills and techniques that were learned in the drama wheel class. Students will study pantomime, improvisation, different theatre terms and script construction. Students will participate in projects that will include writing, memorizing and performing scenes, plays, and skits, for the class. The class will explore a unit on Shakespeare and have the opportunity to study and perform sections of his work. Students will not only cover the performance side of theatre but an introduction to the "behind the scenes" technical aspects involved in every production including set and costume design. This class focuses on the development of communication, self-confidence, and cooperative learning through the use of performance. The culmination of this class is an in-class production to which families and friends will be invited.

Drama 1B

Prerequisite: Drama 1A, Musical Theatre, or Instructor Approval

Semester

Drama 1B is a continuation of what was learned in Drama 1A and/or Musical Theatre. The class will begin with a review of the basics of pantomime and improvisation. Students will then move on to study the different theatre terminology and parts of a story. Students will be expected to write, memorize, direct, and perform scenes, monologues, plays, and skits for the class. The students will also further their skills in technical aspects of theatre productions. The class will focus on prop and set design and may assist with the school productions. Finally, towards the end of the semester, the class will rehearse and perform a play for parents/guardians. This class will prepare the student to continue theatre during high school if they so choose. This class may require some after school, evening, and weekend rehearsals and performances.

Musical Theatre (Music Thea)

Prerequisite: None
Semester

Musical Theatre is a class where students will study musical plays and will perform in the school musical. The class will also provide an opportunity to become familiar with many aspects of theatre. Students will experience coursework in acting, singing, and movement in order to develop characters, practice vocal development and articulation, improve stage presence and movement skills. Students will have the opportunity to practice ensemble singing/dancing techniques and to develop solo skills in preparation for the end of semester performance in which they will not only perform but create the sets, costumes and props. This class requires after school, evening, and weekend rehearsals and performances. This class can be repeated.

Introduction to Stage Tech

Prerequisite: None
Semester

Introduction to Stage Tech is a class designed to integrate theoretical and practical knowledge of stage technology and design. Students will study and learn about the theatrical design and construction of sets, lighting, sound, props, makeup, and costumes. They will apply their skills by developing design concepts and mounting productions. By assuming vital technical roles in play productions, students will work effectively in leadership and ensemble situations, and experience the relationship of technical theatre to the theatrical event as a whole. Students will learn to operate theatrical equipment and tools safely, and use these skills to provide technical services for school stage activities. This course will involve some after-school and evening lab hours to support Fletcher's theatrical productions.

FAMILY AND CONSUMER STUDIES

Foods and Nutrition

Prerequisite: None
Semester

Foods & Nutrition

In this semester class, students will learn to work cooperatively in small groups to prepare popular and delicious recipes for breakfast, lunch, dinner and snacks. Some popular food labs include Egg in a hole, Top Chef Muffin Challenge, Vegetable Pulao/Biryani, Breakfast Burritos, Pancakes & Belgian Waffles, Ultimate macaroni and cheese, Pasta and Marinara Sauce, Artisan pizza, French Crepes, special holiday treats and so much more! They will learn hands-on cooking fundamentals, such as planning and following recipes, effective time management, safe and sanitary food preparation practices, proper use and care of kitchen equipment, including knife skills and the function of ingredients. Students will increase their understanding of healthy nutrition and a balanced diet. Each semester will cover related topics but may feature different variations on recipes and projects. This course has no prerequisites or homework requirements.

UNIQUE ELECTIVES

Creative Writing (Cr Writ)

Prerequisite: None
Semester

In Creative Writing, students will have the opportunity to experiment with several modes of creative writing, including poetry, narratives, autobiographical incidents, fictional articles, descriptive writing, fairy tales, and various types of short stories. Students will engage in unique writing exercises that encourage both an enjoyment

of writing and a development of narrative writing skills, such as point of view, characterization, sensory detail, effective dialogue, foreshadowing, and more. In addition to daily writing, students will learn to read as writers, studying the technique and craft of great writers. All students receive personalized feedback (from the teacher as well as from peers) throughout the writing process. Creative Writing is a fun, safe community of writers who honor each other's attempts to capture their world in words.

Introduction to Sustainability

Prerequisite: None
Semester

Introduction to Sustainability elective will focus on learning and building a foundation in the understanding of the relationship between humans and the Earth. Students will examine how humans impact their environment and analyze issues related to land use, water availability, pollution, sustainable agriculture, and developing sustainable energy. They will use this information to propose solutions to environmental problems that can be implemented across their campus and community. Students will be involved with in-class lessons, as well as out of class project based and service learning.

Leadership and Public Speaking (Lead/PubSpk)

Prerequisite: None
Semester

The Leadership class is designed to provide students the opportunity to analyze and engage in leadership and work on speaking and presentation skills. They have opportunities to examine the life of a public leader they admire and discuss leadership characteristics. Time will be spent designing and organizing service projects around the school and community. Students are crucial members of the Fletcher community as they produce and run small group meetings, facilitate whole-school activities such as spirit days and lunchtime activities, and design school dances. The students examine group dynamics, habits of effective teens, and gain skills including but not limited to time management, activity planning, public speaking and presentations.

The ability to speak well and present with confidence are valuable skills that will be developed during this class. Students will learn how to effectively prepare and present speeches and presentations. By emphasizing such skills as research, critical reading, writing, creativity, and organization, this class helps to reinforce skills that students will use in other academic subjects as well as in life. The goal of this class is for students to be confident and effective speakers by the end of the semester.

Marine Biology

Prerequisite: None
Semester

Marine Biology will explore the properties of water, marine geology, marine ecosystems, and the creatures that live in them. Students will learn about marine biology through a variety of activities, such as hands-on lessons, laboratories, experiments, and individual and group projects/activities.

Money Matters

Prerequisite: None
Semester

Money Matters is a standards-based course providing an introduction to the world of money and money management. Students will learn about saving money, budgeting, how to use credit wisely, and the implications of good and bad credit. A unit on understanding and paying taxes and consumerism will be covered. An on-going bookkeeping project will be practiced weekly. Students will research and produce a biography project on an influential Entrepreneur.

School Service (SchServ)

Prerequisite: None

Semester

School Service is a very limited semester elective. Students in School Service work in the school offices, the library, or serve as department or teacher assistants. School Service students must be reliable and able to work with a minimum of supervision. They also learn customer service, computer, and business machine skills.