



BLACK RIVER

PUBLIC SCHOOL

Middle School & High School
Program of Study

Academic Year
2026-2027



Program of Study 2026-2027

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ADMISSIONS

As a public school, Black River seeks students who have a serious desire to learn and work diligently to prepare for higher education. Black River is a college preparatory academy chartered by Grand Valley State University. For more information regarding admissions at Black River, visit our website at: <http://www.blackriverpublicschool.org/content/admissions>

REGISTRATION PROCEDURES

1. Read the course descriptions in the booklet very carefully and thoroughly before you begin planning your schedule. Ask your parents to read the booklet and discuss it with them. It is important to view all possibilities before beginning to choose your courses for the next year.
2. Be sure to note required courses and credits as well as prerequisites, grade requirements and teacher approval.
3. Plan your program not only in light of your special interests and activities, but also with the intention of broadening your interests and enriching your background.
4. Before you reach a final decision on courses, discuss your choices with your parents and teachers. Students and parents are encouraged to meet with their CAP teacher or School Counselor to discuss options in scheduling.
5. Each student must turn in a registration sheet by **March 30, 2026**, to assure priority in scheduling and to confirm their enrollment status for the next school year.

M. S. GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Department	Credits	Department	Credits
English	3.0	Math	3.0
Science	3.0	History	3.0
Spanish	2.0	Fine Arts	2.0
P.E.	1.0*	Electives	1.0
*or 2 G period courses (.667)		Credits Total = 18.0	

In addition to the above, all middle school students are required to pass 3 years of project term and complete 20 hours of community service. Middle school students are generally required to enroll in seven courses. Middle school students are encouraged to take advanced courses at the high school level when appropriate. However, most colleges and universities only recognize work completed between grades 9-12.

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BLACK RIVER H.S. GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Twenty-four credits is the minimum requirement for graduation from Black River. All courses required for graduation must be taken at Black River (or some school that Black River recognizes in case of transfers). The Michigan Merit Curriculum will be met and exceeded by completing the Black River graduation requirements.

Department	Credits	Clarification
English	4.0	Must take four courses of English, even if the student is advanced.
Mathematics	4.0	Must include evidence of passing Algebra/Statistics, Algebra/Geometry, and Advanced Algebra/Geometry. Must take a four math courses while in high school. One of those must be taken during the senior year, even if the student is advanced.
Science	3.0	Must take Biology and Chemistry
Spanish/ Foreign Language	2.0	Must take and pass Spanish 3. Highly recommended to take two years of a foreign language while in high school.
Fine Arts	2.0	Art, Band, Choir, or Orchestra
History	3.0	Must take World History, Civics/Economics, and US History. The AP equivalents are allowed.
PE/Health	1.0 PE .5 Health	Three full seasons of Black River interscholastic sports participation will substitute for the PE graduation requirement. Conditioning and weight training courses also count toward meeting the PE requirement. Independent activities outside of school must be approved by administration for credit. Health Credit is granted through CAP activities in 11 th grade.
Electives	Varies	Choose courses from the program of study to fill a full-time academic schedule.
CAP/Flex	.4	College Advisory Program must be taken every year. CAP meets every day for 25 minutes.
Online Learning		Throughout the required course of study in grades 6-12, students are required to use technology to reinforce learning and prepare them for the future.
Project Term	1.2	3 years of project term must be taken
Community Service	60 hours	
Four-year College or University Acceptance	Verification from institution	All Black River students are required to be accepted into a 4-year college or university.

Black River's high school graduation requirements have been determined with the school's mission of college preparation as a guide. Successful completion of these graduation requirements is necessary to earn a diploma from Black River Public School. Students with disabilities will be assisted in meeting these graduation requirements as appropriate and as specified in their Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan. Students can request a Personal Curriculum which may allow the student to meet certain graduation requirements through School Board approved modification of state and local standards. For additional information regarding personal curriculum requirements, please contact the Director of Special Education at [616-355-0055 ext 159](tel:616-355-0055).

COLLEGE ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Before selecting courses, students should review college admission requirements that are available in the College Advisor's office. Black River recommends that applicants to competitive colleges successfully complete the following High School program, including as many AP offerings in each subject as possible:

- 4 years of English
- 4 years of history
- 4 years of mathematics
- 4 years of science (biology, chemistry, physics)
- 4 years of foreign language

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SAMPLE COLLEGE PREPARATORY SCHEDULE

9th Grade Example Schedule

English 9
History 9: World History or AP World History
Biology
Algebra/Statistics
Spanish 3 (Completed Spanish 1A &1B and Spanish 2 in Middle School)
Symphonic Band
G Period Elective

10th Grade Example Schedule

English 10
History 10: Civics and Economics
Chemistry
Algebra/Geometry
Spanish 4
Symphonic Band
G Period Elective

11th Grade Example Schedule

English 11 or AP English Language
History 11: US History or AP US History
Physics or AP Science
Adv. Algebra/Geometry
Spanish 5 or AP Spanish
Symphonic Band
G Period Elective

12th Grade Example Schedule

English 12 or AP English Literature
History 12 or AP History Elective
AP Science or Elective
AP Precalculus
AP Psychology
Symphonic Band
G Period Elective

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Our unique community service program is designed to involve every student at Black River in the life of our community and to foster concern for worldwide issues in order to aid students in discovering their ability and responsibility to make a positive difference in the world.

Elementary school students in grades K-3 must complete a minimum of 10 hours of service, elementary students in grades 4-5 a minimum of 15 hours of service, middle school students a minimum of 20 hours of service and high school students must complete a minimum of 60 hours before graduating. Transfer students will be evaluated on an individual basis and will have a prorated requirement.

The Community Service program is outlined in depth at: <http://www.blackriverpublicschool.org/content/community-service>

COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMS

Black River offers all juniors the opportunity to take the PSAT test in October. The test will be administered on Friday, October 16, 2026. Juniors will also take the SAT in the spring as part of the Michigan required assessment.

Students can elect to take the ACT in the spring of their junior year. Students may repeat both the ACT and SAT test as often as desired. Those wishing to take the ACT or SAT must register in advance through one of several local high school test centers. All juniors will automatically be registered to take the SAT in April as part of the State of Michigan required assessment.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT COURSES

Courses in the Advanced Placement (AP) Program are college-level studies. As such, the homework requirements for these courses exceed those of non-AP courses; as an example, for every hour of course time, a student may be asked for an hour or more of work to be completed outside of class. Students who register for these classes are encouraged to take the AP examination in May. The scores are used as a measurement for placement in college courses with the possibility of receiving college credit. There is an examination fee.

A student in an AP class earns weighted grade points only if the student achieves a C- or better in the class and takes and earns a grade of 2 or higher on the College Board AP Exam. The grade is weighted by default unless the student does not meet the above criteria.

To determine if Advanced Placement courses are the right option for you, please see the course instructor. Course instructors grant approval for student enrollment into AP courses.

COLLEGE ADVISORY PROGRAM

The College Advisory Program (CAP) provides guidance and curriculum for teachers in grades 6-12 and targets outcomes for each student while providing meaningful relationships between staff and students. Teachers instruct students on college, college preparation and college planning as well as give academic guidance, intervention and support. The intent of the course is to help students discover for themselves how to be successful in Middle School and High School and to appreciate the power of a college education.

These goals will be accomplished through two types of CAP Classes. The first will be a consistent CAP

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class that meets with an advisory teacher twice a week, during which time students will complete various lessons and sign up for Flex classes. The second will be Flex CAP classes the remaining days of the week, the content of which will be based on the student's needs.

Other benefits of the CAP program include providing students with a teacher advocate, helping students find ways to be successful within the academic, enrichment and social options available, building important social skills in a focused peer group, and promoting a culture of personal responsibility, engagement and respect. These benefits support the objective of the College Advisory Program by providing support and resources in preparation for college and life.

Students will be receive a letter grade according to three criteria:

1. Participation and Accountability
2. Class Activities
3. Class Lessons

DUAL ENROLLMENT

Dual Enrollment (also called Postsecondary Enrollment Options) permits an eligible high school student to take a college class while still enrolled in high school. The college class may be taken for high school credit, college credit, or both.

The law that governs the dual enrollment program provides that a portion of the college cost may be paid by the school district. Under certain circumstances, the amount would be based on the per-student state funding received at the district level and the proportion of courses a student takes at the college level if the student is enrolled in less than a full time schedule of high school classes. It does not cover fees for books, transportation, parking costs or activity fees. These costs, as well as any portion of the college tuition not covered by Black River, must be paid by the student's family.

Eligible classes at college are generally in academic areas where the high school curriculum has been exhausted or the class is not offered by the high school. The Registrar or School Counselor must approve all dual enrollment courses before the student registers. After approval, the student must then register through the college's admissions office.

Grades received in a Dual Enrollment class will be included on the Black River transcript, however grades will not factor into the cumulative GPA calculation.

CAREERLINE TECH CENTER

The Careerline Tech Center (CTC) offers over thirty different programs for students to consider. Visit their website at <https://www.careerlinetech.org> to find out more about what they offer. Students attend the CTC for a half day with the other half of the day being spent at Black River. In general, seniors have priority to attend the CTC, but some juniors may be eligible. Priority will be given to students who are on track to graduate and who have positive daily attendance. The career path and future goals of the student will also be considered. Students considering the CTC should attend an observation in early February and consult the school counselor early on in their high school career.

Grades received at the Careerline Tech Center will be included on the Black River transcript, however grades will not factor into the cumulative GPA calculation.

GRADES

Updates of what students are doing in their classes are available through teacher websites or monthly newsletters. Students are given comments as well as letter grades six times each year, all of which are posted in Infinite Campus. At the end of each semester, letter grades will be grades-of-record to compute a student's GPA. Each mid-semester, the letter grade will be only an indication of the student's performance at that time, and such grades do not "count" as grades-of-record. Between each grading period a simpler progress report will be posted to Infinite Campus for parents and students to access. Parents and students may request access to on-line grades and attendance via the Infinite Campus on-line portal. All grade reports are posted on Infinite Campus.

INFINITE CAMPUS PARENT PORTAL

Parents and students are eligible and encouraged to use the Infinite Campus student/parent on-line portal. This service allows a parent and/or their student(s) to use the internet to log on to a secure website to view grades, assignments, attendance and other data that has been posted by Black River Public School. To gain access to the portal, parents must complete an online consent. Only parents/ guardians and students may receive access.

A link to the online portal is provided on our website at www.blackriverpublicschool.org. Parents only need to submit the form once and will have access to all students in their household as they are enrolled.

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GRADING SCALE

Grade Point Average (GPA) reflects coursework completed at Black River Public School.

Grade	Grade Points for Normal Classes	Grade Points for AP Classes *	Interpretation
A	4.0	5.0	Highest Distinction
A-	3.7	4.7	High Distinction
B+	3.3	4.3	Distinction
B	3.0	4.0	Laudable
B-	2.7	3.7	Commendable
C+	2.3	3.3	Satisfactory
C	2.0	3.0	
C-	1.7	2.7	Unsatisfactory
D+	1.3	1.3	Poor
D	1.0	1.0	
D-	0.7	0.7	
F	0.0	0.0	Failing and unacceptable

* A student in an AP class earns the weighted grade points only if the student achieves a C- or better in the class and takes and earns a grade of 2 or higher on the College Board AP Exam. The grade is weighted by default unless the student does not meet the above criteria.

Project term courses are assessed with a grade of H (Honors), P (Pass) or F (Fail). These courses will not be computed in a student's GPA.

INCOMPLETE GRADES

Incomplete grades must be made up within the two-week period at the end of a grading term. Failure to complete the work within the two-week period may result in a failing grade. Incomplete grades are allowed only for a serious reason (e.g. prolonged student illness with appropriate documentation).

HONOR ROLL

The Honor Roll is computed on the basis of courses taken at Black River. To qualify for the **Academic Dean's List**, includes all students with a term GPA of 3.5 - 4.0 (or higher). The **Honor Roll** includes all students with a term GPA of 3.0 - 3.49.

CLASS RANK

Because of the limited size and competitive nature of graduation classes, Black River does not publicize the rank of its students.

SCHEDULE CHANGES

After the registration process is complete, a schedule change will take place only in the following cases:

- If the change is recommended by the instructor or department chairperson,
- If the student has a schedule conflict, or

- If the student needs a course for college or graduation.

All schedules are final after the first five school days of the semester. Schedule changes will not occur for the following reasons: teacher preferences or conflicts, convenience of meeting time, and difficulty of the course.

In order to add or drop a course, students must obtain written approval from the registrar/course instructor/head of school and parents.

WITHDRAW GRADES

A **WP (Withdraw Pass)** or **WF (Withdraw Fail)** is placed on the permanent record of students who are allowed to drop courses after the five-day period in which changes are permitted. Such drops require the permission of the Head of School and are made only in special circumstances.

GRADE REVIEW BOARD

If a student believes that a grade is invalid or unfair, the first step is to have a private, one-on-one meeting with the teacher, and discuss the matter fully. If the student or parents still think the grade is unfair or invalid, they may request a meeting of the Grade Review Board. The committee meeting with the student and parent(s) shall be composed of the teacher, the Head of School, a student council representative and the student's CAP teacher. Although the Review Board may recommend to a teacher that a grade be changed, the teacher is the ultimate authority in grade change decisions.

POLICY ON CREDIT RECOVERY

Black River does not offer credit recovery courses. Ordinarily, students who fail a course during the regular school year must repeat the course during the next school year. Generally, Black River's core courses cannot be replaced with online or summer coursework. See the Head of School for details.

POLICY ON TESTING OUT/CREDIT BY EXAM

Per Michigan law, a student may attempt to test out of high school classes with the sole purpose of advancing in the curriculum. The intent of this law is to allow students who have extensive prior knowledge in a subject, the opportunity to test out and move on to higher level classes in that subject area. Once credit is earned by exam, a student may not receive credit thereafter for a course lower in sequence within the same subject area. To successfully test out, students must exhibit mastery by scoring a 76.5% (C+) or better on a final exam in the course. A successful test out attempt will be posted on a student's transcript as a CR (Credit).

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Test out attempts, either successful or unsuccessful, do not factor into a student's grade point average. Test out requests will be addressed individually by student. Students may not request to test out of a course once it has begun and students will not be provided with a study guide.

ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY

In accordance with MHSAA policy, Black River students need to maintain a minimum 2.0 cumulative GPA and be passing all of their classes to be eligible for interschool athletics. Eligibility checks are conducted weekly beginning in the third week of each semester.

CAREER PATHWAYS

The State of Michigan has divided the major careers into the six categories listed below. Schools have been encouraged to integrate these Career Pathways into their curriculum. In the course description, non-required high school courses have been related to the relevant Career Pathway(s).

Agriscience	
Arts and Communication	
Business, Management, Marketing, and Technology	
Engineering/Manufacturing	
Health Sciences	
Human Services	

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

Middle school English classes at Black River are designed in collaboration with history classes to study a specific geographic area each year. Classes are often structured in a workshop format, effectively immersing students in the writing process and engaging them in meaningful responses to literature through discussion and written analysis of literature. Writing in all middle school courses reflects the Common Core standards of Michigan. The reading focuses heavily on selections of classic and young adult literature.

ENGLISH 6: AFRICA, MIDDLE EAST & LATIN AMERICA

Course Length: 2 semesters
Credits: 1.0
Eligible Grade Levels: 6

Sixth grade English students will focus on literature from Africa and the Americas, including pre-colonial tribal communities, slave trade, sharecropping, civil rights, and the influence of western culture. Students will focus on the African American experience in North America. Inferential and experiential literature responses will be introduced and expected to provide a basis for discussions and seminars. Students will be expected to demonstrate understanding of the writing process and various writing styles to produce numerous works that are well organized and grammatically correct. As part of their course work, the usage and mechanics of grammar will be taught as well as precision of language and vocabulary skills.

ENGLISH 7: ASIA

Course Length: 2 semesters
Credits: 1.0
Eligible Grade Levels: 7
Prerequisites: Successful completion of English 6 or permission of instructor

Seventh grade English students focus mainly on the literary contributions inspired by the Far East, including Pakistan, China, Korea, and Japan. Students will write, revise, and edit creative prose including memoir, compare-contrast, persuasive, and literary analysis essays using MLA format. Responses to literature focus on identifying elements of plot, themes, real-life connections, character analysis, and articulating opinions based on the literature. Students will also learn mechanics, grammar, and word study on a weekly basis as part of their course work.

ENGLISH 8: EARLY EUROPE

Course Length: 2 semesters
Credits: 1.0
Eligible Grade Levels: 8
Prerequisites: Successful completion of English 7 or permission of instructor

Eighth grade English students focus on Early Europe, from Ancient Greece through World War II. Reading instruction will equip students to lead discussions that include themes, symbolism, real-life connections, character motivation and analysis, literary devices, word choice, and plot development. Writing instruction will encourage students to engage in brainstorming, outlining, drafting, and revising formal

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essays that focus on paragraph building, literary analysis, narrative development, and research style using MLA format. Students will also study vocabulary and grammar on a weekly basis to supplement their language development.

HIGH SCHOOL

High school English courses at Black River are designed to allow for collaborative content and focus with other humanities courses. Each English course provides students with opportunities to study a broad range of classic and contemporary literature including fiction, non-fiction, drama, and poetry. Students will write in a variety of modes that ask them to consider purpose, audience, and voice. Throughout each course, students will be encouraged to make meaningful connections between language and life as they develop skills to analyze these texts and effectively articulate ideas in a variety of written work, collaborative discussions, and presentations.

ENGLISH 9: LANGUAGE ARTS LITERACY

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 1.0

Eligible Grade Level: 9

Prerequisites: Successful completion of English 8 or permission of instructor.

Ninth grade English students focus on a variety of themes and texts central to classic and modern literature. Students will continue to explore the process of writing over varying time frames as they consider a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences. Students will produce a variety of written and project-based responses to literature including narrative, analytical, informative/explanatory, and persuasive essays, as well as other creative and interpretive works. In addition to writing, students will also initiate and participate effectively in collaborative discussions and create engaging presentations that incorporate the use of technology. Students will continue to develop their understanding of how language functions in different contexts, and mechanics and grammar will be reviewed as needed in coursework.

ENGLISH 10: LANGUAGE, LITERATURE AND RESEARCH

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 1.0

Eligible Grade Level: 10

Prerequisites: Successful completion of English 9 or permission of instructor.

Tenth grade English students focus on the continued development of analytical writing skills, with particular attention given to paragraph development, textual

evidence, and the writing process. Students will pursue a variety of writing projects, with emphasis on sentence composing and MLA formatting. The culminating writing project for English 10 is a large-scale research paper focused on human rights violations. Throughout the year, students will develop their critical thinking, reading comprehension, and speaking skills when engaging with important works of literature that deal with social, political, and cultural contexts in a changing world.

ENGLISH 11: LANGUAGE AND BUSINESS COMPOSITION

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 1.0

Eligible Grade Level: 11

Prerequisites: Successful completion of English 10 or permission of instructor.

English 11: Language and Business Composition is designed to prepare students for corporate and workplace reading, writing, and speaking. Students will read reports, memoirs, abstracts, and proposals as mentors for their own writing. Students will learn to write professional emails and instructions, and best practice attribution in virtual form will also be covered. In preparation for the workplace, students will learn how to successfully interview, give formal presentations, and create visuals that incorporate rhetorical design. Basic grammar is reviewed, and students will learn to use corporate vocabulary.

All 11th grade English students learn to read and analyze non-fiction essays, speeches, news reports, and visual rhetoric, focusing on authors' rhetorical choices and the impact of these choices on the audience. Students read and write persuasive and research essays, examine the ethical use of AI, and review how to avoid plagiarism. Instruction and practice emphasize both effective public speaking and clear written communication.

ENGLISH 11: LANGUAGE AND COLLEGE COMPOSITION

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 1.0

Eligible Grade Level: 11

Prerequisites: Successful completion of English 10 or permission of instructor.

English 11: Language and College Composition is designed to prepare students for their first year of college-level English classes. Students will read letters and memoirs as mentors for writing personal narratives and rhetorical analysis essays in a timed setting. Students will learn to participate in online threaded discussions and other written modes they

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may encounter at the college level. Creating one's unique voice in argumentative writing is also covered, as is the use of MLA format. Preparation for the SAT multiple choice and rhetorical analysis essay take place throughout this course. Basic grammar is reviewed.

All 11th grade English students learn to read and analyze non-fiction essays, speeches, news reports, and visual rhetoric, focusing on authors' rhetorical choices and the impact of these choices on the audience. Students read and write persuasive and research essays, examine the ethical use of AI, and review how to avoid plagiarism. Instruction and practice emphasize both effective public speaking and clear written communication.

ENGLISH 12: LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 1.0

Eligible Grade level: 12

Prerequisites: Successful completion of English 11 or permission of instructor.

Twelfth-grade English students focus on significant and representative global literature. Students will critically compare and contrast the major works of fiction, poetry, and drama and the themes that have shaped them. An emphasis will be placed on literary analysis, how elements such as figurative language, imagery, and symbolism construct meaning, how social and historical values get communicated through literature, and how structure and style contribute to the artistic quality of a piece. Writing assignments will continue to prepare students for college-level writing and include chances to write expository, analytical, and argumentative pieces, considering both formal, multi-draft essays, and exploratory informal writing. Students will learn how to develop and control tone and voice in writing, develop a variety of organizational techniques to increase coherence, and review and mechanics, grammar, and research, which will be completed according to MLA format.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Course length: 2 semesters

Credits: 1.0

Eligible grade levels: 11

Prerequisites: Permission from the instructor

AP English Language and Composition is a college-level course designed to replace students' first year of college-level English classes. Students will read letters, memoirs, nonfiction novels, and poetry as

mentors for writing synthesis essays, personal narratives, and rhetorical analysis essays in a timed setting. Students will learn to structure arguments and build a line of reasoning. Creating one's unique voice in argumentative writing is also covered, as is the use of MLA format. Preparation for the College Board's AP Language exam and for the SAT multiple choice and rhetorical analysis essay take place throughout this course. Basic grammar skills are required; rhetorical grammar and rhetorical device vocabulary are introduced.

All 11th grade English students learn to read and analyze non-fiction essays, speeches, news reports, and visual rhetoric, focusing on authors' rhetorical choices and the impact of these choices on the audience. Students read and write persuasive and research essays, examine the ethical use of AI, and review how to avoid plagiarism. Instruction and practice emphasize both effective public speaking and clear written communication.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT ENGLISH LITERATURE

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 1.0

Eligible grade levels: 12

Prerequisite: successful completion of AP English Language and permission from instructor

Advanced Placement English Literature students focus on college-level reading selections, discussions, and writing. Representative works of recognized literary merit from the genres of fiction, drama, and poetry will be studied extensively and across multiple literary periods. Students will read deliberately and thoroughly, taking time to understand a work's complexity, by studying a variety of literary devices, such as figurative language, symbolism, and imagery, to absorb its richness of meaning, ultimately analyzing how that meaning is embodied in literary form. In addition to considering a work's literary artistry, students reflect on the social and historical values it reflects and embodies. Writing assignments focus on the critical analysis of literature and include explication, analytical, and argumentative essays. Students will have extensive opportunities to develop their analysis and evaluation of literature through formal and informal writing activities, and learn how to develop critical essays into their own interpretations of literature. In writing, attention will be given to developing and organizing ideas in clear, coherent, and persuasive language in order to help students develop stylistic maturity. Focus will include developing a sophisticated and controlled voice and tone through elevated syntax and diction.

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9th grade	10th grade	11th grade	12th grade
English 9: Language Arts Literacy	English 10: Language, Literature and Research	English 11: Language and Composition or AP English Language	English 12: Literature and Composition or AP English Literature

HISTORY DEPARTMENT

At Black River Public School, Middle School students enroll in history courses that explore material on a global scale. Although the term "history" indicates a specific subject-area curriculum, history instructors identify various categories for classifying content standards: historical, geographic, civic, cultural, and economic perspectives; inquiry; public discourse and decision making; and citizen involvement. In each course, instructors and students will study a particular region of the world through analyses of the mentioned perspectives. History instructors work with instructors in other disciplines (English, the arts, foreign language) to help students recognize interdisciplinary relationships among various subjects.

HISTORY 6: AFRICA/LATIN AMERICA/MIDDLE EAST

Course Length: 2 semesters
Credits: 1.0
Eligible Grade Levels: 6
Prerequisites: none

Sixth grade history is an introduction to ancient civilizations and modern societies of Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America. Units on Mesopotamia, modern Middle East, African countries, and Latin American civilizations will allow students to investigate and expand their knowledge of the world. Whenever possible, American historical events will be linked to the units.

Students will look at the cultures including but not limited to religions, art, and customs. Discussions will include ideas such as trade and resource management or comparing cultures. Students will also be expected to learn the locations of countries, landforms, and selected cities to understand the geography of the area being studied. Students will continue literary analysis through historical documents, primary documents, and novel studies.

HISTORY 7: ASIA

Course Length: 2 semesters
Credits: 1.0
Eligible Grade Levels: 7
Prerequisites: none

Seventh grade history explores Asia and the Pacific. Utilizing geographical skills, students will compare the change in an area over time, using Asia as the context. Students will also use projects, papers, and activities to weave together the tale of Asian history and its vast cultures and people. We will correlate United States historical events to events studied when possible, specifically in the context of World War II. Students are encouraged to develop critical thinking and writing skills where they will learn to craft an argument and defend it using textual evidence. Students are also encouraged to build up communication skills, including teamwork, to promote healthy habits for a future in college or the workplace. Students will be able to leave this course with geographical, reading, writing, and critical thinking skills that will aid them on their academic journey.

HISTORY 8: EARLY EUROPE

Course Length: 2 semesters
Credits: 1.0
Eligible Grade Levels: 8
Prerequisites: none

Eighth grade history introduces students to historical developments of Europe, with examination of the geographic, political, religious, economic, literary and artistic aspects of European cultures. The class explores units on ancient Greece and Rome during the fall semester and Medieval and Renaissance Europe during the spring.

There will be a focus the entire year on reading primary documents and writing. Throughout all four major units, students will read poetry and letters, view pictures, act out plays and read autobiographies. The students will then react to these documents through various forms of writing.

Throughout the year interest will also be shown to see how these different time periods in Europe influenced how America was formed and what our government is like today. Students will be challenged to dive deep into European history to find American roots.

HIGH SCHOOL

The M-STEP Summative Assessment (April of Junior year) covers topics in late-nineteenth and twentieth centuries, geographic and environmental implications of global issues and events, American government and world affairs, and the United States and international economic systems. Students who follow the Black River Public School history curriculum should be in a favorable position to perform well on the state required assessment.

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HISTORY 9: WORLD HISTORY

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 1.0 World History

Eligible Grade Levels: 9

Prerequisites: none

“One of the hardest things to convince students of in general is that ideas and ways of thinking and ways of understanding the world have a history” Prof. Alan Charles Kors, Ph.D., University of Pennsylvania

History 9 weaves evidence and insights from many scientific and historical disciplines across 13.8 billion years into a single, accessible origin story, one that explores who we are, how we got here, how we are connected to everything around us, and where we may be heading. The concept arose from a desire to go beyond the specialized and self-contained fields that emerged in the 20th century and grasp history as a whole, looking for common themes across the entire time scale of history. While History 9 weaves together concepts and themes drawn from chemistry, physics, and biology, it does so with a goal of helping students understand a historical narrative and ultimately human civilizations past, present, and future. This is key to understanding and addressing many challenging contemporary issues. Questions in History 9 drive the course, and enable and require students to think critically and broadly. These are: How did we get here? How has the universe and life within it grown more complex over 13.8 billion years? How do we know what we know about the past? How can we judge claims about the past? Why does what we “know” change over time? What difference does it make? Target material includes human experience with “Agriculture and Civilizations” (which corresponds to the targets of MDE’s “Expanding and Intensifying Hemispheric Interactions, 300-1500); “Expansion and Interaction” (MDE’s “The Emergence of the First Global Age, 15th to 18th Centuries” and “An Age of Global Revolutions, 18th Century to 1914”); “Acceleration” (MDE’s “Global Crisis and Achievement, 1900 to Present”); and “The Future” (MDE’s “Contemporary Global Issues”), among other units. Consistent throughout the course, students are also instructed to “think as historians do” through: asking “how and why” questions; conducting research and collecting findings; formulating responses and theses; supporting these statements with specific examples as evidence.

HISTORY 10: CIVICS

Course Length: 1 semester

Credits: .5 Civics

Eligible Grade Levels: 10

Prerequisites: none

Civics is a one semester survey course that is

typically taken during the sophomore year and fulfills the civics 0.5 credit required for graduation. This class will study American Government, Citizenship, and law. Students will examine the structure and function of government, the Constitution, the checks and balances system, federalism, the three branches of Government, political parties, public policy, and foreign policy.

HISTORY 10: ECONOMICS

Course Length: 1 semester

Credits: .5 Economics

Eligible Grade Levels: 10

Prerequisites: none

Economics is a one semester survey course typically taken during the sophomore year and is required for graduation. We will cover microeconomics, macroeconomics, and personal finance. Topics discussed will include consumers, suppliers, governments and the impact their decisions make on the economy. We will also discuss personal debt and budgets and the impact of consumerism. Instruction will include table discussions, powerpoints, and videos. A final project will require real life budgets based on a career of your own choosing and a location that you would chose to live.

HISTORY 11: UNITED STATES

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 1.0 US History

Eligible Grade Levels: 11

Prerequisites: none

US History is a course designed for high school juniors to engage them in learning about their country and the events that have set the tone for current American thought. The course begins focusing on the early days of Columbus and moves through the Colonial Era, to the present day. Not only are students exposed to many different people, places, and dates, but they will also be exposed to the various cultural, societal, and political shifts found throughout American history. An emphasis is placed on “knowing” our past and seeing it through a more multi-cultural and less traditional format. Students have the opportunity to participate in group discussions, projects, in-class writings, and daily interactive activities that encourage learning and understanding. As individuals and as a class, students are asked to make connections throughout history and recognize the patterns in thought and policy historically in an attempt to understand the current status of our country.

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HISTORY 12: WORLD ISSUES

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 1.0

Eligible Grade Levels: 12

Prerequisites: none

The world changes and so does this class. This class is not a current events class but a world issues class. We do look at current events and try to stay aware, but our focus will be on issues that recur over time. When new issues come up, we add new content to the class. Some topics discussed in recent years have been racism, finances, legalization of drugs, world religions, human rights, government, and elections. Students are expected to read one book per semester and participate in a discussion about that book. Students will be expected to make presentations to the class on topics that are important to them so they can educate their classmates. Students will also engage in a video series about finances. Students will benefit from this class as it explores topics that are relevant and important in today's world as well as looking at past events to see if history has repeated, is repeating, and will repeat itself in the future.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT: U.S. GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 1.0 Civics

Eligible Grade Levels: 10-12

Prerequisite: Permission of Instructor

**Students who opt to take this course would still be required to take a semester course of Economics*

This course addresses knowledge of facts, concepts, and theories pertaining to U.S. government and politics. Students will develop an understanding of typical patterns of political processes and behavior and their consequences (including the components of political behavior, the principles used to justify various government structures and procedures, and the political effects of these structures and procedures). Work includes analysis and interpretation of data and relationships in U.S. government and politics; written analysis and interpretation of the subject matter of U.S. government and politics; and careful attention to the specific free-response question posed and ability to stay on task. Students in this class are expected to take the Advanced Placement Examination in May.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT: UNITED STATES HISTORY

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 1.0

Eligible Grade Levels: 10-12

Prerequisites: Permission of Instructor

This course is a college-level survey course in American history with a required summer reading and writing assignment that must be picked up from the teacher before summer break starts. Solid reading and writing skills, along with a willingness to devote considerable time to homework and study, are necessary to succeed. Students not only examine the facts of American history, but also analyze and synthesize historical information and study historiography as well. Students learn that history is not a static set of events set in stone, but an ongoing human endeavor seeking to answer who we are, where we have been, and where we are going as a nation. The class concludes with a college level examination, prepared by an independent testing agency-The College Board-which, if passed, may result in college credit.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT: EUROPEAN HISTORY

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 1.0

Eligible Grade Levels: 10-12

Prerequisites: Permission of Instructor

In AP European History, students investigate significant events, individuals, developments, and processes from approximately 1450 to the present. Students develop and use the same skills and methods employed by historians: analyzing primary and secondary sources; developing historical arguments; making historical connections; and utilizing reasoning about comparison, causation, and continuity and change. The course also provides seven themes that students explore throughout the course in order to make connections among historical developments in different times and places: interaction of Europe and the world, economic and commercial development, cultural and intellectual development, states and other institutions of power, social organization and development, national and European identity, and technological and scientific innovations.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT: WORLD HISTORY: MODERN

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 1.0

Eligible Grade Levels: 9-12

Prerequisites: Permission of Instructor

In "AP World History: Modern," students investigate significant events, individuals, developments, and processes from 1200 to the present. Students develop and use the same skills and methods employed by historians: analyzing primary and secondary sources; developing historical arguments; making historical connections; and utilizing reasoning about comparison, causation, and continuity and change. The course provides six themes that

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students explore throughout the course in order to make connections among historical developments in different times and places: humans and the environment, cultural developments and interactions, governance, economic systems, social interactions and organization, and technology and innovation. The course concludes with the national examination, scheduled in May.

History graduation requirements are 1 credit of World History, .5 credits of Civics, .5 credits of Economics, and 1 credit of US History.

9th grade	10th grade	11th grade	12th grade
History 9: World History	History 10: Civics .5 Economics .5	History 11: US History	History 12: World Issues
Alternate Choice: AP World History	Alternate Choices: AP European History or AP US Government & Politics or AP World History	Alternate Choices: AP US History or AP European History or AP World History	Alternate Choices AP US Government & Politics or AP European History or AP US History or AP World History

MATHEMATICS DEPARTMENT

The mathematics department provides a curriculum, teaching and learning environment consistent with an integrated math program adhering to standards and practices outlined by the state of Michigan by the Common Core State Standards CCSS. By successfully completing Integrated Mathematics I through III or equivalent level testing in middle school, students will have met the requirements for grades six through eight. Upon successful completion of the middle school curriculum or its equivalent, students will complete Integrated Algebra Statistics, Integrated Algebra Geometry, Integrated Advanced Algebra Geometry, and one additional math course as a senior. With successful completion of each high school course, students will have met the outlined mathematics requirements by the state of Michigan from each of the CCSS strands in Number and Quantity, Algebra, Functions, Modeling, Geometry, and Statistics and Probability. Students in high school will be required to earn four math credits and must take a math class or its equivalent as a senior. If students complete all of the required math courses offered at Black River prior to completing

high school, the student may have the option to enroll in further math classes at a local college or university through a dual enrollment program.

The mathematics department will offer occasional intervention classes that utilize the same curriculum but accommodates special needs of students. These classes are open by recommendation only and will not be listed in the course catalog. If you feel your student is in need of intervention please speak with his or her current math teacher and Black River administration for further counseling.

The math curriculum at BRPS is based on verbal and written expression to explain problem solving strategies and solutions. Each math class integrates all forms of math: statistics, geometry, algebra, trigonometry, discrete mathematics, and some forms of precalculus and seeks to deepen understanding by spiraling each strand together to initiate more diverse and complex understanding. Students are taught not only how to solve problems, but how to approach the analysis of a math problem using higher level thinking skills. The focus of the curriculum is not only on accurate computation, but also on exploration of applied content and diverse methods or solution strategies. Our classrooms utilize a cooperative learning approach to explore math through discovery and discourse that lead to deeper understanding.

Before the start of our program students will be encouraged to take a placement test to determine their entry level. Because of the integrated nature of our program, students may be given the opportunity to advance past their currently enrolled grade level. If seeking advancement please contact the mathematics department chair for more details.

INTEGRATED MATHEMATICS I

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 1.0

Eligible Grade Levels: 6

Prerequisites: none

Students will study units involving basic fractions, number sense, basic probability, decimals and percent, shapes, area, and perimeter. This is an integrated mathematics course and it is the first course in the Connected Mathematics Project.

INTEGRATED MATHEMATICS II

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 1.0

Eligible Grade Levels: 7

Prerequisites: Successful completion of Integrated Mathematics I or permission of mathematics department.

Students will study units involving geometric

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similarities and properties of similar figures; ratios, proportions, and percents; probability and expected value; surface area and volume; linear functions; statistics. Students will be introduced to using graphing calculators to aid in solving problems during second semester. Use of these calculators will be expected in all future math classes. This is an integrated mathematics course and it is the second course in the Connected Mathematics Project.

INTEGRATED MATHEMATICS III

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 1.0

Eligible Grade Levels: 8

Prerequisites: Successful completion of Integrated Mathematics II or permission of mathematics department.

Students will study units involving mathematical models, the Pythagorean Theorem, linear relations, quadratic relationships, symbolic algebra, and geometric symmetry and transformations. This is an integrated mathematics course and it is the third course in the Connected Mathematics Project. Successful completion of this course may permit a student to advance to Integrated Algebra/Geometry, with permission of the mathematics department.

HIGH SCHOOL

INTEGRATED ALGEBRA/STATISTICS

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 1.0

Eligible Grade Levels: 9, 10

Prerequisites: Successful completion of middle school mathematics. Basic knowledge of and experience with graphing calculators.

This is an entry-level high school mathematics class. Students will study units involving introductory statistics, linear functions, exponential functions, quadratic functions, spatial geometry, introductory proof, and probability simulations. This is an integrated mathematics class and it uses the first course in the *Core-Plus Mathematics* textbook series.

INTEGRATED ALGEBRA/GEOMETRY

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 1.0

Eligible Grade Levels: 10, 11

Prerequisites: Successful completion of Integrated Algebra/Statistics or permission of the mathematics department.

Students will study units involving direct and inverse variation, power functions, multivariable functions, geometric transformations, correlation coefficients, nonlinear functions, common logarithms, graph

theory, trigonometric functions, and probability. This is an integrated mathematics class and it is the second course in the *Core-Plus Mathematics* textbook series.

INTEGRATED ADVANCED ALGEBRA/GEOMETRY

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 1.0

Eligible Grade Levels: 11, 12

Prerequisites: Successful completion of Integrated Algebra/Geometry or permission of the mathematics department.

Students will study units involving reasoning and proof, inequalities and linear programming, similarity and congruence, samples and variation, polynomial and rational functions, circles and circular functions, recursion and iteration, and inverse functions.

INTEGRATED ADVANCED ALGEBRA/STATISTICS

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 1.0

Eligible Grade Levels: 11, 12

Prerequisites: Successful completion of Integrated Advanced Algebra/Geometry.

This class is intended for students who wish to pursue college studies in the performing arts, liberal arts, or social sciences. Algebra topics will be chosen by the math department based on student need, but may include: linear, polynomial, rational, radical, exponential, and logarithmic functions and their inverses; conic sections, and solving systems of equations and inequalities in two and three variables. Additionally, the class includes a study of descriptive and inferential statistics with an emphasis on application to the social sciences. Topics include: data collection and interpretation, correlation and regression, measures of center and variation, confidence intervals, experimental design, binomial and normal distributions and hypothesis testing. Upon successful completion of this course students should be prepared for a college-level pre-calculus course and a college-level introductory statistics course.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT STATISTICS

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 1.0

Eligible Grade Levels: 11, 12

Prerequisites: Completion of Integrated Advanced Algebra/Geometry with a B or better or successful completion of Precalculus. Permission of the mathematics department is required.

Students will spend the year preparing for the Advanced Placement Statistics examination. Successful completion of the AP examination may earn the student college credit. Topics covered

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include organizing data, samples and experiments, probability, and statistical inference.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT PRECALCULUS

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 1.0

Eligible Grade Levels: 9-12

Prerequisites: Completion of Integrated Advanced Algebra/Geometry with a B or better. Permission of the mathematics department is required.

Students will spend the year preparing for the Advanced Placement Precalculus examination. Successful completion of the AP examination may earn the student college credit. Topics covered include rates of change, derivatives, integrals, vectors, parametric equations, logarithms, counting models, polynomial and rational functions, symbolic reasoning, complex numbers, trigonometric identities, and three dimensional geometry. This mathematics course utilizes a combination of the College Board AP Precalculus framework, while also pulling from previous Black River curriculum.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT CALCULUS

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 1.0

Eligible Grade Levels: 12

Prerequisites: Successful completion of Integrated Pre-calculus and permission of the mathematics department.

Students will spend the year preparing for the Advanced Placement Calculus examination. Successful completion of the AP examination may earn the student college credit. Topics covered include in-depth study of limits, derivatives, and integrals.

COMPUTER AIDED DRAFTING & DESIGN I

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 1.0 Mathematics (if taken in 12th grade)

Eligible Grade Levels: 12

Prerequisite: Completion of Adv. Algebra/Geometry if taking for senior math credit.

In this course, students will explore and learn engineering drawing techniques and computer aided design software. The class will focus on three main learning areas: engineering software knowledge, technical drawing concepts, and product design activities. Basic 2D CAD mechanical drawing concepts through advanced 3D solid model product design will be studied. Students will work individually as well as in groups to progress from basic technical drawing concepts through advanced product design and documentation.

INTRO TO 3D COMPUTER ANIMATION

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 1.0 Mathematics (if taken in 12th grade)

Eligible Grade Levels: 12

Prerequisite: Completion of Adv. Algebra/Geometry if taking for senior math credit.

In this course, students will explore and learn 3D animation software. The class will focus on two main learning areas: software knowledge and manipulation as well as fundamental animation story telling. Students will use extended project based learning activities working individually and in groups to explore the use of 3D animation software and storytelling.

ELECTIVE MATH CREDIT (EMC)

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 1.0 Mathematics (if taken in 12th grade)

Eligible Grade Levels: 12

Prerequisite: Completion of Adv. Algebra/Geometry if taking for senior math credit.

Students will engage in mathematical projects throughout the year that correspond to a fine arts class, music class, or PE class as a chosen elective. The completion of the projects in the EMC course will earn students an additional math credit on their transcript, while engaging in rewarding art, music, or PE elective. Projects will incorporate math standards but will relate directly to the work being completed in their elective course class. This class is meant to be taken asynchronously, meaning that students will not have a meeting time in their A-F classes. This course will be completed on a student's own personal time, as part of a prep block, a scheduled G block, or in mandatory Flex meets, but will still earn a full math credit. Students will have an assigned advisor who will meet with them to plan projects, receive feedback, and to evaluate progress. The class will be assigned an A-F grading scale. Students will be expected to complete work outside of their elective class to engage in the projects.

ADDITIONAL NOTES ON MATH COURSEWORK

The math department recommends the following high school course of study for students wishing to concentrate on math at Black River.

9 th Grade	10 th Grade	11 th Grade	12 th Grade
Algebra/ Statistics	Algebra/ Geometry	Advanced Algebra/ Geometry	AP Precalculus or
			Adv. Alg/Stats AP Statistics AP Calculus CAD/Design I 3D Animation

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New students will complete a mathematics placement test to determine where to begin in our course of study. Students wishing to advance must successfully test out of a course and seek recommendation from their current math teacher to advance. Upon math department permission students will be advanced into upper level courses. For more details on advancement please contact the mathematics department chair.

MUSIC DEPARTMENT

The Black River music department is dedicated to developing a life-long love of music. Students are challenged to become proficient performers by rehearsing with their instruments daily and performing often. All performing ensembles at Black River work very hard to learn both as individual musicians and as members of a group. Students can look forward to public performances in both the concert setting as well as a festival setting where ratings will be given based on quality of performance. The music program stresses a college preparatory atmosphere by teaching basic music theory and history. Students do more than play their instruments and sing at Black River - they work to gain knowledge that will enable them to appreciate great music throughout their lives.

BEGINNING BAND

Course Length: 2 semesters
Credits: 1.0
Eligible Grade Levels: 6-12
Prerequisites: none
Career Pathways:



We start students by having them try different instruments during their 5th grade music classes. Our goal is to find a good fit for the students that will allow them to succeed at learning how to play. Choices consist of the following instruments with opportunities to play other instruments during the second year of their progress:

Flute, Clarinet, Alto Saxophone, Tenor Saxophone, Trumpet, Trombone, Euphonium and Percussion

Black River Beginning Band students will:

Be able to produce a characteristic tone on their chosen instrument using proper embouchure, breathing, hand position and posture. This will be demonstrated on an individual basis as well as during group activities in rehearsal and concert.

Negotiate 4-5 major key signatures (F, Bb, Eb, Ab, Db) by demonstrating on their chosen instruments the corresponding major scale with arpeggio from memory.

Begin to explore the tenets of band music production - Sound, Rhythm, Notes, Articulation, Dynamics, Phrasing and Balance.

Have an understanding of basic rhythmic concepts using note values from whole notes and rests. subdivided into half notes, quarters, eighths and sixteenths.

Students will be able to negotiate the time signatures of 4/4, 3/4, and 2/4. This understanding is measurable by the student being able to write in the counting of basic rhythms as part of a written examination.

Class work will include the study and performance of beginning band literature as well as textual study from a band method book. A written assignment in the form of a narrative paper will be submitted each semester.

Students will attend a live musical performance and respond using a guiding rubric.

INTERMEDIATE BAND

Course Length: 2 semesters
Credits: 1.0
Eligible Grade Levels: 6-12
Prerequisites: Beginning Band
Career Pathways:



Black River Intermediate Band students will:

Continue to strive to produce a centered and characteristic tone on their instrument using proper embouchure, breathing, hand position and posture with a beginning emphasis on intonation tendencies. Beginning collaboration skills will be learned through small group dynamics. This will be demonstrated on an individual basis as well as during sectional group activities in rehearsal and concert. Continue to explore solid band music production through its tenets. Use the musical circle of fifths to be able to construct all major scales. This understanding is measurable by the student as part of written examinations. Negotiate eight major key signatures (Bb, Eb, Ab, Db, Gb, B, E, A) and their corresponding modes. Understand and be able to negotiate all seven modes in the key of Bb major. (Ionian, Dorian, Phrygian, Lydian, Mixolydian, Aeolian, Locrian) Augment the understanding of basic rhythmic concepts using note and rest values from whole

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notes and rests sub-divided into half notes, quarters, eighths and sixteenths.

Students will continue to negotiate the time signatures of 4/4, 3/4, 2/4 and begin work with triple meters of 6/8, 3/8. In addition, students will start to develop cut time (2/2) counting skills. This understanding is measurable by the student being able to write in the counting of basic rhythms as part of a written examination.

Class work will include studying band literature from popular composers of level 1 & 2 from Europe and North America and begin the study of musical form through march music. (I, AA, BB, C, DD). Students will continue to explore music composition for wind and percussion instruments through collaborative projects. Students will attend a live musical performance and respond using a guiding rubric.

SYMPHONIC BAND

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 1 credit

Eligible Grade Levels: 9-12 or permission of instructor

Prerequisite: successful audition with instructor

Career Pathways:



Black River High School Symphonic Band students will:

Employ a consistent high standard of musical performance through personal preparation at all times and demonstrate artistic collaboration through performance. Use prior knowledge to construct all major scales, melodic minor scales and modes. Understanding will be measurable by written examinations and individual performance.

Negotiate twelve major key signatures (Bb, Eb, Ab, Db, Gb, B, E, A, D, G, C, F). Perform in MSBOA Band Festival and MSBOA Solo & Ensemble (alternating years). Continue to negotiate prior stated time signatures and be able to work in compound time signatures. This understanding will be measurable by the student being able to perform and write counting of these rhythms as part of a written examination.

Class work will include studying classic and new band literature from popular composers of level 3,4 & 5. Students will explore music composition for wind and percussion instruments through collaborative and individual projects.

JAZZ LAB

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 0.20

Eligible Grade Levels: 7-12

Prerequisites: must be current member of a Black River band or orchestra, or with director permission

Career Pathways:



Zero Hour Jazz Lab takes place before the regular school schedule during zero hour. Students will be able to commit to a flexible instrumentation jazz group that rehearses three days each week and has regular band concerts throughout the year. All band, orchestral and electronic instrumentalists are eligible to join from grades 7-12. This band performs frequently and focuses on improvisation skills and learning the many genres of jazz music. All instruments are welcome. Jazz Lab students may periodically have the opportunity to join jazz combos from the Jazz Orchestra.

BEGINNING ORCHESTRA

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 1.0

Eligible Grade Levels: 6-12

Career Pathways:



The Black River Beginning Orchestra is an ensemble where students learn to play string instruments including the violin, viola, cello and string bass. The students will begin by playing out of a beginning string method book. Throughout the course of the school year, we will cover playing in D major, G major, and C major keys, negotiate 4/4, 3/4, and 2/4 time signatures, perform in four concerts, and learn some basic composing skills. Students will learn to read music in a step by step approach. After speaking with the Orchestra Director, students will choose their own instruments. Students not playing the string bass must provide their own instruments.

PREPARATORY ORCHESTRA

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 1.0

Eligible Grade Levels: 6-12

Prerequisites: Beginning Orchestra and teacher approval

Career Pathways:



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The Preparatory Orchestra is designed for the second-year string student. Students in this class will continue to advance their basic technique and learn increasingly more complex material as they prepare to enter the Concert Orchestra. Students will learn vibrato, develop skills composing, play in a variety of major and minor keys, and learn more complicated bowing techniques. Students will be placed in this ensemble at the discretion of the Orchestra Director.

CONCERT ORCHESTRA

Course Length: 2 semesters
Credits: 1.0
Eligible Grade Levels: 6-12
Prerequisite: Permission from Instructor

Career Pathways:



This ensemble is for developing string players with two or more years of playing experience. Students in the Concert Orchestra build on the basic skills to increase proficiency and experience. This intermediate ensemble focuses on skills such as shifting, vibrato, composing, and playing as an ensemble. Participation in this ensemble is by audition.

ADVANCED ORCHESTRA

Course Length: 2 semesters
Credits: 1.0
Eligible Grade Levels: 8-12
Prerequisite: Participation in this ensemble is by audition.

Career Pathways:



The Black River Advanced Orchestra is a string ensemble focused on the performance of challenging compositions. This advanced ensemble often plays conductorless, which allows students the opportunity to further develop listening skills, non-verbal communication while playing their instruments, and musical independence. Advanced Orchestra students will also compose, combine with choir students for the December concert, perform as a full orchestra in the spring, and go on an optional overnight trip during the second semester. Participation in this ensemble is by audition.

VOCAL ELEMENTS

Course Length: 2 semesters
Credits: 1.0
Eligible Grades: 6-8
Prerequisites: none

Career Pathways:



Vocal Elements is a performance ensemble for students with limited previous experience in choral ensembles. Students will begin the sequential process of vocal development and other basic music skills relating to the choral experience. Grading will consist of daily attendance, vocal assessments, basic music theory assignments, and mandatory attendance at all performances. Additional information will be included in the choral handbook. The handbook will be distributed the first week of class.

CONCERT CHOIR

Course Length: 2 semesters
Credits: 1.0
Eligible Grades: 7-12
Prerequisites: Open to any 9-12 students, but 7-8 students must audition.

Career Pathways:



This ensemble is for students who are continuing the study of healthy vocal development (singing) and beginning the process of artistic expression through choral music, with two or more years of singing experience. Students in the Concert Choir build on the basic skills learned in Vocal Elements to increase proficiency and experience. This intermediate ensemble focuses on skills such as sight singing and singing as an ensemble. Grading will consist of daily attendance, vocal assessments, and mandatory attendance at all performances. Additional information will be included in the choral handbook. The handbook will be distributed the first week of class. **Participation in this ensemble is by audition.**

COLUMBIA AVENUE CHAMBER CHOIR

Course Length: 2 semesters
Credits: 1.0
Eligible Grades: 9-12
Prerequisites: Permission of Instructor/Audition

Career Pathways:



The Select Vocal Ensemble is an advanced choral ensemble open by audition only. This ensemble will focus on the study of advanced choral repertoire and vocal technique. Students in the Select Vocal Ensemble will be expected have had at least 1-2

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years of prior vocal experience in either Concert Choir or Vocal Elements, as this course will build upon the basic skills previously learned so as to increase proficiency and experience. This ensemble will be focused on performance and learning advanced music. Grading will consist of daily attendance, vocal assessments, and mandatory attendance at all performances.

SCIENCE DEPARTMENT

The science department at Black River is committed to presenting information to all of our students in the most relevant and engaging way as possible. The recognition that every student has a different way of learning is important in the study of the sciences. An alternative program of study is available for individuals with special circumstances by teacher and administrator approval. To bolster science learning, laboratory work is used to complement the curriculum and to give middle and high school students a positive and safe opportunity to participate in experiments to further explore science concepts.

SCIENCE 6

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 1.0

Eligible Grade Levels: 6

Prerequisites: none

This introductory science course provides students with a foundational understanding of life, earth, and physical sciences through an integrated and hands-on approach. Students develop basic inquiry skills by asking testable questions, collecting data, and drawing conclusions through collaborative investigations. This course is aligned to Michigan's Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), emphasizing three-dimensional learning and encouraging curiosity and scientific thinking. Key concepts include Systems and System Models, Patterns, and Cause and Effect.

SCIENCE 7

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 1.0

Eligible Grade Levels: 7

Prerequisites: none

Seventh grade science builds on prior integrated science knowledge with an increased focus on scientific inquiry, real-world application, and analytical thinking as students explore more complex systems. Through hands-on labs and collaborative projects, students refine their ability to design experiments, analyze data, and support claims with evidence. This course is aligned to Michigan's Next Generation

Science Standards (NGSS) and engages students in deeper exploration of science and engineering practices. Key concepts include Energy and Matter, and Structure and Function. This course also includes the middle school presentation of the reproductive health and sexual education curriculum.

SCIENCE 8

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 1.0

Eligible Grade Levels: 8

Prerequisites: none

Designed to prepare students for high school science, this course challenges learners to apply scientific reasoning to advanced topics. Students engage in multi-step investigations, develop models, and explore engineering solutions to real-world problems. Emphasis is placed on critical thinking, data interpretation, and scientific argumentation. Aligned with Michigan's Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), this course fosters independence in scientific inquiry and supports readiness for future STEM coursework. Key concepts include Scale, Proportion, and Quantity, and Stability and Change.

HIGH SCHOOL

BIOLOGY

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 1.0

Eligible Grade Levels: 9

Prerequisites: none

Biology is the study of life. This is a broad field with many different aspects and concepts to learn. In this class, many labs and several group and individual research projects are done throughout the year. Online activities complement topics covered in class. The concepts that will be studied include: cells, biological chemistry, cell respiration, photosynthesis, genetics, evolution, plants, and animals. This course is required for graduation from Black River and is a prerequisite for Chemistry and AP-level sciences.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT BIOLOGY

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 1.0

Eligible Grade Levels: 11-12

Prerequisites: Successful completion of Biology and Chemistry and permission of the instructor

This course is designed for those students who intend to major in a science field in college or wish to test out of part of their college science requirement. This course is meant to mirror a college biology course. The topics covered in this course are similar to topics in the regular biology course, but are

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learned more in-depth. A standard set of AP labs is completed throughout the year and students are prepared to complete a comprehensive exam in May that will determine college credit. If a student chooses not to take the AP exam, the course will appear on their transcript as Advanced Studies in Biology. It is recommended that students complete both Biology and Chemistry prior to enrolling in this course.

CHEMISTRY

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 1.0

Eligible Grade Levels: 10

Prerequisites: Biology

This course provides a year-long introduction to chemistry. First semester topics include energy and matter, atomic structure and configurations, the periodic table, chemical formulas and bonding, chemical reactions and equations, and moles. Second semester topics include heat and stoichiometry, states of matter, solutions, and acids and bases. Labs done throughout the year provides an opportunity to apply knowledge learned during discussion and group work exercises or as an introduction to a new topic to be discussed. This class includes the high school presentation of the abstinence-based sex education curriculum. This course is required for graduation from Black River and is a prerequisite for Chemistry and AP-level sciences.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT CHEMISTRY

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 1.0

Eligible Grade Levels: 11, 12

Prerequisites: Permission of instructor

This course is designed for those students who intend to major in a science field in college. This course is meant to mirror a college chemistry course. The topics covered in this course are similar to topics in the regular chemistry course, but are learned more in-depth and with more calculations, rigor and laboratory applications. Furthermore, other topics studied include chemical kinetics and thermodynamics, oxidation-reduction reactions, electrochemistry, and equilibrium. Lab work is documented in specific laboratory notebooks and lab reports are expected to be written as if the results were being published in professional chemistry journals. If a student chooses not to take the AP exam, the course will appear on their transcript as Advanced Studies in Chemistry.

CONCEPTUAL PHYSICS

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 1.0

Eligible Grade Levels: 11, 12

Prerequisites: Biology, Chemistry, Alg./Geometry

Conceptual Physics or PEER Physics, (Physics through Evidence, Empowerment through Reasoning) is a first year introductory physics course that is taught using the PEER Physics NGSS-aligned curriculum. This hands-on, collaborative and discussion-based course enables students to develop science skills by applying physics concepts to real-world, relevant phenomena. Students are expected to engage in substantial group work and class discussions. They will compare evidence gathered in class with their peers to develop and refine models, ultimately working toward a consensus and explaining their results. Units of study may include: Charge, Magnetism, Waves, Energy, Force, Gravitation and Patterns. This course also focuses heavily on concepts and the math behind them, as well as technical writing skills in a Claim, Evidence, and Reasoning format. Students should be enrolled in or have successfully completed Integrated Advanced Algebra/Geometry. AP Physics C: Mechanics (calculus-based) may be taken after successful completion of this course, if desired and eligible.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT PHYSICS 1

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 1.0

Eligible Grade Levels: 11, 12

Prerequisites: Completion of Chemistry, permission from the physics instructor, enrolled in at least Integrated Advanced Algebra/Geometry, and strong trigonometry skills.

AP Physics 1 is an advanced physics course, but it is designed as a first-year physics course. It may be taken instead of conceptual physics, or as a second physics course after successful completion of conceptual physics. Dual enrollment or previous completion of Integrated Advanced Algebra/Geometry is required. In addition, students need to have strong algebra and trigonometry skills and have earned at least a B in Integrated/Algebra Geometry. Topics include: Kinematics, Force and Translational Dynamics, Work, Energy, and Power, Linear Momentum, Torque and Rotational Dynamics, Energy and Momentum of Rotating Systems, Oscillations and Fluids. This course emphasizes inquiry, problem-solving, and math skills. 20-25% of the class is devoted to laboratory work, and students will complete multiple laboratory investigations. It is

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equivalent to a one-semester algebra-based college course. The course is typically taken by college health science and social science majors. Note: College credit cannot be obtained without completion of AP Physics 2.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT PHYSICS C: MECHANICS

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 1.0

Eligible Grade Levels: 11, 12

Prerequisites: Permission from physics instructor, successful completion of Pre-Calculus.

Corequisites: Must be enrolled in or have successfully completed AP Calculus.

The AP Physics C: Mechanics course is mathematically rigorous and strong algebra skills are needed. Calculus is required, but is not the main component of this class. Topics include: Kinematics, Force and Translational Dynamics, Work, Energy, and Power, Linear Momentum, Torque and Rotational Dynamics, Energy and Momentum of Rotating Systems and Oscillations. Approximately 20-25 % of class time will be devoted to laboratory work and multiple laboratory investigations will be completed. Proof of a laboratory component is required in order to receive full college credit. The goal of the course is to prepare students for the AP Physics C: Mechanics exam in May. This class is an equivalent to a one semester calculus-based physics college course. The course is generally taken by engineering and physics majors in college, however many disciplines require it too. Successful completion of this course will enable students to take AP Physics C-Electricity and Magnetism as a second year physics course.

ADVANCED GEOLOGY

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 1.0 (and optional college credit)

Eligible Grade Levels: 11, 12

Prerequisites: General Chemistry or pass 8th grade Physical science with a B or greater

{This course is *not* an AP[®]/College Board-sponsored course.} This course is designed to allow students to experience a rigorous geology course in high school. The objective of this course to provide students with a basic understanding of the Earth's materials and processes. Students will be introduced to the methods that geoscientists use to explore the Earth, while becoming knowledgeable citizens that can make informed decisions concerning geologic issues. Students may choose to participate in an

ongoing research project through the University of Wisconsin, Madison, to earn college credit. In order to earn college credit, students must pass two geoscience lab exams and one comprehensive knowledge-based final exam with a 70% or greater cumulative score. The class format consists of lecture, discussion, demonstrations, and videos that reinforce the important topics of the text. Useful materials and current news items are discussed, while lab activities will reinforce lecture topics and demonstrate methods used by geologists. Field study, in the form of trips on and off campus, will be provided to help students experience a more enriched understanding of geoscience.

ANATOMY/PHYSIOLOGY

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 1.0

Eligible Grade Levels: 10-12

Prerequisite: Completion of Biology

Explore the fascinating world of anatomy and physiology, where you'll learn all about the human body, from the largest organs to the smallest cells. "Anatomy" is the study of the structure of parts of the body and their relationships to one another. "Physiology" is the study of the functions of parts of the body and their connectedness on a cellular and molecular level. Using both of these areas of study, you'll learn how the parts of the body work in harmony with one another to keep you alive! Whether you dream of a career in the medical field or are simply curious about how your body works, this course will provide you with a deeper understanding and appreciation of the human body's complexity. This course is highly recommended for students participating in HOSA. See the instructor for more information.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 1.0

Eligible Grade Levels: 11, 12

Prerequisites: Biology, Chemistry, and permission of the instructor

The AP Environmental Science course is designed to be the equivalent of a one-semester, introductory college course in environmental science. The course provides students with the scientific principles, concepts and methodologies required to understand the interrelationships of the natural world, to identify and analyze environmental problems both natural and human-made, to evaluate the relative risks associated with these problems and to examine

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alternative solutions for resolving and/or preventing them. Topics include human demographics, human health, and transmission of diseases, biomes, ecosystems, biodiversity, global warming, ozone depletion, pollution, renewable and nonrenewable energy, agriculture global economics, and environmental legislation. A laboratory component is also a required part of this course.

ADDITIONAL NOTES ON SCIENCE COURSEWORK

The science department recommends the following course of study for students wishing to concentrate on science at Black River:

9 th grade	10 th grade	11 th grade	12 th grade
<i>Biology</i> (Required)	<i>Chemistry</i> (Required)	<i>Physics OR</i> <i>Geology OR</i> <i>Anatomy/Physio.</i>	<i>Physics OR</i> <i>Geology OR</i> <i>Anatomy/Physio.</i>
		<u>AP options</u> AP Physics C AP Biology AP Chemistry AP Env. Science	<u>AP options</u> AP Physics C AP Biology AP Chemistry AP Env. Science

The classes *in italics* are considered the standard scope-and-sequence expectation for students wanting to go to college.

SPANISH DEPARTMENT:

Students in the Spanish program develop the ability to communicate in another language and gain insight into themselves and others. They acquire knowledge of the structure and function of the Spanish language and immerse in Spanish speaking cultures. Their study will provide learners with access to additional knowledge and skills necessary to function in a global community and workplace.

Black River requires that all graduating students successfully complete Spanish 3. Students are encouraged to take at least two years of Spanish in high school.

SPANISH 1A

Course length: 2 semesters
Credits: 1.0
Eligible Grade Levels: 6, 7
Prerequisites: none

Spanish 1A is a beginner's course. Students are expected to reach the novice mid to novice high level of proficiency in Spanish. Their goals include being able to understand and exchange information on familiar topics and activities and being able to write simple descriptions. Although students will work towards proficiency in all modes of communication, most emphasis will be placed on the interpretive

mode of communication: reading and listening skills. Students will read one novice Spanish reader each semester with a focus on the culture of a Spanish speaking country during each book. Students will develop a knowledge of basic and useful vocabulary, focusing on high frequency verb structures. They will learn how to conjugate regular present tense verbs and the most frequently used irregular present tense verbs. We will practice the language using games, short readings, conversations, music, movie talks, co-created stories, videos etc. while gaining knowledge and respect for Spanish speaking countries.

SPANISH 1B

Course Length: 2 semesters
Credits: 1.0
Eligible Grade Levels: 7, 8
Prerequisites: Successful completion of Spanish 1A and a grade of C or higher is recommended.

Spanish 1B is a continuation of Spanish 1A and is typically the second year of world language study for students in middle school. This course will be taught using the Somos I curriculum and be taught using Comprehensible Input methodology, including activities such as Storyasking, Movie Talks, music lyric completion, and games. Students will continue building upon their language skills by listening, reading, writing, and speaking in Spanish. Students will read one novice novel in Spanish each semester that focuses on fluency and high frequency vocabulary and grammatical structures in authentic contexts. At the end of the year, students are expected to reach the Novice Mid to Novice High proficiency in the Spanish language according to the ACTFL proficiency guidelines.

SPANISH I

Course Length: 2 semesters
Credits: 1.0
Eligible Grade Levels: 8-12
Prerequisites: None

Spanish I is an introductory level course taught using the Somos I curriculum and the Comprehensible Input methodology. Students will engage in a variety of activities that build acquisition in Spanish language with a focus on high frequency vocabulary and structures. These activities include Story Asking, Movie Talks, music lyric complete, Calendar Talks, and games. Students will also read novice-level novels with a focus on the culture of a Spanish speaking country. Although students will work toward proficiency in all modes of communication, most emphasis on the interpretive mode: reading and listening. At the end of the course, students are expected to reach a Novice Mid to Novice High level

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of proficiency according to the ACTFL proficiency guidelines

SPANISH II

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 1.0

Eligible Grade Levels: 8-12

Prerequisites: Successful completion of middle school Spanish IB and/or High School Spanish I and a grade of C or higher is recommended.

Spanish II is taught using a combination of the Somos I and II curriculum, Comprehensible Input methodology, authentic resources, grammar in context, and intermediate level novels in Spanish. Through stories, games, music, podcasts, and more, students will increase their cultural awareness while strengthening their proficiency with the language in both the present and past tense. At the end of the course, students are expected to reach an Intermediate Low level of proficiency according to the ACTFL proficiency guidelines.

SPANISH III

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 1.0

Eligible Grade Levels: 9 – 12

Prerequisites: Successful completion of Spanish II and a grade of C or higher is recommended.

Spanish III is taught using comprehensible input methodology with a combination of Somos II and Huellas 1 curriculum. Students engage in meaningful communication through reading authentic and language learner oriented texts, listening to podcasts and songs, partner and group speaking, and writing in Spanish. Throughout the course students acquire new vocabulary and deepen their understanding of grammar, developing their ability to communicate in a variety of time frames and contexts. At the end of the course, students are expected to reach an Intermediate Mid level of proficiency, according to the ACTFL proficiency guidelines.

SPANISH IV

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits : 1.0

Eligible Grade Levels: 10 – 12

Prerequisites: Successful completion of Spanish III and a grade of C or higher is recommended.

Spanish IV is a continuation of Spanish III and is typically the second year of world language study for students in high school. This course will be taught using the Huellas 2 curriculum and using Comprehensible Input methodology, including activities such as Storyasking, Movie Talks, music lyric completion, and games. Students will continue building upon their language skills by listening,

reading, writing, and speaking in Spanish about topics such as famous art and artists, food from around the world, and global sustainability. Students will read one intermediate novel in Spanish each semester that focuses on fluency, high frequency vocabulary, and grammatical structures in authentic contexts. At the end of the year, students are expected to maintain the Intermediate Mid to Intermediate High proficiency in the Spanish language according to the ACTFL proficiency guidelines.

SPANISH V

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 1.0

Eligible Grade Levels: 10 – 12

Prerequisites: Successful completion of Spanish IV and a grade of C or higher is recommended.

Spanish V is a continuation of Spanish IV and is typically the third year of world language study for students in high school. This course will be taught using the Huellas 2 curriculum and using Comprehensible Input methodology, including activities such as Storyasking, Movie Talks, music lyric completion, and games. Students will continue building upon their language skills by listening, reading, writing, and speaking in Spanish about various topics. Students will read one intermediate novel in Spanish each semester that focuses on fluency, high frequency vocabulary, and grammatical structures in authentic contexts. At the end of the year, students are expected to reach the Intermediate High proficiency in the Spanish language according to the ACTFL proficiency guidelines.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT SPANISH LANGUAGE & CULTURE

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 1.0

Eligible Grade Levels: 11, 12

Prerequisites: Permission of Instructor

The AP Spanish Language and Culture course is a rigorous, immersive course designed to strengthen students' proficiency in Spanish while deepening their understanding of the cultures of the Spanish-speaking world. Conducted almost entirely in Spanish, the course emphasizes real-world communication through the three modes of communication: interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational. Students engage with authentic texts and media—including articles, podcasts, films, literature, and current events—to explore global themes such as personal and public identity, families and communities, beauty and aesthetics, science and

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technology, contemporary life, and global challenges. The course builds advanced skills in speaking, listening, reading, and writing, with a strong focus on cultural awareness, critical thinking, and persuasive communication.

By the end of the course, students will be prepared to succeed on the AP Spanish Language and Culture Exam and to use Spanish confidently and effectively in academic, professional, and real-world contexts.

ADDITIONAL NOTES ON SPANISH LANGUAGE STUDY

Accelerated Study

With successful completion of middle school Spanish IA, IB and Spanish II in 8th grade, students may move directly into Spanish III at the high school level. We encourage students to extend their study of Spanish beyond Spanish III.

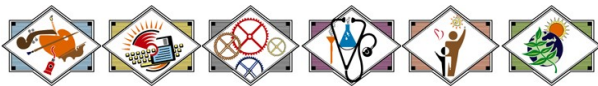
9 th grade	10 th grade	11 th grade	12 th grade
Spanish 3	Spanish 4	Spanish 5 or AP Spanish Lang	AP Spanish Lang

VISUAL ART DEPARTMENT

The Art department of Black River provides a comprehensive and challenging visual art curriculum for our students. The middle school classes broaden students' understanding of the cultures they study in Humanities with clear steps that build on one another. Students who complete the high school series of art courses will be prepared to enter college and life with real skills and a developed sense of personal aesthetics.

AFRICAN AND EGYPTIAN ART

Course Length: 2 semesters
Credits: 1.0
Eligible Grade Level: 6
Prerequisites: none
Career Pathways:



The focus of this course is to provide a first positive middle school experience with art and to study the visual culture of Africa, Egypt and the Middle East. Various art mediums will be explored-such as: drawing, painting, sculpture, ceramics, papier-mâché sculpture, and weaving. Students will gain basic skills in these areas while creating fun and interesting projects, such as yarn weaving, contemporary masks

inspired by the traditions of African masks, and Egyptian canopic jars. Students will also learn and apply the elements of art and other art making techniques to help enhance artistic abilities.

ASIAN ART

Course Length: 2 semesters
Credits: 1.0
Eligible Grade Level: 7
Prerequisites: none
Career Pathways:



This course focuses on the development of creativity and the study of the visual culture of Asia. Since Asia is such a large continent, with so many diverse cultures, this class will maintain a directed emphasis on Australia, China, Japan, and South Asia including India and Indonesia. Various art materials will be used, such as: drawing, painting, sculpture, and clay. In this course, students may use traditional block printing methods, techniques of Chinese brush painting, and create papier-mâché Chinese dragons. Students also learn about basic color theory, as well as developing a deeper understanding of the elements and principles of art.

EARLY EUROPEAN ART

Course Length: 2 semesters
Credits: 1.0
Eligible Grade Level: 8
Prerequisites: none
Career Pathways:



This course offers students an opportunity to study the visual culture of early Europe as they embark upon more advanced projects that may include painting, drawing, sculpture, ceramics, and architectural design. Students will learn European art history from Prehistory through the Baroque period. Projects may include creating Greek inspired vases, designing a medieval castle and learn how to draw ancient Greek and Roman architecture using two-point perspective. Students further their understanding of applying value with pencil, the use different watercolor techniques, and illustrate how the elements and principles of art are used to create stronger and more developed artwork.

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HIGH SCHOOL

ART I

Course Length: 2 semesters
Credits: 1.0
Eligible Grade Levels: 9-12
Career Pathways:



This course provides an academic study of art through an introduction to art history, contemporary art, and basic art techniques. Students will use a variety of techniques in drawing, painting, mixed media, and sculpture to broaden understanding of two-dimensional and three-dimensional art making.

ART II

Course Length: 2 semesters
Credits: 1.0
Eligible Grade Levels: 10, 11, 12
Prerequisite: Completion of Art Foundations
Career Pathways:



This course is for students that have completed an Art I, Ceramics, or Digital Media class. The aim is to focus on two-dimensional art making—drawing and painting specifically, at an intermediate level. Students will increase skill levels with dry media (drawing) and painting, while developing artworks to communicate ideas and concepts through the completion of well composed artworks. Additionally, course content will include focus on the history of art—modernism and postmodernism, art making techniques, and composition/design.

CERAMICS AND SCULPTURE

Course Length: 2 semesters
Credits: 1.0
Eligible Grade Levels: 9-12
Career Pathways:



This class is designed to move students past the two-dimensional mediums of drawing and painting and into projects that focus on three-dimensional form with sculpture. The course will cover the academic study of art through an introduction to art history, contemporary art, and basic sculpture techniques. Materials, such as clay, plaster, recycled materials, and fiber arts, will be used to create artworks and to understand concepts of form and space. Students will explore idea development through the evaluation of several traditional and conceptual sculpture artists.

This course counts as a foundation art credit.

ART III

Course Length: 2 semesters
Credits: 1.0
Eligible Grade Levels: 11, 12
Prerequisite: Art III students must have completed two Foundations level art courses.
Career Pathways:



Art III is designed for students looking for upper level art challenges. This class will include presentations, research, critiques, and hands-on creative art making. Students will have the opportunity to focus more on a specific medium, skill, or topic in 4 week increments and explore new techniques every two weeks that can either apply to their focused works or be used as a practice in a new medium or style within their sketchbooks. By the end of this course students will have a portfolio of 8 works between two semesters and a sketchbook full of new techniques they can use in future endeavors or college portfolio applications.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT ART HISTORY

Course Length: 2 semesters
Credits: 1.0
Eligible Grade Levels: 11-12
Prerequisite: Permission of teacher
Career Pathways:



This college level Art History course is an excellent class for 11th and 12th grade students who wish to learn about art history in its historical context. Students will: express historical understanding in writing, understand important historical events in context with visual art history, grasp major art historical periods from early European history to modern Western historical perspectives, and distinguish between Western and non-Western aesthetics. Also, students will complete tests periodically and research projects to help examine understanding and express personal interest. Students will take an AP Art History exam in early May.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT DRAWING

Course Length: 2 semesters
Credits: 1.0
Eligible Grade Levels: 11, 12
Prerequisite: Must have completed two Foundations level art courses.
Career Pathways:

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This course is for students who have completed two foundation art courses, or have an art teacher's signature allowing admission based on past portfolio work which has been reviewed. AP (Advanced Placement) Drawing is a program administered by the College Board to provide highly motivated high school students with an opportunity to earn college credit in art with a drawing focus. Students will submit a drawing portfolio to the College Board with work that focuses on the use of mark-making, line, surface, space, light and shade, and composition. The final AP drawing portfolio will include 5 selected works and 15 sustained investigation images that shows a student's ability to investigate and create a series of work that shows growth and exploration through varied means. Drawing (analog and digital), painting, printmaking, and mixed media work are among the possibilities for submission. Still images from videos or film are accepted. Composite images may be submitted. Students will be encouraged to develop a strong personal artistic voice.

INTRODUCTION TO DIGITAL MEDIA & PHOTOGRAPHY

Course Length: 2 semesters
Credits: 1.0 (Fine Art)
Eligible Grade Levels: 9-12
Career Pathways:



This Digital Media and Photography course is designed to introduce students to the basic skills and techniques of digital photography, digital illustration, video editing, and computer image editing. In the fall semester, students will focus on digital illustration and computer image editing. In the spring semester, students will focus on digital photography and videography. Students will gain knowledge of the effects of lighting, composition and basic camera functions. In this course students will learn how to use Adobe Photoshop Elements and Adobe Premiere Elements, as well as Krita, Serif DrawPlus x8, and several other free programs. Students will have the opportunity to learn to use school supplied Canon DSLR cameras and Wacom tablets. In addition to studio work, students will examine the artworks of traditional and digital artists past and present. This course counts as a foundation art credit.

ADVANCED DIGITAL MEDIA & PHOTOGRAPHY

Course Length: 2 semesters
Credits: 1.0 (Fine Art)
Eligible Grade Levels: 10-12

Prerequisite: Successful Completion of Intro. to Digital Media
Career Pathways:



The Advanced Digital Media and Photography course is a continuation of the Introduction to Digital Media course. Students in this course will choose an area of focus for their digital portfolio. Choices on portfolio focus include: digital photography, digital illustration, videography, or digital collage. Students will work on creating multiple portfolio-ready artworks to be displayed digitally and on high quality prints. This course is independently driven with several portfolio assignments. Students in this course must be willing to work outside of school to expand their portfolio variety. This course counts as a second foundation art credit.

MIDDLE SCHOOL ELECTIVES

COLLEGE ADVISORY PROGRAM

Course Length: 2 semesters
Credits: .10
Eligible Grade Levels: 6-8
Career Pathways:



The College Advisory Program (CAP) provides guidance and curriculum for teachers in grades 6-12 and targets outcomes for each student while providing meaningful relationships between staff and students. Teachers instruct students on college, college preparation and college planning as well as give academic guidance, intervention and support. The intent of the course is to help students discover for themselves how to be successful in Middle School and High School and to appreciate the power of a college education.

These goals will be accomplished through two types of CAP Classes. The first will be a consistent CAP class that meets with an advisory teacher twice a week, during which time students will complete various lessons and sign up for Flex classes. The second will be Flex CAP classes the remaining days of the week, the content of which will be based on the student's needs.

Other benefits of the CAP program include providing students with a teacher advocate, helping students find ways to be successful within the academic, enrichment and social options available, building important social skills in a focused peer group, and

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promoting a culture of personal responsibility, engagement and respect. These benefits support the objective of the College Advisory Program by providing support and resources in preparation for college and life.

Students will receive a letter grade according to three criteria:

1. Flex Participation and Accountability
2. Class Activities
3. Class Lessons

6TH GRADE PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 0.50 per semester

Eligible Grade Levels: 6

Prerequisites: none

Career Pathways:



This elective class will allow 6th grade students to improve their physical fitness, cardiovascular health, and athletic ability. As an activity based class, each student is required to participate each day. A variety of sports and games will be played allowing for growth and skill development in a number of different areas. With only 6th grade students, this class will offer a risk free area to expand your physical health and wellbeing.

MATH WORKSHOP

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: .5 per semester

Eligible Grade Levels: 6

Career Pathways:



Math Workshop is an elective opportunity for 6th grade students who would benefit from extra time and practice with basic math skills, 6th grade concepts, and 7th grade readiness skills. This class is taken in tandem with the Integrated Math I course and provides students with additional support in the transition from 5th to 6th grade math. Methods of instruction include inquiry based learning, engaging projects, and collaborative problem solving. We will explore the skills and concepts needed to be successful in Math 6 and reinforce prerequisite skills and future skills through engaging activities. Recommended students will receive invitations. If you do not receive an invitation and are interested in this class, please contact the math department.

MS PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 0.50 per semester

Eligible Grade Levels: 6-8

Prerequisites: none

Career Pathways:



This elective class is for 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students who want to improve their physical fitness, cardiovascular health, and athletic ability. As an activity based class, each student is required to participate each day. A variety of sports and games will be played allowing for growth and skill development in a number of different areas. We will work on building team skills in sports and games as well as individual athletic skills.

HIGH SCHOOL ELECTIVES

ADVANCED SPORTS CONDITIONING

Course Length: 1 or 2 semesters

Credits: 0.50 per semester

Eligible Grade Levels: 9-12

Prerequisites: Must play a BRPS sponsored sport

Career Pathways:



This course is for athletes to improve their athletic ability while getting a great physical workout. Each student will obtain an hour long sport specific workout from the Varsity coach of the sport(s) they play. Two days a week, the students will perform these workouts, the third class period each week will be a cardiovascular workout. This class is designed to build and improve athletic ability and improve physical conditioning.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT PREPARATION

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 1.0

Eligible Grade Levels: 11-12

Pre-requisites: Concurrently enrolled in 3 or more AP classes or combination of college courses

Career Pathways:



Students who are enrolled in a combination of three or more AP or college courses are eligible for this class. The purpose of this class is to prepare students to be ready for the AP exams associated

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with their AP class load. Assignments related to their classes will be assigned weekly with the intent of serving as a review over learned material from their advanced classes as well as practice for the spring exam. These assignments will take up a portion of the class period and with the remainder of the time in class dedicated to course work, either individually or in small study groups.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT PSYCHOLOGY

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 1.0

Eligible Grade Levels: 11-12

Career Pathways:



This course is designed to introduce students to the academic, scientific study of the behavior and mental processes of human beings and other animals. Students are exposed to psychological facts, principles and phenomena associated with each of the major subfields within psychology.

Principles of psychology include, but are not limited to: biological bases of behavior, research methods, history and approaches, sensation and perception, states of consciousness, motivation and emotion, cognition, developmental psychology, psychopathology, and social psychology.

Students are encouraged to take the AP Psychology exam in May. Students will learn through experiential and project-based assignments, independent reading, class discussion and in-class lectures.

AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 1.0

Eligible Grade Levels: 10 -12

Career Pathways:



Introduction to African American Studies is a year-long elective that introduces students to the rich and complex history of African Americans and their influence on the United States and the world. Through historical documents, literature, art, music, and discussion, students explore how African Americans have shaped culture, challenged injustice, and built communities across time. Offered concurrently with AP African American Studies, students will engage in shared topics while building foundational knowledge and critical skills essential to understanding African American history and culture.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 1.0

Eligible Grade Levels: 11-12

Pre-requisites: Permission of Instructor

Career Pathways:



AP African American Studies is an interdisciplinary course that examines the diversity of African American experiences through direct encounters with varied sources. Students explore key topics that extend from early African kingdoms to the ongoing challenges and achievements of the contemporary moment. Given the interdisciplinary character of African American Studies, students in the course will develop skills across multiple fields, with an emphasis on developing historical, literary, visual, and data analysis skills. This course foregrounds a study of the diversity of Black communities in the United States within the broader context of Africa and the African diaspora. The course will culminate in a student driven research project of their choice during which they will define a line of inquiry, conduct independent research to analyze authentic sources from multiple disciplines, and develop and deliver a presentation about their selected topic. This project is submitted by students and scored by their teachers; this teacher-scored component counts as 10 percent of the student's final AP Exam score.

ADVANCED SOCIOLOGY

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 1.0

Eligible Grade Levels: 11-12

Career Pathways:



Students who have already taken Sociology and wish to continue these studies with more depth and freedom have the opportunity to explore their sociological interests in this course. Run concurrently with the Sociology course, students have the choice to join and lead class discussion and prepare supplemental material for the class. Additionally, students write an independent study proposal that specifies their areas of interest for independent study and research for the year, which includes objectives and assessment criteria, and then follow through with that study.

COLLEGE ADVISORY PROGRAM

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: .10

Eligible Grade Levels: 9-12

BLACK RIVER PUBLIC SCHOOL PROGRAM OF STUDY

Career Pathways:



The College Advisory Program (CAP) provides guidance and curriculum for teachers in grades 6-12 and targets outcomes for each student while providing meaningful relationships between staff and students. Teachers instruct students on college, college preparation and college planning as well as give academic guidance, intervention and support. The intent of the course is to help students discover for themselves how to be successful in Middle School and High School and to appreciate the power of a college education.

These goals will be accomplished through two types of CAP Classes. The first will be a consistent CAP class that meets with an advisory teacher twice a week, during which time students will complete various lessons and sign up for Flex classes. The second will be Flex CAP classes the remaining days of the week, the content of which will be based on the student's needs.

Other benefits of the CAP program include providing students with a teacher advocate, helping students find ways to be successful within the academic, enrichment and social options available, building important social skills in a focused peer group, and promoting a culture of personal responsibility, engagement and respect. These benefits support the objective of the College Advisory Program by providing support and resources in preparation for college and life.

Students will be receive a letter grade according to three criteria:

4. Participation and Accountability
5. Class Activities
6. Class Lessons

COMPUTER AIDED DRAFTING & DESIGN I

Course Length: 2 semesters
Credits: 1.0 Mathematics (if taken during 12th grade)
Eligible Grade Levels: 9-12
Career Pathways:



In this course, students will explore and learn engineering drawing techniques and computer aided design software. The class will focus on three main learning areas: engineering software knowledge, technical drawing concepts, and product design

activities. Basic 2D CAD mechanical drawing concepts through advanced 3D solid model product design will be studied. Students will work individually as well as in groups to progress from basic technical drawing concepts through advanced product design and documentation.

Seniors can take this course for their 4th math credit.

INDEPENDENT STUDY/ONLINE COURSE

Course Length: 1 semester

Credits: 0.5

Eligible Grade Levels: 11-12 and/or permission from the Head of School

Career Pathways:



Students may seek approval to research or explore a topic for academic credit on an "independent study" basis if the course is not offered or available due to schedule constraints. Independent Study students will be encouraged to enroll in a Michigan Virtual High School online course if applicable (fees may be incurred).

Permission to pursue an independent study project is a privilege granted to students who have demonstrated their ability to work with little supervision. The student wishing to undertake the project must complete an Independent Study application and secure approval from the potential faculty advisor of the project and the Head of School. Students must complete assignments as designated by their faculty advisor and course syllabus. Students will receive a letter grade for the course.

INTRODUCTION TO 3D COMPUTER ANIMATION

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 1.0 Mathematics (if taken during 12th grade)

Eligible Grade Levels: 9-12

Career Pathways:



In this course, students will explore and learn 3D animation software. The class will focus on two main learning areas: software knowledge and manipulation as well as fundamental animation story telling. Students will use extended project based learning activities working individually and in groups to explore the use of 3D animation software and storytelling.

Seniors can take this course for their 4th math credit.

INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 1.0

Eligible Grade Levels: 10-12

Career Pathways:

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Philosophy is the study of essential questions *and* the study of the people throughout history who have crafted answers to those questions. Questions like: How do we view the world? What is the nature of reality? What does it mean to be human? How do we make meaning? How do we navigate ethics and morality? What makes life beautiful? As we study the ideas and writings of major philosophers, the goals of this class are to both read and think actively with the aim of understanding — and then to apply logical reasoning to formulate discussions, arguments, and debates based on the many philosophies of the world. We will begin, as many avenues of study do, in Ancient Greece. We will travel through the timeline of philosophy, dabbling in history, art, religion, science, and literature, until we reach the present day.

Texts may include *Sophie's World*, a novel about the history of philosophy, by Jostein Gaarder, as well as selected myths, poetry, essays, non-fiction articles, visual and musical artworks, and comics.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Course Length: 2 semesters
Credits: 1.0
Eligible Grade Levels: 9-12
Career Pathways:



This course will engage you in healthy activity to promote physical wellness in both body and in mind. This is an activity-based class; therefore all are expected to participate on a daily basis. Physical activity has been shown to help you think more clearly, breathe better, and be relaxed in a way that is conducive to the over all excellence in all areas of academia. Fitness is a life long goal; by teaching you a healthy life style we expect you will continue this healthy life style into life after school. Successful completion of two semesters of this course fulfills the graduation requirement of 1.0 credit in Physical Education.

SOCIOLOGY

Course Length: 2 semesters
Credits: 1.0
Eligible Grade Levels: 10-12
Career Pathways:



Why do people act the way they do? Why are men expected to be more aggressive than women? Why

are some behaviors considered deviant in our society while others are totally acceptable? How much does bias and prejudice really affect our daily thoughts and actions?

Sociology seeks to answer these questions in a scientific manner. Simply put, Sociology is the study of how humans behave in groups. Sociologists use different sociological perspectives to determine how groups and social institutions influence people and how people are influenced by society. In studying Sociology, we seek to understand our own world as well as the world far from our own experiences. This course will examine the sociology of deviance, stratification, gender, race, and religion, among other topics.

Students will receive a letter grade for the course.

MIDDLE SCHOOL G-PERIOD COURSES

ADVANCED THEATRE ARTS

Course Length: 1 semester (Spring)
Credits: 0.34
Eligible Grade Levels: 7-12

Prerequisite: Prior Drama, Intro to Theatre, and permission from instructor

Career Pathways:



Advanced Theatre Arts is designed for students who want to delve deeper into the craft of acting and/or technical theatre. Students may elect to take this course multiple times throughout their years at Black River, and each subsequent time, they will build upon their prior experiences through advanced acting techniques, scene work, stagecraft, voice work, directing, theatre history and theatre design elements. Each student enrolled in this class will have some ability to customize the curriculum to meet their individual theatre goals.

ART EXPLORATION

Course Length: 1 semester (Fall or Spring)
Credits: 0.34
Eligible Grade Levels: 6-8

Career Pathways:



This elective class for 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students is designed to explore various art mediums. Students will experiment with drawing, painting, and collage. Art mediums will be introduced and students will be able to choose how to explore each medium within their own artwork. In addition to art creation,

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students will learn about various artists who use the explored mediums to communicate ideas.

ASTRONOMY

Course Length: 1 semester (Fall)

Credits: .34

Eligible Grade Levels: 6-8

Career Pathways:



Astronomy is a course in which students will be actively increasing their knowledge of our solar system and the universe. Students will be working in the computer lab, in the classroom, and in the science lab on many different assignments. Topics range from the Kuiper Belt to constellations, it will be lots of fun!

BR PROBLEM SOLVERS

Course Length: 1 semester (Fall or Spring)

Credits: 0.34

Eligible Grade Levels: 6-8

Career Pathways:



Engineering uses scientific principles to solve problems. In this course, students will make observations, identify problems, and work to solve them using a problem-based learning approach. Students will identify, engineer, and authentically present their solutions to an audience. Students may also be tasked with implementing their solutions.

CARDIOVASCULAR FITNESS/HEALTH

Course Length: 1 semester (Fall or Spring)

Credits: 0.34 (Physical Education)

Eligible Grade Levels: 6-8

Career Pathways:



This course provides guidance on habits conducive to a healthy lifestyle that are important for students as they grow and develop. Students will engage in a number of cardiovascular activities including; stair climbing, distance running, anaerobic sprinting and aerobic calisthenics. All activities will focus on enhancing pulmonary functions, muscular, skeletal flexibility, and over all homeostasis. At the conclusion of the semester a student should be able to run three miles at an eight mile per hour pace. Participation in one local 5km race is encouraged.

COMPUTER AIDED DRAFTING (CAD)

Course Length: 1 semester (Fall or Spring)

Credits: 0.34

Eligible Grade Levels: 6-8

Prerequisite: Students wishing to take this class who have taken 3D Cars during Project Term need prior permission from the teacher.

Career Pathways:



The class where creativity and computer aided design come together. This class blends the discipline and structure of CAD with the creative fun of object design. Over the course of the semester we'll ease you into the field of CAD while learning SketchUp and perhaps more as time allows. What other course can offer you three languages in one year? We will learn how to design items in SketchUp as well as explore the other tools and standards used by professional CAD designers today.

CREATIVE WRITING

Course Length: 1 semester (Spring)

Credits: 0.34

Eligible Grade Levels: 6-8

Career Pathways:



Creative writing can enhance our lives with vivid images, crystal-clear honesty, and fascinating insights into the way we view and interact with the world. With this in mind, we will delve into the artistic world of creative writing in an inspired and inclusive environment. While reading short stories and poems, students will learn from the masters and determine their own personal style. As a class, we will focus on revising our work through a collaborative workshop process while developing a digital portfolio of writing using Google Classroom. Each class period we will start with a short journal-writing prompt to help build a creative mindset, and many of these prompts could lead to ideas we pursue in poems and stories. As poet Shel Silverstein beckons, "If you are a dreamer...come in, come in!"

DRAGONS, CASTLES & KNIGHTS

Course Length: 1 semester (Fall)

Credits: 0.34

Eligible Grade Levels: 6-8

Career Pathways:



Were dragons real? What would it have been like to live in a castle? What would your life have been like if you were a real knight? Are the Middle Ages one of

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your favorite eras of history? Join this class, and we will discover more about the fantasy life of the Middle Ages as well as the reality. Who were the legends? Who were the real heroes? We will watch some of the best movies and documentaries that depict life in the Middle Ages. Come on an adventure to explore some of Europe's most iconic castles, cities, and cathedrals.

We will explore our topics with multiple methods of instruction: movies, documentaries, books, art, speeches, skits, interviews, movie-making, and debates. This class will follow the Project Based Learning methodology.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE (EL) SUPPORT

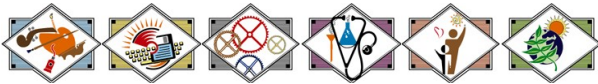
Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 0.34/semester

Eligible Grade Levels: 6-12

Prerequisite: Must be designated English Language Learner

Career Pathways:



The EL support class is an English Language Development (ELD) course for students who qualify as English Language Learners. The class is designed to help EL students attain English language proficiency in listening, reading, speaking and writing. A strong focus on academic and content vocabulary is prevalent. Students will also receive support with core class content, organization, and study skills, as needed. Proficiency goals will be set for each student based on individual WIDA ACCESS data. ELD instruction will occur through direct language lessons, both one on one and in small groups. Participating students will also be enrolled in the Lexia PowerUp program, which focuses on developing English language skills by identifying students' skill gaps and providing individualized instruction in the areas of word study, grammar, and reading comprehension. The PowerUp program blends online student-driven instruction with one-to-one teacher-delivered lessons and activities. Students who participate in the PowerUp lessons will become better prepared to engage with the complex texts and materials encountered in their general education courses. In addition to direct language instruction, during the EL support class the students will have supported work time on assignments from their general education courses. They will receive instruction on how to organize their materials and schedules, prioritize tasks during work time, and prepare for assessments, as needed.

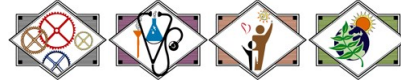
EVERYDAY SCIENCE

Course Length: 1 semester (Spring)

Credits: 0.34

Eligible Grade Levels: 6-8

Career Pathways:



To better understand science around us, Everyday Science has incorporated a hands on approach to learning blended with inquiry-driven "missions" in which students design, build, test, troubleshoot and compete final products with classmates. In addition, students are able to work together to offer problems and solutions to other classmates in an effort to encourage teamwork and effective communication.

FROM THE GROUND UP

Course Length: 1 semester (Fall)

Credits: 0.34

Eligible Grade Levels: 6-8

Career Pathways:



Experience the freedom and exhilaration of bouldering and wall climbing at the only climbing gym on the lakeshore! Each G-block class we will travel to Scrapyard Climbing Collective where you can practice and grow your climbing skills. While improving your climbing skills you will also improve your math skills. Your hardwork will help train your brain mathematically and your body physically. Space is limited to 15 students.

FTC ROBOTICS

Course Length: 1 semester (Fall)

Credits: 0.34

Eligible Grade Levels: 7-8

Prerequisite: Grade level preference, Student contract required

Career Pathways:



FTC is way more than building robots. FIRST Tech Challenge robotics will consist of two teams of 12 students that will be challenged to design, build, program, and operate robots to play a floor game in an alliance format. Participants have called it, "the hardest fun you'll ever have!" Guided by Coach Bittrick and various Mentors, students will develop STEM skills and practice engineering principles (like keeping an engineering notebook), while realizing the value of hard work, innovation, and sharing ideas.

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The robot kit is programmed using a variety of languages. Students will also raise funds and participate in community outreach for which they can win awards. Students taking the class will have access to tens of millions of dollars in college scholarships. FTC Robotics concludes with regional Championships and an exciting FIRST Championship at the end of April.

Students will be asked to sign a contract of commitment, which will ensure their commitment to the program. This course will require some travel, as well as scheduled Saturday meetings.

GAMES GALORE

Course Length: 1 semester (Fall or Spring)

Credits: 0.34

Eligible Grade Levels: 6-8

Career Pathways:



Games Galore is an exciting course for students to enjoy playing beloved board and card games as well as learning and discovering new ones. This class will include all kinds of games including Apples to Apples, Spyfall, Taco vs. Burrito, and Mexicopoly. Students are encouraged to bring games from home to play in class as well. At the end of the course, students will have the opportunity to create their own game and play it with their classmates.

HISTORY OF ANIMATION

Course Length: 1 semester (Spring)

Credits: 0.34

Eligible Grade Levels: 6-8

Career Pathways:



Animation is a beautiful world of self expression, art, and gripping stories that caters to the imagination. Have you ever wondered who are the brilliant minds who pioneered animation? Have you wondered about what animation looked like throughout the different decades and eras? This is the perfect class for you! Dive into Disney animation, explore Don Bluth's works, discover studio Ghibli, and check out the transition from 2D to 3D. So much to learn in History of Animation!

INTRODUCTION TO THEATRE ARTS

Course Length: 1 semester (Fall)

Credits: 0.34

Eligible Grade Levels: 7 -12

Career Pathways:



Students enrolled in Intro to Theatre Arts will gain a greater understanding of theatre technique through acting exercises, stagecraft, improvisation activities, and performances.

All students will perform monologues, duo scenes and short scenes from a variety of plays. We will also spend some time learning about the off-stage aspects of theatre, such as costume design, set design, makeup techniques and prop creation. Students may only take this class one time.

LIFE AT THE LIBRARY

Course Length: 1 semester (Fall)

Credits: 0.34

Eligible Grade Levels: 6-8

Career Pathways:



Students will be given time to read, research, and explore topics that are interesting to them. Trips to the library will allow students to dive into a subject and become an expert on the material. Space will be given so that students can have discussions with their peers and teachers.

¡LUCES, CÁMARA, MÚSICA! EXPLORING SPANISH THROUGH FILM AND SONG

Course Length: 1 semester (Fall or Spring)

Credits: 0.34

Eligible Grade Levels: 6-8

Career Pathways:



Get ready to turn up the volume and dim the lights! *¡Luces, Cámara, Música!* is an exciting middle school Spanish course where students learn the language through the vibrant worlds of movies, TV shows, and music from across the Spanish-speaking world.

In this interactive class, students will explore age-appropriate film clips, shows, and songs from countries such as Mexico, Spain, Colombia, and Argentina. Through popular animated films like *Coco* and inspiring songs such as *Vivir Mi Vida* by Marc Anthony, students will build vocabulary, improve listening skills, and practice speaking in meaningful, memorable ways.

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MATH ADVANTAGE

Course Length: 1 semester (Fall or Spring)

Credits: 0.34

Eligible Grade Levels: 7-8th

Prerequisite: Recommendation from current math teacher

Career Pathways:



Designed for students who had difficulty in their previous math classes, Math Advantage is intended to give students extra time and additional support to foster their success in middle school mathematics. Students will engage in lessons that reinforce classroom learning, and will have time to work on assigned math homework as well as on additional problems and activities that supplement classroom learning. In order to enroll in this class, students must receive a recommendation from their current math teacher. Each student will be expected to come to class ready to work, with all materials: textbook, notebook, homework assignments and any other material necessary for success. Grading will be based on participation and completion.

NATIONAL PARK EXPLORERS

Course Length: 1 semester (Spring)

Credits: 0.34

Eligible Grade Levels: 6-8

Career Pathways:



Calling all explorers and outdoor enthusiasts! In this class, we will explore the beauty, ecology, geology and history of National Parks through videos, projects, trivia and more, all from the comfort of the classroom. We will also learn and practice outdoor skills related to camping, wilderness survival and other recreational activities. Come with a positive attitude and leave with ideas you can take with you on future vacations.

NATURE ART & ECOLOGY

Course Length: 1 semester (Fall)

Credits: 0.34

Eligible Grade Levels: 6-8

Career Pathways:



Get crafty in nature and with nature! In this class we will journey outside the classroom to gather inspiration and natural materials that will help us create unique works of art. From collages to paint to prints and more, we will explore the many ways that we can make something beautiful out of outdoor

items. Along the way we will learn local ecology, such as how to identify plants in the world around us, and explore professional artists who work with natural materials. If you love being creative, science, and getting outside, this is the class for you.

NEXT-GEN ROBOTICS

Course Length: 1 semester (Spring)

Credits: 0.34

Eligible Grade Levels: 6-7

Prerequisite: Grade level preference, Student contract required

Career Pathways:



Next-Gen Robotics is a class designed for the next "generation" of FTC robotics students. This course is recommended for students that are interested in joining the competitive FTC robotics course in the Fall. The course is open to 6th and 7th grade students. Any 8th grade FTC robotics students currently enrolled in the course in the fall will be required to take a different G-block course in the spring. Next-Gen Robotics will prepare future FTC team members for the coming season. Students will concentrate their efforts on designing, programming and building robots. Students will also get involved in raising funds and community outreach leading into the competitive season. If a student does not plan to join the competitive team in the fall, they are encouraged to choose another G-block elective. A Next-Gen student may be given preference during team selection in the fall.

PILATES & PHYSIOLOGY

Course Length: 1 semester (Fall or Spring)

Credits: 0.34

Eligible Grade Levels: 6-8

Career Pathways:



In this interactive course, students will explore the exciting world of Pilates and how it connects to the human body's physiology. Designed for middle school students, this class will introduce the fundamentals of Pilates, focusing on building strength, flexibility, and balance through fun and dynamic exercises. Students will learn about the major muscle groups, how they work together, and the importance of maintaining a healthy body. Through hands-on practice, they will experience how Pilates can improve posture, reduce stress, and enhance overall fitness. Each class period we will start with a physiology lesson and then move into a pilates session.

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PODCAST YOUR PASSION

Course Length: 1 semester (Spring)

Credits: 0.34

Eligible Grade Levels: 6-8

Career Pathways:



Do you have a passion you want to learn more about during a semester long class? Do you have a desire to share your knowledge with others through the use of technology? Then join this class where you will be able to propose a passion to study, research the topic, and then make a series of podcasts to share what you have learned.

SCIENCE OF MICHIGAN

Course Length: 1 semester (Fall)

Credits: 0.34

Eligible Grade Levels: 6-8

Career Pathways:



This course explores Michigan's unique natural systems through the lens of ecology, earth science, and environmental science. Students will investigate Michigan's ecosystems, wildlife, landforms, weather, and natural resources while examining how humans interact with and impact the environment.

SONG WRITING & COMPOSITION

Course Length: 1 semester (Spring)

Credits: 0.34

Eligible Grade Levels: 6-8

Career Pathways:



This elective Songwriting and Composition course is designed to introduce students to the basic skills for songwriting and composition. Students will learn the basics of music theory in order to arrange already existing music and compose their own new works. Students will complete projects using different musical notation software that allow them to demonstrate their own musical creativity, including: writing lyrics, composing melodies, creating interesting harmonies, and composing for instrumental ensembles. In this course, students explore the elements of music and foundational principles of music theory through composition and songwriting. They will use music notation technology to write music for a variety of instruments and collaborate with classmates as they listen to peers' creations. Throughout the course, students will

develop and refine several original musical works as they understand more about how memorable music is imagined, created, and presented.

STRESS LESS = SUCCESS!

Course Length: 1 semester (Fall)

Credits: 0.34

Eligible Grade Levels: 6-8

Career Pathways:



In this engaging and interactive class, students will explore key concepts related to social-emotional well-being and improving executive functioning skills, equipping them with the tools to better understand themselves and others. The course will focus on developing self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, communication, organization, and conflict resolution. Through a combination of discussions, activities, and role-playing exercises, students will learn how to manage their emotions, build positive relationships, and cultivate resilience in the face of challenges. By the end of the class, students will feel more confident in their ability to navigate social situations, cope with stress, manage their work loads, and foster a supportive and inclusive community within their school environment. This class is designed to help students strengthen their emotional intelligence and become well-rounded individuals who thrive both academically and personally.

SUCCESS IN SCHOOL

Course Length: 1 semester (Fall)

Credits: 0.34

Eligible Grade Levels: 6th Grade only

Career Pathways:



Moving from 5th grade to 6th grade is a big change for students. The purpose of this course is to help students make this transition and become successful middle school students. Students will work on many activities ranging from learning to effectively use a planner and Infinite Campus to library and computer skills necessary for success in middle school and beyond. By participating in the class students will gain test-taking strategies, note-taking skills as well as organizational skills.

Some activities included in this course will include:

Goal Setting

Time Management

Finding a good place to study/do homework

How to use the planner

How to study for a quiz/test

How to read for meaning/take notes

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How to effectively study with other students
Following directions
Talking with teachers
Keeping an organized notebook/binder

¡VAMOS! A JOURNEY THROUGH HISPANIC CULTURE

Course Length: 1 semester (Fall or Spring)
Credits: 0.34
Eligible Grade Levels: 6-8
Career Pathways:



In this course students will explore the diverse world of Hispanic culture and traditions through music, crafts, geography, food, games, art, and more! Throughout the class we will cover the regions of Central and South America, the Caribbean, and the countries of Spain and Mexico. Students will expand their knowledge of and experience the richness of Hispanic culture around the world. This course will be taught mostly in English with the integration of Spanish as we explore different customs of the Spanish speaking world.

WOMEN IN GREEK MYTHOLOGY

Course Length: 1 semester (Spring)
Credits: 0.34
Eligible Grade Levels: 6-12
Career Pathways:



During this Semester 2 course students will explore the role of women in Greek mythology through the use of books, podcasts, movies, and shows. Students will study origin stories, motivations, and powers of the women found in these myths to better understand continued references of these women in modern life. Students will have opportunities to get creative in their interpretations of their stories through art/craft/media projects.

WRITTEN & ILLUSTRATED BY

Course Length: 1 semester (Spring)
Credits: 0.34
Eligible Grade Levels: 6-8
Career Pathways:



"Great stories happen to those who can tell them" -- Ira Glas. In Written and Illustrated by..., students will bring their stories, their imaginations, and their creativity to share and to publish. During the class

time, students will explore various styles of writing in literature, novels, children's books, short stories, and more. After students grasp the understanding of the world of stories, they will begin to experiment with their own style of writing and end with a final published work of their own. Students will also begin to explore visual literacy - to understand what they see. In addition to writing, different techniques of illustrating will be introduced and developed. At the end of the semester, the students will have a portfolio of work to be shared and a self-published book.

YOUTH IN GOVERNMENT

Course Length: 1 semester (Fall)
Credits: 0.34
Eligible Grade Levels: 6-8
Career Pathways:



If you've ever argued about a rule, had an opinion about how things should run, or wanted your voice to actually matter, Youth in Government is your class. This isn't worksheets and lectures — it's hands-on, real-world government where you become the leaders. You'll write bills, debate issues that actually affect people, have mock trials, and make decisions just like real lawmakers, lawyers, and officials. You'll build confidence speaking in front of others, learn how to think on your feet, and understand how power, compromise, and leadership really work (not just how it looks on the news). Plus, you'll work as a team, could possibly compete, travel for conferences, and be part of something bigger than a normal class. If you like discussion, leadership, law, politics, or just being involved, this is the class for you!

ZOOLOGY

Course Length: 1 semester (Spring)
Credits: 0.34
Eligible Grade Levels: 6-8
Career Pathways:



Zoology is a course focused on the study of animals and their adaptations, behaviors, and ecosystems. Students will use scientific thinking to investigate how animals survive, interact, and evolve in a changing world.

BLACK RIVER PUBLIC SCHOOL PROGRAM OF STUDY

HIGH SCHOOL G-PERIOD COURSES

2026 ELECTIONS & NEWS

Course Length: 1 semester (Fall)

Credits: 0.34

Eligible Grade Levels: 9-12

Career Pathways:



Are you interested in politics? We will look at the 2026 Midterm Elections including the congressional elections where the two major parties vie for control of the the US House of Representatives and the US Senate, as well as other elections like the Michigan Gubernatorial race. Additionally, we will look at different viewpoints of major issues, political positions of various candidates and political parties, look at political polling, as well as have class discussions. After the election, we will spend the rest of the semester keeping up with political news and discussing the performance of politicians. Take this class and stay informed about politics!

ADVANCED PLACEMENT PREPARATION

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 0.67

Eligible Grade Levels: 11-12

Pre-requisites: Concurrently enrolled in 3 or more AP classes or equivalent college courses

Career Pathways:



Students who are enrolled in a combination of three or more AP or college courses are eligible for this class. The purpose of this class is to prepare students to be ready for the AP exams associated with their AP class load. Assignments related to their classes will be assigned weekly with the intent of serving as a review of learned material from their advanced classes as well as practice for the spring exam. These assignments will take up a portion of the class period and with the remainder of the time in class, students are expected to be working quietly, either individually or in small study groups, on AP class assignments and test preparation.

ADVANCED THEATRE ARTS

Course Length: 1 semester (Spring)

Credits: 0.34

Eligible Grade Levels: 7-12

Prerequisite: Prior Drama, Intro to Theatre, and permission from instructor

Career Pathways:



Advanced Theatre Arts is designed for students who want to delve deeper into the craft of acting and/or technical theatre. Students may elect to take this course multiple times throughout their years at Black River, and each subsequent time, they will build upon their prior experiences through advanced acting techniques, scene work, stage craft, voice work, directing, theatre history and theatre design elements. Each student enrolled in this class will have some ability to customize the curriculum to meet their individual theatre goals.

BACKYARD PHYSICS

Course Length: 1 semester (Fall)

Credits: 0.34

Eligible Grade Levels: 9-12

Career Pathways:



Physics is everywhere! From the time you start throwing your spoon from your high chair to the first time you get behind the wheel of a car you are actively engaging in a world governed by the rules of physics. You will take an active approach in discovering the physics that surrounds us. This course is designed to present physics concepts with a hands-on approach utilizing labs and projects that peak your curiosity and challenge *you* to discovery. We will study physics concepts found in kinematics, electro-magnetics, thermodynamics, and more through various projects including rocketry, collisions, circuitry, and controlled explosions. This course is an elective that can be chosen for all high school levels. Although it focuses on physics concepts, it will not be offered as a science credit.

BASKETBALL CONDITIONING

Course Length: 1 semester (Fall)

Credits: 0.34

Eligible Grade Levels: 9-12

Career Pathways:



This course is designed to develop students' basketball skills through a combination of individual drills, team activities, and competitive games. Students will learn the fundamentals of basketball, including dribbling, passing, shooting, and basketball IQ, while also improving their fitness and conditioning. Emphasis will be placed on improving individual skills.

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CREATIVE WRITING

Course Length: 1 semester (Fall)

Credits: 0.34

Eligible Grade Levels: 9-12

Career Pathways:



Creative Writing is a one-semester course in the fall. Throughout the semester, you will have the opportunity to immerse yourself in both poetry and prose and find your literary voice as you tackle genre writing assignments that include short stories, memoirs, tiny stories, prose poems, apprenticeship poems, negative space poems, Sestinas, and more. We will read published stories and poems in each genre, and we will use the witty and poignant advice of veteran writers like novelist Anne Lamott (*Bird by Bird: Some Instructions on Writing and Life*) and poet Ted Kooser (*The Poetry Home Repair Manual*) to guide our writing. As a class, we will hold small group workshops and readings, and you will ultimately craft an individual chapbook of written work that you have created throughout the semester or year. As poet Shel Silverstein beckons, "If you are a dreamer...come in, come in!"

CURRENT EVENTS

Course Length: 1 semester (Spring)

Credits: 0.34

Eligible Grade Levels: 9-12

Career Pathways:



Want to keep up with current events including politics, world affairs, and other major issues of the day? Take this class to stay well-informed about the world around you. We'll look at current events from Michigan, to the US, to the world. We'll look at how different news sources cover events differently at times and create our own news coverage as well.

ELECTIVE MATH CREDIT (EMC)

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 1.0 Mathematics (if taken in 12th grade)

Eligible Grade Levels: 12

Prerequisite: Students will need to have successfully completed math 11 as well as being currently enrolled in at least 1 fine art elective, music elective, or PE elective

Students will engage in mathematical projects throughout the year that correspond to a fine arts class, music class, or PE class as a chosen elective. The completion of the projects in the EMC course will earn students an additional math credit on their transcript, while engaging in rewarding art, music, or

PE elective. Projects will incorporate math standards but will relate directly to the work being completed in their elective course class. This class is meant to be taken asynchronously, meaning that students will not have a meeting time in their A-F classes. This course will be completed on a student's own personal time, as part of a prep block, a scheduled G block, or in mandatory Flex meets, but will still earn a full math credit. Students will have an assigned advisor who will meet with them to plan projects, receive feedback, and to evaluate progress. The class will be assigned an A-F grading scale. Students will be expected to complete work outside of their elective class to engage in the projects.

ELEMENT CROCHET CHEMISTRY

Course Length: 1 semester (Spring)

Credits: 0.34

Eligible Grade Levels: 9-12

Career Pathways:



Crochet is a relaxing and useful hobby for many, but did you know that there are many areas of crochet that involve chemistry? If you have ever wanted to learn to crochet or have already mastered this rewarding technique, then this one-semester G-block class will teach you the basics or help take your existing skills to the next level. In addition, we will learn about the different types of crochet hooks and the materials they are made of. This class will also focus on crocheting the periodic table and learning about different elements and their main purpose. Students will incorporate scientific experimental design techniques into their work learn how to present their findings in the form of a scientific poster. This class is not a science credit.

ENGLISH ADVANTAGE

Course Length: 1 semester (Fall or Spring)

Credits: 0.34

Eligible Grade Levels: 9-12

Prerequisite: Referral from Current English Teacher

Career Pathways:



English Advantage is a course designed to strengthen students' reading and writing skills, enabling them to be successful in their English classes. Students will learn methods to improve reading comprehension and critical thinking skills, as well as strategies to advance their writing. Students will have extra work time and help to complete the reading and writing assignments from their English classes, as well as support for reading and writing across the curriculum. Students must obtain the

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recommendation of their current English teacher in order to enroll in the course.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE (EL) SUPPORT

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 0.34/semester

Eligible Grade Levels: 6-12

Prerequisite: Must be designated English Language Learner

Career Pathways:



The EL support class is an English Language Development (ELD) course for students who qualify as English Language Learners. The class is designed to help EL students attain English language proficiency in listening, reading, speaking and writing. A strong focus on academic and content vocabulary is prevalent. Students will also receive support with core class content, organization, and study skills, as needed. Proficiency goals will be set for each student based on individual WIDA ACCESS data. ELD instruction will occur through direct language lessons, both one on one and in small groups. Participating students will also be enrolled in the Lexia PowerUp program, which focuses on developing English language skills by identifying students' skill gaps and providing individualized instruction in the areas of word study, grammar, and reading comprehension. The PowerUp program blends online student-driven instruction with one-to-one teacher-delivered lessons and activities. Students who participate in the PowerUp lessons will become better prepared to engage with the complex texts and materials encountered in their general education courses. In addition to direct language instruction, during the EL support class the students will have supported work time on assignments from their general education courses. They will receive instruction on how to organize their materials and schedules, prioritize tasks during work time, and prepare for assessments, as needed.

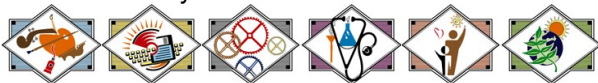
EVERYDAY ETHICS

Course Length: 1 semester (Spring)

Credits: 0.34

Eligible Grade Levels: 9-12

Career Pathways:



What would you do if your friend cheated on a test and asked you to keep it secret? Should you always tell the truth—even if it hurts someone? Every day—on social media, in friendships, at school, at work—students make choices that have ethical dimensions.

Everyday Ethics introduces students to the major philosophical frameworks of ethics while grounding every idea in real, relatable situations. Through debates, simulations, case studies, and project-based learning, students explore how people define right and wrong, what makes actions fair or unfair, and how our values guide our decisions.

FIBER ARTS STUDIO

Course Length: 1 semester (Fall or Spring)

Credits: 0.34 Fine Art

Eligible Grade Levels: 9-12

Career Pathways:



This course is an exploration of materials that goes beyond ceramics, paper, and painting. Students will explore a variety of fiber art materials. Students will learn basic skills about hand sewing, machine sewing, as well as dive into beginner level skills with other fiber art related materials like basketry, weaving, leatherwork, and cold connect jewelry fabrication. Join the course for a semester or for the year as we explore a variety of art forms while also digging into the origins or historical aspects of the materials we will be using. Students will learn the importance of these skills and how each medium has been used for practical, political, revolutionary, and artistic reasons.

FORENSIC SCIENCE

Course Length: 1 semester (Spring)

Credits: 0.34

Eligible Grade Levels: 9 – 12

Career Pathways:



Forensic Science is the science of crime scene investigation. Evidence is collected at a crime scene in order to prove or disprove that a person is the perpetrator of a crime. This course incorporates aspects of biology, chemistry, physics, environmental science, and computer science to give students a glimpse into the world of criminalistics. Lab activities will allow students to utilize real crime scene investigation techniques. In addition, students will explore some famous case studies and survey careers in forensic science. Topics include: History of forensic science, blood typing and genetics, visible and latent fingerprinting, handwriting analysis and forgery detection, chromatography analysis of chemicals left at a crime scene, toxicology, ballistics, crime scene evidence impressions, scale drawings and virtual crime scene recreation.

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FROM THE GROUND UP

Course Length: 1 semester (Spring)
Credits: 0.34
Eligible Grade Levels: 9-12
Career Pathways:



Experience the freedom and exhilaration of bouldering and wall climbing at the only climbing gym on the lakeshore! Each G-block class we will travel to Scrapyard Climbing Collective where you can practice and grow your climbing skills. While improving your climbing skills you will also improve your math skills. Your hardwork will help train your brain mathematically and your body physically. Space is limited to 15 students.

FRONTYARD PHYSICS

Course Length: 1 semester (Spring)
Credits: 0.34
Eligible Grade Levels: 9-12
Career Pathways:



Frontyard physics offers you some of the same features you loved about Backyard physics only with all new sets of challenging and creative projects. This course is designed to present physics concepts with a hands-on approach utilizing labs and projects that peak your curiosity and challenge you to discovery. You will take an active approach in discovering the physics that surrounds us. We will study physics concepts found in kinematics, electromagnetism, thermodynamics, and more through various building projects and competitions. You can take Frontyard, or Backyard physics in either order with no prerequisites. Each class features its own set of challenging projects that will have you investigating the more active side of science. This course is an elective that can be chosen for all high school levels. Although it focuses on physics concepts, it will not be offered as a science credit.

FUTURE HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

Course Length: 1 semester (Fall)
Credits: 0.34
Eligible Grade Levels: 9 – 12
Career Pathways:



For students interested in future careers in healthcare or biomedical science. We'll be taking a deep dive into concepts such as infectious diseases, biotechnology, public health, and more! Students will

be introduced to a wide array of medical professions and explore a variety of career paths. This G-block class is perfect for students who are eager to explore the field and want to get a headstart on their future academic journey in healthcare. In addition to learning core medical concepts, students will have the opportunity to compete with Health Occupations Students of America. HOSA is a national organization that empowers students to develop leadership, teamwork, and technical skills in healthcare-related fields. Students will participate in activities that prepare them for HOSA competitive events, including medical terminology, medical math, and understanding patient care techniques.

HISTORY AS TOLD BY HOLLYWOOD

Course Length: 1 semesters (Spring)
Credits: 0.34
Eligible Grade Levels: 9-12
Career Pathways:



This is an exciting course that explores the representation of historical events and figures in film and television. Students will examine how Hollywood portrays historical events and figures, and how these portrayals shape our understanding of the past. The course will cover a range of genres and time periods, including war films, biopics, and period dramas. Through critical analysis and discussion, students will gain a deeper understanding of the power of film to shape public perceptions and historical memory. This course is suitable for history, film, and media studies students, as well as anyone interested in the intersection of history and popular culture. This class will be watching R-rated movies that will include blood and historical violence. All movies are screened by the teacher and a list of movies watched will be provided at the beginning of the class for guardians to review.

HISTORY OF FOOD

Course Length: 1 semester (Spring)
Credits: 0.34
Eligible Grade Levels: 9-12
Career Pathways:



The History of Food course invites students to explore the rich and diverse story of how food has shaped human civilization. From ancient agricultural practices to the globalization of cuisine, students will examine how food production, trade, and consumption have evolved over millennia. The course will delve into the origins of key foods and food systems, the role of food in different cultures

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and religions, and the impact of innovations such as the domestication of plants and animals, the spice trade, and the development of cooking technologies. By studying the interconnectedness of food, economy, and society, students will gain insight into how food has influenced everything from migration patterns to social structures.

As students progress, they will explore significant milestones in the history of food, including the rise of culinary traditions in Europe, Asia, and the Americas, and the impact of industrialization and modern food production techniques. Topics will include the evolution of cooking methods, the impact of food on health and nutrition, and the environmental and ethical challenges posed by contemporary food systems. Through a combination of historical analysis, hands-on projects, and culinary exploration, students will better understand the ways in which food is not just a source of sustenance, but a central element of human history, culture, and identity.

HISTORY OF SPORTS

Course Length: 1 semester (Fall)

Credits: 0.34

Eligible Grade Levels: 9-12

Career Pathways:



The History of Sports course offers students an exploration of the origins, evolution, and cultural significance of sports throughout history. Beginning with ancient civilizations, students will examine how early games and athletic competitions influenced society, politics, and religion. The course will explore the development of sports in various regions, from the ancient Olympics in Greece to the first team-based games in medieval Europe. It will also focus on the impact of sports on social structures, including class, race, and gender, and how these factors have shaped the way sports are played and viewed today.

Throughout the course, students will analyze key moments in sports history, from the rise of professional leagues to major international events like the World Cup and the Olympic Games. By studying the role of sports in shaping national identity, international relations, and popular culture, students will gain a deeper understanding of how sports reflect and influence broader societal trends. The course will engage students in discussions, research projects, and multimedia presentations, allowing them to critically examine the ongoing transformation of sports in the modern world and their place within it.

INDEPENDENT READING: READ WHAT MOVES YOU

Course Length: 1 semester (Fall)

Credits: 0.34

Eligible Grade Levels: 9-12

Career Pathways:



In this course, students choose the books that speak to them—from fantasy to memoir, graphic novels to historical fiction, YA lit to classic literature. While everyone reads different texts, the class builds a shared community of readers through book talks, creative projects, discussions, and reading challenges. Students will explore their personal reading identities, develop lifelong reading habits, and practice essential skills in literary analysis, critical thinking, and communication. Whether you're reading to escape, to learn, or to feel understood, this course gives you the freedom to read what you love—and the tools to think deeply about it.

INTRODUCTION TO THEATRE ARTS

Course Length: 1 semester (Fall)

Credits: 0.34

Eligible Grade Levels: 7 -12

Career Pathways:



Students enrolled in Intro to Theatre Arts will gain a greater understanding of theatre technique through acting exercises, stagecraft, improvisation activities, and performances.

All students will perform monologues, duo scenes and short scenes from a variety of plays. We will also spend some time learning about the off-stage aspects of theatre, such as costume design, set design, makeup techniques and prop creation. Students may only take this class one time.

JAZZ ORCHESTRA

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 0.67

Eligible Grade Levels: 8-12

Prerequisite: Permission from Instructor

Career Pathways:



The Black River Jazz Orchestra is a competitive, advanced jazz ensemble. A collaborative effort from all participants that prepares music for performances both on and off campus is our goal. We will study

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classic ensembles from BeBop through Miles Davis through current Jazz Fusion groups. All instruments are welcome.

Typically, the Jazz Orchestra performs at the CMU, WMU, MSBOA, and Thornapple Arts Council Jazz Festivals and participation is expected of all Jazz Orchestra students. Additionally, they are invited to perform in the Tulip Time Parade in May each year. Jazz Orchestra students will be given the opportunity to create self-led jazz combos that are periodically coached by the instructor.

MATH & SCIENCE ADVANTAGE

Course Length: 1 semester (Fall or Spring)

Credits: 0.34

Eligible Grade Levels: 9-12

Prerequisite: Recommendation from current math or science teacher

Career Pathways:



Math and Science Advantage is designed for students who have been identified by their previous math and/or science teacher as having difficulties. Math and Science Advantage is intended to give students additional support to foster their success in high school mathematics and science curricula. Students will engage in lessons that reinforce classroom learning, and give them extra time to work on class-assigned math and science homework. They will also be expected to complete additional problems and activities that supplement classroom learning. In order to enroll in this class, students must receive a recommendation from their current math or science teacher. Each student will be expected to bring their math and science classwork to each session, attempt the assigned practice and write a study plan. Completing homework for other subjects outside of math and science, is beyond the scope of this class. Students must earn 75% or higher to pass this class and grading will be based on engagement, participation and practice.

MUSICAL THEATRE STUDIO: PERFORMANCE & PRODUCTION

Course Length: 1 semester (Fall)

Credits: 0.34

Eligible Grade Levels: 9-12

Career Pathways:



This performance-based elective course provides students with focused training in musical theatre performance and small-scale production. Students will select songs, scenes, and short musicals that

align with their interests and abilities while receiving individualized vocal coaching and instruction in characterization, staging, and performance technique.

In addition to solo and duet work, students may collaborate in small ensembles (4 or fewer performers) to stage and produce short-form musicals or musical excerpts not typically feasible within the larger theatre department season. Emphasis will be placed on vocal technique, acting through song, musical interpretation, staging, rehearsal process, and performance professionalism.

The course culminates in informal studio performances or showcases of selected works.

NATURE PRESERVED FOR THE FUTURE

Course Length: 1 semester (Spring)

Credits: 0.34

Eligible Grade Levels: 9-12

Career Pathways:



Come along and learn about the Great Outdoors!! National, State and International Parks preserve the history, geography, geology, and the fauna and flora for us today and for our future generations. We will engage our learning through videos and documentaries about our park systems. We will take virtual trips to far away places and discover hidden secrets. You will have the opportunity to become an expert about the history, geography, wildlife, or plantlife of our park systems. We will also visit local parks here in Holland. Bring your best walking shoes! We will explore our topics with multiple methods of instruction: movies, documentaries, books, art, speeches, skits, interviews, movie-making, and debates. This class will follow the Project Based Learning methodology.

SOCCER CONDITIONING

Course Length: 1 semester (Fall or Spring)

Credits: 0.34

Eligible Grade Levels: 9-12

Career Pathways:



This course is designed to introduce and refine the skills necessary to play soccer at various levels. Students will focus on individual skills such as dribbling, passing, shooting, and ball control, as well as team strategies, positioning, and defensive techniques. Fitness and agility will be emphasized through drills and conditioning exercises, with a strong focus on teamwork, sportsmanship, and

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communication on the field. Students will have opportunities to participate in scrimmages, practice game strategies, and develop a deeper understanding of soccer's rules. Whether you're new to the sport or looking to enhance your abilities, this class is structured to help students grow as a player individually.

SONG WRITING & COMPOSITION

Course Length: 1 semester (Fall)

Credits: 0.34

Eligible Grade Levels: 9-12

Career Pathways:



This elective Songwriting and Composition course is designed to introduce students to the basic skills for songwriting and composition. Students will learn the basics of music theory in order to arrange already existing music and compose their own new works. Students will complete projects using different musical notation software that allow them to demonstrate their own musical creativity, including: writing lyrics, composing melodies, creating interesting harmonies, and composing for instrumental ensembles. In this course, students explore the elements of music and foundational principles of music theory through composition and songwriting. They will use music notation technology to write music for a variety of instruments and collaborate with classmates as they listen to peers' creations. Throughout the course, students will develop and refine several original musical works as they understand more about how memorable music is imagined, created, and presented.

WEIGHT TRAINING

Course Length: 1 semester (Fall or Spring)

Credits: 0.34 (Physical Education)

Eligible Grade Levels: 9-12

Career Pathways:



The purpose of this class is to introduce students to a weight room and initiate a weight-training program. Students will study the muscle system and learn ways to strengthen the muscles. Since each student in the class is a guest at an off-site facility and an ambassador of Black River Public School, exemplary behavior is expected.

WOMEN IN GREEK MYTHOLOGY

Course Length: 1 semester (Spring)

Credits: 0.34

Eligible Grade Levels: 6-12

Career Pathways:



During this Semester 2 course students will explore the role of women in Greek mythology through the use of books, podcasts, movies, and shows. Students will study origin stories, motivations, and powers of the women found in these myths to better understand continued references of these women in modern life. Students will have opportunities to get creative in their interpretations of their stories through art/craft/media projects.

YARN CROCHET CHEMISTRY

Course Length: 1 semester (Fall)

Credits: 0.34

Eligible Grade Levels: 9-12

Career Pathways:



Crochet is a relaxing and useful hobby for many, but did you know that there are many areas of crochet that involve chemistry? If you have ever wanted to learn to crochet or have already mastered this rewarding technique, then this one-semester G-block class will teach you the basics or help take your existing skills to the next level. In addition, we will learn about the chemistry of acrylic yarn and man-made fibers, including yarn-dyeing chemistry and the synthesis of natural fibers. As a class, we will apply the scientific method to formulate a research question, design and perform experiments to collect evidence, and learn more about the science of crochet and yarn and how it relates to a scientific setting. Students will also learn how to produce scientific posters, which are often presented at science conferences as an alternative to an oral presentation. This class is not a science credit.

YEARBOOK

Course Length: 2 semesters

Credits: 0.67 Elective

Eligible Grade Levels: 9-12

Prerequisite: Permission of Yearbook Advisor

Career Pathways:



This class focuses on building a product for students that is designed by students; the yearbook is

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published and sold at the end of the school year. One of the three major areas of focus includes the graphic design aspect of creating a school yearbook or publication—students learn how the elements and principles of design work to create aesthetically pleasing, professional spread design. Students learn how to create spread layouts on an online yearbook editing site, create unique advertisements, and understand how to sell a product in a diverse market. The second aspect of this production is developing an understanding of photography and working to create a dynamic publication, while learning how to manipulate images and digital art. The last aspect of the course is learning to creatively present topics with dynamic headlines and themes for the current yearbook.

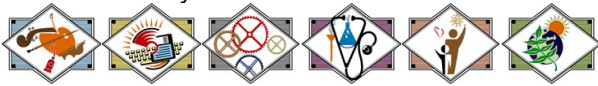
YOUTH IN GOVERNMENT

Course Length: 1 semester (Fall)

Credits: 0.34

Eligible Grade Levels: 9-12

Career Pathways:



If you've ever argued about a rule, had an opinion about how things should run, or wanted your voice to actually matter, Youth in Government is your class. This isn't worksheets and lectures — it's hands-on, real-world government where you become the leaders. You'll write bills, debate issues that actually affect people, have mock trials, and make decisions just like real lawmakers, lawyers, and officials. You'll build confidence speaking in front of others, learn how to think on your feet, and understand how power, compromise, and leadership really work (not just how it looks on the news). Plus, you'll work as a team, could possibly compete, travel for conferences, and be part of something bigger than a normal class. If you like discussion, leadership, law, politics, or just being involved, this is the class for you!

Note: Due to enrollment or changes in staff, some courses may not be offered; elective or G-period courses may be added later.