

# Bak Middle School of the Arts Course Descriptions For 2026/2027

## 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade Art Major Class and Elective Selections



### Communications

#### Media Courses

***Bak MSOA Today/TV Production II*** – 8<sup>th</sup> grade, year

**An application process must be followed to be admitted to this course.**

This class produces the daily live video news show for the school. Focus is placed on the production of a news program and the technical execution of the live show. Students will demonstrate professional techniques of TV studio work through rotating assignments on the studio crew including producer, anchor, and scriptwriter, feature and news reporters, director, camera operator, switcher, graphics, teleprompter, audio, and floor director. Students must have a strong sense of self-direction and be able to work well under strict deadlines and in a team environment. Prerequisite: TV Production I and Electronic News Gathering

***TV MAGAZINE*** – 8<sup>th</sup> grade, year

**An application process must be followed to be admitted to this course.**

In this course, students produce a monthly TV magazine show called MSOA REPLAY with feature-style segments, in-depth pieces, and creative video production. In addition, students produce a variety of segments for Bak MSOA Today including "look live" feature reports, news and sports reports, commercial and PSA breaks, as well as show opens. Students learn to develop their storytelling skills, concentrate on in-depth reporting and interviewing techniques, and expand audio/visual approaches for longer-format pieces.

***Advanced Video Production*** – 8<sup>th</sup> grade, semester

*Communications Majors who take Marketing Communications will also take Advanced Video Production. Advanced Editing will be a separate course offered to 8<sup>th</sup> graders.* Students will develop more advanced techniques in script writing, storyboarding, studio production, videography, and editing. Students will develop their ability to present information and stories through a growing appreciation of cinematography. In addition, students will work with advanced production equipment and increase their knowledge with editing software. Students will be given challenging real-world projects and assignments typical of the video field. They will also work on preparing the Communications Showcase.

***Marketing Communications*** - 8<sup>th</sup> grade, semester

This class provides an overview of the marketing mix with emphasis on the promotion component. Students learn to think strategically and to understand the basic tools and processes used to reach and communicate with various target markets. A functional approach is used to allow students to apply writing, graphic design, and video production skills for a wide range of communication products and events. They will also work on preparing the Communications Showcase. *Students who take this course will also take a semester of Advanced Video Production.*

***Advanced Graphic Design*** – 8<sup>th</sup> grade, year

This course is open to Communications, Visual Arts majors and other majors that have had prior experience in Computer Graphics at Bak. It will offer students experience in creating graphics for use in publication and digital formats. Students will learn how to use Adobe Illustrator (primarily) and Adobe Photoshop. Illustrator is used for both fine art and graphic applications like book covers, infographics, icons, app logo designs, cartoons, etc. (Other programs will be introduced.)

**Photoshop** – 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade, semester

This course provides a thorough overview of the interface, the tools, the features, tricks, and tips for using Photoshop. The course is an ideal combination of instructor-led demonstration and hands-on practice. The class will focus on "real-world" applications such as magazine cover designs, print ads, logos, menu designs, animation, and enhancing and manipulating images.

**Electronic News Gathering** – 7<sup>th</sup> grade, semester

This television journalism course will focus on writing, reporting, shooting and editing news, feature and sport stories for the daily video announcements show. Using broadcast industry standards, and Associated Press writing styles, students will learn how to build reporter stories for the Bak MSOA Today Show. Students will learn standard news techniques and develop an awareness of journalistic style and specific techniques in writing for the spoken word. Students will provide a real service to the school since their work will be broadcast on the campus television newscast. People will be counting on you to provide the news! **Communication majors are required to take ENG in grade 7.**

**TV Production** – 7<sup>th</sup> grade, semester

Students will learn basic theory, techniques, and procedures of television production and receive practical working knowledge of the school's studio and control room equipment including camera, switcher, character generator, prompter, audio console and lighting. Following study of studio procedures, students plan, write, produce and direct TV studio productions. **This course is required if you plan to apply for Bak MSOA Today in grade 8.**

**Video Production** – 7<sup>th</sup> grade, semester

This course takes basic techniques learned in Introduction of Video Production and expands on the phases of production to create video projects. Technical focus will be on advanced camera techniques and digital editing. Content includes producing, scripting, storyboarding, scheduling, directing, and editing video shorts. The course expands fundamental technical and production competencies in a number of complimentary areas while encouraging students to develop and explore their individual creative interest. Students are the sole producers of video products and should possess a strong sense of self-direction.

**Advanced Graphic Design (TOSA Certification)** – 8<sup>th</sup> grade, year

Upgrade your skills to a professional standard! This rigorous, fast-paced course is designed for technically savvy students ready to master the industry standards of graphic design: **Adobe Photoshop and Illustrator**. Prepare for, complete, and pass the two **TOSA adaptive exams** and earn an official TOSA Certification in Adobe Graphic Design. Using the **Isograd Learning Platform**, students will move beyond basic tools to explore advanced software functionality, sophisticated design workflows, and professional-grade techniques. This isn't just a design class. It's a pathway to official industry credentials. **Note: Enrollment in this course requires a high level of dedication to technical mastery as well as Mr. Wilson's signature on the course selection sheet.**

**Speech Classes**

***Communication majors are required to take Speech and Debate in 7th grade.***

***Speech and Debate*** 7th grade, semester

This is an introductory course in competitive speech and debate, which will include, but is not limited to Humorous, Dramatic, & Oral Interpretation, Student Congress, Public-Forum Debate, Original Oratory, and Impromptu Speaking. Students will learn rules governing forensic (speech and debate) competition.

***Advanced Speech and Debate*** – 8th grade, year

Students will be taught to prepare for competitive events in speech, interpretation and debate which will include but is not limited to Humorous, Dramatic, & Program of Oral Interpretation, Original Oratory, and Student Congress. Students will learn rules governing forensics (speech and debate) competition. As members of the school's Speech & Debate Club, this class will involve attending club meetings and requires participation in at least one afterschool competition every 9 weeks.

***Advanced Speech and Debate is open to students in all majors. Stop by room 4-150 to get Mr. Seeger's signature on your course selection sheet.***

***Speech and Debate Team officers are required to take Advanced Speech and Debate.***

***Students who are interested in joining the Speech and Debate Team are required to sign up for a Speech and Debate elective class.***

## **Writing Courses**

***Creative Writing 1 and 2***, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade, semester

This is a semester-long class that provides students an outlet for self-expression through imaginative writing in poetry and fiction. Students will learn the importance of daily writing and revision to help develop their unique style and voice. Students will explore various genres, participate in writing workshops, and even self-publish their work. They will also learn to meet deadlines – like the literary professionals do – and engage in class critiques and peer feedback.

*Note: Seventh graders who did not take Creative Writing in 6<sup>th</sup> grade should choose Creative Writing I.*

***The Portfolio News – Multimedia Journalism*** – 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade, year

An application process must be followed if you are interested in being on the newspaper staff.

This course builds on the fundamentals of journalistic writing, layout and design, copy editing and photography to produce *The Portfolio*, a print and online newspaper that serves the students and faculty at Bak Middle School of the Arts. Staffers will have the chance to pitch and produce their own content from start to finish. On this student-run publication, staff members will learn to work together in a fast-paced, newsroom environment. *Students will be expected to participate in afterschool club "Newsroom" one day per week.*

***Masterpiece Yearbook – Journalism & Design*** – 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade, year

An application process must be followed if you are interested in being on the yearbook staff.

In this course, students work toward the yearlong goal of producing a quality yearbook that captures the school year at Bak Middle School of the Arts. Students will develop their journalistic interests while honing their fundamentals in writing, design, editing and photography. They will also use professional software tools to develop the yearbook while working in a collaborative, team-based environment. *Students will be expected to participate in afterschool club "Newsroom" one day per week.*

## **Dance**

### ***Ballet and Modern***

This is a mandatory course for all Dance majors. Two periods of dance are required for all 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade dance majors. They will include Ballet, Modern and Jazz technique classes with exposure to anatomy, dance history, and movement analysis. Students will be placed in levels according to experience and ability. 1 year.

***Dance Repertory***- year long elective, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade

Prerequisite: Intermediate and advanced levels, dance majors only by audition. This elective will be another dance class. Repertory 1 meets one period (usually Period 8) and Repertory 2 meets two periods (Periods 7 and 8). Students will work on Ballet, Modern and Jazz repertory, and learn about choreographing. They may also be invited to perform in the community, but, the emphasis is on learning how to approach new styles and how to work in a rehearsal setting. Students should be available for performances. 1 year.

***Tap*** - semester long elective, all grades and majors

**Beginning Tap** - Offered to all majors and recommended for individuals who have never tap danced before or for a long time, this class will teach basic tap vocabulary, rhythms, style and execution. No previous experience necessary but tap shoes are required. Great class for anyone interested in musical theatre.

**Intermediate/Advanced Tap** – Offered to all majors, this class will review all basic tap steps as well as introduce advanced steps and combinations. This class is for experienced tap dancers only. Tap shoes are required.

## **Band**

### ***Intermediate Band***, (Brass, Percussion, and Woodwinds)

Prerequisite: demonstrated proficiency and/or teacher recommendation. Students will be expected to furnish a suitable instrument for class. The content includes refinement of music reading and rhythmic execution, and the development of consistent performance techniques. Intermediate Band performs on some school concerts when the band has demonstrated performance readiness. 1 year.

### ***Concert Band***

Prerequisite: demonstrated proficiency and/or teacher recommendation. Students will be expected to furnish a suitable instrument for class. The content includes further refinement of reading music notation and rhythms, development of consistent performance techniques, and scale studies/patterns. Concert Band performs at 3 school concerts yearly and Florida Band Masters Association Music Performance Assessment. 1 year.

### ***Advanced Band***

Prerequisite: demonstrated proficiency of the most advanced level and/or teacher recommendation. Instrumentation is considered in the selection of students. Students will be expected to furnish a suitable instrument for class. This band will enter the Florida Band Master Association Music Performance Assessment and other festivals. Students must maintain a 2.0 GPA to perform with the band. The content includes interpreting difficult music, developing independent musicianship, and tone production and performance techniques. *Special note: This is a performance oriented course and may require extra rehearsals and performances as announced by the teacher. Practice outside of class is expected. Private lessons are highly encouraged.* 1 year

### ***Jazz Band, Beginning and Advanced-*** year long electives, all grade levels

By audition only. Instrumentation is considered in the selection of students. Students will be expected to furnish a suitable instrument for class. Limited to 25 students for each section. This band will enter FBA and other festivals. Students must maintain a 2.0 GPA to perform with the band. *Special note: This is a performance oriented course and may require extra rehearsals and performances as announced by the teacher. Practice outside of class is expected. Private lessons are highly encouraged.* 1 year.

### ***Chamber Ensemble – Band*** – grades 7 and 8

Prerequisite: demonstrated proficiency and/or teacher recommendation. The purpose of this course is to enable students to develop basic skills on a selected instrument in an individual or small ensemble setting using varied literature. Performance techniques and the development of music knowledge are central to this course. 1 year.

## **Strings**

### ***Intermediate I Strings***

Beginning Strings Prerequisite: acceptance into the strings program at MSOA. Students will be expected to furnish a suitable instrument for class. School instruments may be rented based on director's recommendation and availability. This course provides students with instruction in the development of technical skills on orchestral stringed instruments. Content includes development of fundamental skills in reading musical notation, music theory and fundamental techniques. 1 year.

### ***Intermediate II Strings***

Prerequisite: demonstrated proficiency and/or teacher recommendation. This course provides students with instruction in the application of musicianship and technical skills through the study of varied string orchestra literature. Content includes interpreting medium level string music, ensemble performance skills, refining tone production, reading musical notation and aesthetic perceptions. Practice outside of class is expected and private lessons are encouraged. 1 year.

### ***Advanced III Strings***

Prerequisite: demonstrated proficiency and teacher recommendation. This is a performance-oriented course and may require extra rehearsals and performances as announced by the teacher. Practice outside of class is expected and private lessons are encouraged. This group will enter FOA and other festivals. Students must maintain a 2.0 GPA to perform with this ensemble. The course develops independence in musicianship and performance of advanced string orchestra literature, tone production and performance techniques. 1 year.

### ***Chamber Ensemble - Strings***

Prerequisite: demonstrated proficiency and teacher recommendation.

This course will be available to any 8<sup>th</sup> grade string major who would like to play string quartets. If selected, some of these quartets will have the opportunity to perform outside of school for community events. 1 year

### ***Music Theory - Strings***

**Required yearlong elective for all 7<sup>th</sup> grade Strings majors.**

The purpose of this course is to provide the opportunity to study theoretical music principles in depth and apply them to creative activities. The content includes, but is not limited to, music theory fundamentals and related applications. 1 year

## **Vocal Music**

### ***Intermediate Chorus***, grades 7 & 8

This is a performance-oriented course for Vocal majors and will require extra rehearsals and performances beyond the school day as announced by the director. This course provides students with experience and applications of vocal production techniques and part-singing. The content includes, but is not limited to, enabling students to individually refine skills in vocal tone production, part singing, choral performance techniques, and musical literacy and music appreciation. Students must maintain a 2.0 PGA to perform with the chorus at Music Performance Assessments (Solo, Ensemble and Choral Festivals.)1 year.

### ***Advanced Treble Chorus***, grade 7 & 8

This is a performance-oriented course for Vocal majors and will require extra rehearsals and performances beyond the school day as announced by the director. This course provides students with experience and applications of vocal production techniques and part-singing. The content includes, but is not limited to, enabling students to individually refine skills in vocal tone production, part singing, choral performance techniques, and musical literacy and music appreciation. Students must maintain a 2.0 PGA to perform with the chorus at Music Performance Assessments (Solo, Ensemble and Choral Festivals.)1 year.

### ***Tenor-Bass Chorus***, grades 7 and 8

This is a performance-oriented course for Vocal majors and will require extra rehearsals and performances beyond the school day as announced by the director. This course provides students with experience and applications of vocal production techniques and part-singing. The content includes, but is not limited to, enabling students to individually refine skills in vocal tone production, part singing, choral performance techniques, and musical literacy and music appreciation. Students must maintain a 2.0 PGA to perform with the chorus at Music Performance Assessments (Solo, Ensemble and Choral Festivals.)1 year.

### ***Music Theory***, (required yearlong elective for all 7<sup>th</sup> and some 8<sup>th</sup> grade Vocal majors)

This is a required course for *vocal majors* enrolled in Chorus II, III and Boy's Chorus. These courses provide students with experience and applications of intermediate (II) and advanced (III) levels of music theory. The content includes enabling students to individually refine aural skills, melodic and rhythmic recognition and performance, diction, composition and musical literacy. Students must maintain a 2.0 PGA to perform with the chorus at Music Performance Assessments (Solo, Ensemble and Choral Festivals.)1 year.

### ***MSOA Chorale***

This year long elective is open to 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade boys and girls. Acceptance is through an audition process for both vocal majors and non-majors. This year-long elective is open to all 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students. Both vocal majors and non-majors are invited to audition for this ensemble. Acceptance is through a basic pitch-matching audition. Repertoire will focus on pop, musical theatre, and jazz styles of music. Learning choreography may be involved. Members of the Vocal

Ensemble will have 3-4 mandatory performances. NO PRIOR MUSICAL EXPERIENCE IS NECESSARY. This is a great opportunity to improve your voice and learn how to sing with others.

This is a performance oriented course and will require extra rehearsals and performances beyond the school day. The MSOA Chorale will be the vocal music ambassador for the school. They will sing a range of mixed voicing music styles. The course will provide students with experience and application of vocal production techniques and part-singing. The content includes enabling students to individually refine skills in vocal tone production, part-singing, choral performance techniques, and musical literacy and musical appreciation. Students must maintain a 2.0 PGA to perform with the chorus at Music Performance Assessments (Solo, Ensemble and Choral Festivals.)1 year.

### ***Vocal Ensemble***

This year long elective is open to all 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students. Both vocal majors and non-majors are invited to audition for this ensemble. Acceptance is through a basic pitch-matching audition. Repertoire will focus on pop, musical theatre, and jazz styles of music. Learning choreography may be involved. Members of the Vocal Ensemble will have 3-4 mandatory performances. **If this elective is one of your choices, Mr. Valls or Ms. Briggs from the Vocal Department will contact you about auditions.**

## **Piano/Keyboard**

### ***Piano 7*** – grade 7

Prerequisite: demonstrated proficiency and/or teacher recommendation. This year long performance oriented course for piano majors provides keyboard majors with instruction in the development of musicianship and technical skills through the study of varied keyboard literature. Instruction is for students who are capable of independent interpretation of medium to difficult level keyboard music. Practice outside the class is expected.1 year. **Note: all 7<sup>th</sup> grade piano majors will be placed in an additional semester of piano as one of their electives.**

### ***Piano 8*** – grade 8

Prerequisite: demonstrated proficiency and/or teacher recommendation. This is a performance oriented course for piano majors level VIII and above in the BAK curriculum. This performance oriented course provides keyboard majors with instruction in individual keyboard performance. The content includes instruction in performing more advanced solos and the study of varied styles and historical eras. Practice outside the class is expected. 1 year.

### ***Piano techniques for Keyboard Majors***, yearlong, grades 7/8

Prerequisite: demonstrated proficiency and/or teacher recommendation. This is a performance oriented course for piano majors level VIII and above in the BAK curriculum and will require extra rehearsals and performances beyond the school day as announced by the piano director. This class will provide the skills for Keyboard majors to develop as collaborative musicians. Included but not limited to piano duos, trios, quartets, and piano concertos. Practice outside the class is expected.

### ***Keyboard for non-majors***, semester long elective, all grade levels

Open to students in all art areas. This course is designed to give students an opportunity to begin or continue their study of keyboard music and technique while in another major art area at MSOA.

## **Theatre**

### ***Theater Level II***, grade 7

This is a continuing preparation for theatrical production curriculum **for 7<sup>th</sup> grade theatre majors only**. Seventh graders in Level II Theatre will spend two periods in theatre. Each quarter will provide a new experience for students as they rotate through each of the following area specialties:

- **Costume Design and Production** – This class will take you through the steps of how we examine characters and develop costumes for a play. Topics covered are character analysis, pre-production research, costume history, rendering, types of fabrics, sewing techniques and understanding basic patterning. The content may also include make-up for the stage, costume construction and run-crew assignments.

- **Musical Theatre** – Students in this class will continue building skills in music theory, rhythm perception, vocal development and movement. This is performance driven class which will culminate in a musical revue at the end of the quarter featuring ensemble and solo performances. Extra rehearsal time and performances are required and will extend beyond the school day as announced by the director.
- **Stagecraft and Technical Theatre Production** – This class will concentrate on protocols and procedures for stage management and backstage performance production. Students will learn how to prepare a rehearsal script as well as a final show calling script from which they call a simple show from “hour before half hour” to lights up at the end of a show and closing down the equipment. Students will explore the technical areas of live theater including operation of lighting equipment and its maintenance, scenic lighting theory, practical design application, installation of lighting equipment for live theatre production and operation of lighting control boards. Content may also include exploration of elements of sound and theatrical drafting.
- **Play Production** – This class will explore all aspects of producing a one act play from the perspective of the actor, in addition to continuing the study of acting for theatre. Course work includes creating a bio, audition techniques, script and character analysis, rehearsal etiquette, working with blocking, personal props and costume accessories. Extra rehearsal time and performances are required and will extend beyond the school day as announced by the director.

***Theatre Level III***, grade 8

**Eighth graders in Level III Theatre are required to spend two back to back periods in theatre.**

**8<sup>th</sup> grade theatre** is a performance oriented class for theatre majors only. To be cast in a show, students will be required to audition for all productions. Extra rehearsal time and performances are required and will extend beyond the school day as announced by the director or technical director. To be considered for a technical theatre leadership assignment, including lighting or sound operation, students are required to state intent at the time of auditions. The content of the 8th grade course will include Level III technical theatre support, Level III acting analysis, costume design and construction, stage management, set construction and painting, lighting and sound instruction and operation, and house management and publicity skills. Students will be assigned to one of several 8th grade theater teachers during the production cycles. 2 semesters, periods 6 & 8.

***Intro to Theater for non-majors*** – semester long elective, 7<sup>th</sup> grade, **non-theater Majors only**

In this comprehensive theatre course students will gain knowledge and experience as actors. Students will participate in a variety of acting exercises, theatre games and improvisations and apply what they learn to preparing and presenting monologues and scenes from plays. This course is open to students in all art areas in grades 6 and 7.

***Theater for non-majors***, semester long elective, 7th and 8th grade, **non-theater majors only**

In this course, students will review and expand their acting skills and techniques, practice ensemble and solo performing, as well as continue to study script and character analysis. Those new to acting will learn all the basic ABC's of acting and apply them in improvised scenes and chosen scripts. Students will engage in improvisation theatre, study monologues and do scene work with partners. They will have the opportunity to use their imagination, emotions, and intellect to create believable and engaging environments, characters, and dialogue. Students will receive physical and vocal training for the actor. This course is open to students in all art areas in grades 7 and 8.

***Vocal Ensemble (for those who love Musical Theater)***

This year long elective is open to all 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students. Both vocal majors and non-majors are invited to audition for this ensemble. Acceptance is through a basic pitch-matching audition. Repertoire will focus on pop, musical theatre, and jazz styles of music. Learning choreography may be involved. Members of the Vocal Ensemble will have 3-4 mandatory performances. **Please see the Vocal Department instructors for audition information.**

## Visual Arts

### **2D and 3D Art II (7<sup>th</sup>)III (8<sup>th</sup>)** for visual arts majors only

This course includes one semester of 2/D art and one semester of 3/D art. For eighth grade students in Visual Arts studies III, a portfolio development emphasis will be followed for the first semester in both the areas of 2/D and 3/D. In the 2/D course students are provided with the experiences necessary for understanding, appreciating, and production of two-dimensional works of art. Experiences are provided in perception, description, and use of the compositional qualities and subject matter of two-dimensional works of art. In the 3/D course, students are provided with the experiences necessary for understanding, appreciating and producing three-dimensional works of art. Perceiving and responding to basic design concepts in three-dimensional works of art is emphasized. 1 year.

### **Painting** - semester long course **required of all 7<sup>th</sup> grade VA majors**

Prerequisite: visual arts majors only. This is an intermediate level class to continue basic skills and introduce the creation of form using color and design using color optical illusion. The assignments in this class are mainly teacher directed and include both tempera and acrylic.

### **Drawing** - semester long course **required of all 7<sup>th</sup> grade VA majors**

Prerequisite: visual arts majors only. This is an intermediate level drawing course that will focus on observational drawing. The assignments in this class will include still life, figure drawing, and portraiture.

### **Introduction to Digital Media** – semester long course **required of all 7<sup>th</sup> grade VA majors**

This course is designed for complete beginners that would like to learn how to navigate Photoshop, use digital cameras, create simple animations, graphics, and drawing tablets. Students will use the Mac platform, edit images, upload images to a computer, and properly. save their digital composites.

### **Ceramics** - semester long course **required of all 8<sup>th</sup> grade VA majors**

Prerequisite: visual arts majors only. This is an intermediate ceramic course, which includes but is not limited to advanced hand building techniques, mold making, mixed media, wheel thrown objects and some glaze properties.

### **Photography** - semester long course **required of all 8<sup>th</sup> grade VA majors.**

Prerequisite: visual arts majors only. The purpose of this course is to give students basic skills and understanding of photographic imagery. Included is the study of photography and production techniques, criteria and vocabulary for critically analyzing photographs, techniques for proper presentation of photographic works, and career possibilities.

**Note to all 8th grade VA majors: those who are planning to audition in Digital Media at Dreyfoos will need to be in photography first semester. Be sure to indicate that on your course selection sheet by circling YES.**

### **Advanced Digital Media** – semester long elective for 8th grade VA majors

**This course is for students who are planning to audition in Digital Media at Dreyfoos.** This class will provide content that focuses on a basic understanding of the use of digital cameras, Adobe Photoshop on both Mac and PC platforms, storage media and file transfer, as well as basic video storytelling methods and editing. **There is a \$50 fee to cover costs involved** and the teacher's signature is required.

### **Advanced Drawing** – Semester long elective for 8th grade VA majors

**This course is for students who are planning to audition in Visual Art at Dreyfoos.**

This is an advanced drawing course for 8th graders who want to further develop their drawing skills. The focus will be observational drawing/

### **Advanced Painting** – semester long elective for 8<sup>th</sup> grade VA majors

This course will focus on learning advanced painting techniques. Students will use various kinds of paint and will experiment with painting on different types of surfaces such as paper, canvas, wood and clay.

***Introduction to Animation*** – semester long elective, 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Visual Arts Majors

This semester-long course covers the foundations of storyboarding and 2D animation. In order to connect students' visual art skills with the skills needed to create believable animation, this course will build on their knowledge of drawing, perspective, character design, and storytelling while introducing them to various animation techniques and animation software. In addition to advancing their current art and animation skills, projects will explore story structure, camera layout, and the principles of animation.

***Advanced Visual Arts*** – semester long elective, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade Visual Arts Majors

This course will focus on developing advanced art techniques that build upon skills learned in 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade. Students will use various materials as well as explore new mediums. Projects may include drawing, painting, printmaking, sculpture, ceramics and mixed media. This class will allow student to explore conceptual themes in their artwork and will also include self-directed work.

***Advanced Graphic Design & Publication*** – 8<sup>th</sup> grade, year

This course is open to Communications, Visual Arts majors and other majors that have had a Computer Graphics class. It will offer students experience in creating graphics for use in publication and digital formats. Students will learn how to use Adobe Illustrator (primarily) and Adobe Photoshop. Illustrator is used for both fine art and graphic applications like book covers, infographics, icons, app logo designs, cartoons, etc. (Other programs will be introduced.)

***Art for Non Majors 1 & 2*** - semester long elective, all grades

This course is open to all art area majors except Visual Arts. This course provides students with opportunities to develop a basic knowledge of the artistic expression of ideas through two and three-dimensional media. It offers students the opportunity to learn and apply various drawing techniques as well as exploration of ideas and production using varied and original ideas; the rearrangement and the uses of objects; and the development of an aesthetic criteria for making judgments about art. This course may be repeated.

## **World Language Electives**

***Spanish 1*** – 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade, year-long elective. Prerequisite: None, however, **all As and Bs in your academic classes** is required for **7<sup>th</sup> graders** wishing to take this course.

Course Description: This course introduces students to the Spanish language and culture, focusing on listening, speaking, pronunciation, reading, writing and grammar fundamentals.

***Successful completion earns one high school credit, which will appear on the student's permanent record and impact their GPA.***

Important Note: ***This course is NOT for native speakers.*** If you are entering 8<sup>th</sup> grade and Spanish is spoken in your home, please have Mrs. Harkin (rm. 2-102) sign your course selection sheet for possible placement in Spanish 2.

***French 1*** – 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade, year-long elective Prerequisite: None, however, **all As and Bs in your academic classes** is required for **7<sup>th</sup> graders** wishing to take this course.

Course Description: This course introduces students to the French language and culture, focusing on listening, speaking, pronunciation, read, writing and grammar fundamentals.

***Upon successful completion of this course 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders will earn one high school credit in French that will remain on their permanent record all through high school. In addition, the grade earned in this course will begin the high school GPA.***

<b>IMPORTANT NOTE: Students who took French 1 or Spanish 1 in 7<sup>th</sup> grade will be placed in French II or Spanish II (for high school credit) as one of their electives in 8<sup>th</sup> grade.</b>
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**Spanish 2 OR French 2** – 8<sup>th</sup> grade only, year-long elective.

Prerequisite: Successful completion of 7<sup>th</sup> grade Spanish I OR French I OR demonstrated proficiency (written and oral test).

**Spanish 2 or French 2** builds on foundational skills, enhancing listening, speaking, reading, and writing abilities while deepening cultural awareness. Oral communication remains the focus, with added emphasis on reading and writing.

***Upon successful completion of Spanish 2 or French 2, 8<sup>th</sup> graders will earn one high school credit in Spanish or French that will remain on their permanent record all through high school. In addition, the grade earned in this course will continue the cumulative high school GPA.***

## **General Electives**

***The Art of the Mic (Creative Performance & Vocal Artistry)*** - Semester-long elective, 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grades – ***New!***

Think you aren't a writer? Think again. If you're an artist, actor, dancer, musician, singer, or communicator, you're already a storyteller—we're just giving you a new platform. This class focuses on the art of the oral tradition, combining movement, music, and the written word into a powerful live experience. This class is about bringing all those talents together to master the art of the mic. Come experiment, get a little loud, and turn your ideas into a performance that people won't forget. On this adventure, you will learn improvisation exercises, the meaning and history of the art as well as see examples of artists in action. You will be encouraged to utilize your art form in the creation of your own poetic works. This course fosters creative expression, boosts self-confidence, enhances writing and public speaking skills, encourages critical thinking, and builds a supportive community that values diverse talents.

### ***Mixed Vocal Ensemble***

This year long elective is open to all 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students. **Both vocal majors and non-majors are invited to audition for this ensemble.** Acceptance is through a basic pitch-matching audition. Repertoire will focus on pop, musical theatre, and jazz styles of music. Learning choreography may be involved. Members of the Vocal Ensemble will have 3-4 mandatory performances. **Please see the Vocal Department instructors for audition information.**

### ***Intro to Technology*** – semester long elective, 7<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade

The content of this course includes, but is not limited to, the use of commercially available software programs like Google Slides, Google Sites, Google Docs, Google Sheets, Google Email, Google Classroom, Google Drive, Photopea, and Canva. Students will acquire basic knowledge that will help them improve their technology skills.

### ***Digital Media/Graphic Design*** - semester long elective, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades

The content of this course includes basic understanding of devices for electronic production of graphic designs, including uses of computer graphics for advertising and fine art. Students will learn to prepare computer-produced visual elements and to use the computer as a new form for artistic experimentation.

### ***Advanced Graphic Design & Publication*** – 8<sup>th</sup> grade, year-long elective

This course, taught by Mr. Wilson, is open to Communications, Visual Arts majors and **other majors that have had a Computer Graphics class.** It will offer students experience in creating graphics for use in publication and digital formats. Students will learn how to use Adobe Illustrator (primarily) and Adobe Photoshop. Illustrator is used for both fine art and graphic applications like book covers, infographics, icons, app logo designs, cartoons, etc. (Other programs will be introduced.)

### ***Advanced Graphic Design (TOSA Certification)*** – 8<sup>th</sup> grade, year-long elective - ***NEW!***

Upgrade your skills to a professional standard! This rigorous, fast-paced course is designed for technically savvy students ready to master the industry standards of graphic design: **Adobe Photoshop and Illustrator.** Prepare for, complete, and pass the two **TOSA adaptive exams** and earn an official TOSA Certification in Adobe Graphic Design. Using the **Isograd Learning Platform**, students will move beyond basic tools to explore advanced software functionality, sophisticated design workflows, and professional-grade techniques. This isn't just a design class—it's a pathway to official industry credentials. **Note: Enrollment in this course requires a high level of dedication to technical mastery. Mr. Wilson's signature is required on your course selection sheet for this elective.**

**Web Design + Coding** – year long elective, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades

This class will primarily work on coding and Graphic Design for web development. Students will learn the basics of computer coding. They will use this basic knowledge of various codes to begin creating websites, games, apps, and more. Students will also use creative graphic design programs such as Adobe Photoshop, Illustrator, and various other programs to enhance their website design skills. They will use various websites to construct three-dimensional designs. For serious, devoted computer users only. **Mr. Kossove's signature is required on your course selection sheet.**

**Film Study** – semester long elective, grade 8

This course is intended for the student with a true interest in analyzing a representative sampling of films/directors from the advent of film through today. The purpose is to teach students how to think critically about what they see in film and to consider the filmmaking process and decisions made along the way. It also helps students place films in a historical context, using them as a springboard for conversations about social issues. **Important – in addition to viewing films, this class also contains a significant written component requiring students to write an analysis or opinion on each film. Completing the written homework is a primary key to success in the class.**

**Speech and Debate 2** - semester long elective, grades 7 & 8

This semester course covers a variety of styles of public speaking and formal debate. Through research and practice students will become familiar with these styles through instruction, interactive activities and in class performance opportunities. **(Communication majors in grade 7 may not choose this elective.)**

**World Mythology** – semester long elective, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade

Students will read myths from around the world. These myths will help students make connections between classical myths and the real world. Students will gain understanding of such things as why a car company might want to name their car the "titan" and will recognize the word "narcissistic" on the SAT.

**Robotics** – semester long elective, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades

This course aims to guide students in learning the basics of mechanical engineering, design, and computer programming, with an understanding of such concepts as:

Sturdy construction

Gear ratios

Gears

Motors, lamps and sensors

More importantly, the course aims for students to learn to think like engineers – to learn to break down complex problems into simpler, solvable blocks; to model and describe what they want something to do; to see failure as an

**essential** opportunity to learn rather than as a judgment upon their ability.

Center of gravity

Levers

Engineering teamwork

Programming structures – loops, forks, subroutines

**Physical Education courses** – 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade

The following PE courses are available as yearlong or semester electives: **Volleyball (year) and General PE (sem).**

**Critical Thinking** – year long elective, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade

The purpose of this course is to enable students to develop learning strategies, critical thinking skills, and problem-solving skills to enhance their performance in academic and nonacademic endeavors. Students will be required to complete 15 minutes of the "typing club" program and additional activities on the following: strategies for linking new information with prior knowledge; acquiring, storing, and retrieving information; problem solving, and critical thinking skills.

**Media Center Aide** - semester long elective, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade

Students who wish to work as an aide must be able to follow directions and carry a job through to its completion. The signature of Mr. Kossove or Mrs. Bejarano is required on the course selection sheet. **Students MAY NOT choose this elective (Media Center Aide) nor may they ask for a signature from Mr. Kossove or Mrs. Bejarano if they have ever been on probation or received a conduct grade of 1 or 2 while at Bak MSOA.** *Please note: this elective will not generate a grade on the report card.*

**Teacher Aide** - semester long elective, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade

Students who wish to work as teacher aide must be able to follow directions and carry a job through to its completion. These jobs might include helping with paperwork, running off copies, and in some cases acting as a student mentor. The signature of the requesting teacher is required on the course selection sheet. **Students MAY NOT choose this elective (Teacher Aide) nor may they ask for a teacher signature if the student has ever been on probation or received a conduct grade of 1 or 2 while at Bak MSOA.** *Please note: this elective will not generate a grade on the report card.*

**Don't forget! There are also additional electives listed under each art major section.  
Make sure to check out these descriptions under the following:**

- Communications: Creative Writing 2, Speech & Debate for non-majors, Adv. Speech & Debate
- Dance: Tap (beginning and advanced)
- Music: Piano; and, by audition only...Jazz Band, Chorale, Orchestra
- Visual Arts: Art for non-majors
- Theater: Intro to Theater, Theater 2 for non-majors