



PROGRAM OF STUDY

Middle School | 2026-27





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OUR MISSION

The New Community School empowers bright, talented students who are challenged by dyslexia and related learning differences. The innovative and research-based college preparatory curriculum uses a customized educational approach to build skills and foster academic and personal strengths – igniting the passions and gifts of unique minds.

OUR VISION

The New Community School launches students with the knowledge, skills, and resilience to pursue their passions, navigate the opportunities and challenges of their world, and live their lives with courage, compassion, and purpose.

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

MIDDLE SCHOOL

The Middle School experience is designed to present learning experiences that are relevant and challenging in an environment that cultivates individual skill development and self-advocacy. All the academic departments have built-in structures and strategies that are designed not only to help our students compensate for their skill deficits, but to help them develop reliable and effective organizational and study techniques. As students develop the skills needed to succeed in future educational settings, supports and structures are gradually adjusted and students are expected to exercise greater independence.

A primary academic focus in the Middle School is the remediation of reading, handwriting, spelling, composition, math, and study skills. These skills are pivotal for success in academic settings. A typical middle school student's schedule includes classes in English, math, history, science, physical education/health, an elective, and language fundamentals. Class placement in math and language fundamentals is based upon diagnostic skill testing. Fifth and sixth grade electives are quarterly while seventh and eighth grade electives are semester long courses.

PORTRAIT OF A TNCS GRADUATE

Meant as a guide for both students and teachers to develop the skills necessary for success in a rapidly changing, increasingly interconnected world, The Portrait of a TNCS Graduate has six main “pillars” we believe will position a successful TNCS graduate for success.



Adapt Effectively



Read Strategically



Engage in Community



Think Innovatively



Communicate Clearly



Pursue Wellness

LANGUAGE FUNDAMENTALS

Most students at the New Community School take a period of language remediation and instruction called Language Fundamentals (LF). The goal of this class is to improve each student's specific language-based learning skills. The LF teacher uses a diagnostic and prescriptive approach to guide instruction based on daily observation, as well as knowledge of the student's cognitive strengths and weaknesses. The program aims to develop a solid foundation in basic language skills upon which more advanced competencies in reading and writing are built. As students develop automaticity and fluency in accurate word recognition, spelling, and oral reading, their program increasingly emphasizes reading comprehension and written expression.

ADVISORY & FLEX PROGRAMMING

Advisory and Flex at The New Community School (TNCS) provide foundational programming designed to support the holistic development of students. Together, Advisory and Flex create a structured, supportive environment where students can develop essential life skills, build meaningful relationships, and feel deeply connected to their school community.

For Middle School students, Advisory and Flex programming provides the time, space, and support necessary to navigate the unique developmental challenges of adolescence. Whether learning foundational SEL skills, setting academic goals or developing strong relationships, students benefit from a program that centers on their individual needs and growth thereby ensuring that every student feels seen, valued, and supported, reinforcing TNCS's commitment to fostering achievement, well-being, and a sense of community.

The primary goals of advisory and flex are to:

1. Foster Social-Emotional Learning (SEL):

- Advisory provides explicit instruction in SEL skills such as self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship-building, and responsible decision-making.
- Through guided activities, discussions, and reflections, students learn to navigate challenges, regulate emotions, communicate effectively, and develop empathy—skills that are critical for success in school and beyond.

2. Cultivate Strong Relationships:

- Advisory serves as a safe and consistent space for students to build trust with their peers and advisor, fostering a sense of belonging and psychological safety.
- Advisors play a key role as advocates and mentors, offering personalized support while strengthening the connection between students, families, and the school

3. Promote Academic Success:

- Advisors monitor and support academic progress, helping students set goals, track achievements, and address challenges proactively.
- Advisors provide coaching in academic skills such as organization, time management, and study strategies, helping students cultivate habits that lead to success.

4. Build a Shared Community:

- Advisory groups are designed to foster a strong sense of community within TNCS, ensuring students feel connected and valued.
- Students engage in team-building activities, service-learning projects, and collaborative problem-solving, contributing to a shared sense of purpose and school identity.

5. Support Personal Growth:

- Advisory empowers students to explore their strengths, values, and interests, helping them build confidence, resilience, and independence.
- Advisors guide students in developing a growth mindset, encouraging them to embrace challenges as opportunities for learning and personal development.

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

The New Community School believes in the interconnectedness of social and emotional well being and academic development. Studies show that social-emotional skills—such as problem-solving, self-regulation, impulse control, and empathy—help improve academics, reduce negative social behaviors, and create positive classroom climates. The New Community School works to incorporate developmentally appropriate social and emotional programming to foster and support a safe and inclusive learning environment.

EXTRA HELP

A thirty-minute study period known as Extra Help is provided for all students each day. During the Extra Help period, students may see teachers for help, begin assignments, or complete tests.

All academic departments employ similar organizational structures and study skills strategies to help students develop the necessary skills to be successful in school. Teachers of all academic classes publish Week-at-a-Glance updates found on Schoology so that students know what course assignments are upcoming and can plan their study time.

COLLEGE AND CAREER EXPLORATION

During the middle school years, it is important for students to develop career awareness, identify personal strengths, and begin to understand the connection between school and the world of work. The curriculum is designed to align with the school's mission of fostering academic and personal strengths with the goal of utilizing those strengths to confidently prepare for the planning and decision-making stage that occurs during the high school years.

During the spring semester, the College and Career Counselor delivers career exploration lessons in small groups that allow students to engage in critical thinking and meaningful interaction with peers. The content focuses on career vocabulary, understanding career clusters, workplace skills, and using developmentally appropriate career resources. Strategies for increasing students' self-knowledge include interest, skill, and personality inventories. These assessment tools help students understand and appreciate their strengths and interests. Being aware of personal strengths also contributes to a positive attitude and growth mindset as they relate to students' career development.

Career-based learning experiences are built into the TNCS curriculum. These activities build awareness of what students need to learn in order to pursue certain careers. Additionally, these activities help bridge the connection between being a student and the world of work. As students progress through middle school, it is imperative that they understand the relationship between their current academic lives and their future career choices. This relationship is impactful regarding immediate decisions such as high school course selection and long-term career planning.

TECHNOLOGY VISION STATEMENT

Technology is a tool that provides added value to teaching and learning. Technology enriches the materials, methods, and assessments our teachers use to inspire young minds, making learning more interactive and engaging. Technology also allows for a more individualized educational experience for each learner. Middle school students learn how to use assistive technology both to access information and to demonstrate their understanding. Students in 5th through 7th grade will utilize school issued computers throughout the year to learn how to utilize various programs and assistive technology capabilities.

The New Community School supports the specific language-related learning differences of its students by selecting technological tools that help students communicate ideas and access materials. Technology levels the playing field in communication and helps students overcome the barriers they face in learning and content production. The New Community School provides direct instruction, when necessary, in these technologies and encourages students to see technology, including assistive technology, as a lifelong learning and communication tool.



USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE(AI)

The New Community School recognizes that artificial intelligence tools are becoming an increasingly common part of learning and everyday life. In the Middle School, students may engage with AI in developmentally appropriate ways that support learning, skill-building, and curiosity. Any use of AI must align with TNCS's AI Guidelines and be explicitly permitted by the teacher. AI tools may not replace a student's own thinking, reading, writing, or problem-solving, and students are expected to use them ethically, transparently, and responsibly as part of their learning process.

GRADES AND ASSESSMENT

The New Community School subscribes to a standards-based learning model. Under this model, a course grade reflects a student's mastery of the stated course objectives as measured on summative assessments. Rubrics or learning scales are utilized to communicate outcomes, guide instruction, and provide feedback. Learning scales demonstrate a continuum of learning. Reassessment at times is necessary, especially when student performance is below proficient, or the teacher believes the original assessment did not accurately match what the student knows and can do. Students who wish to reassess are encouraged to work with their course teacher.

Student progress reports are issued four times a year, at the end of each quarter. Number grades are given for all courses in grades 5-8 except Language Fundamentals. However, students will receive letter grades for any high school level classes they take.

Although assessment practices may differ slightly among departments and across grade levels. A brief description of grades is as follows:

- | | | |
|----|-------------|--|
| A | 3.5 - 4.0 | = Excelling - demonstrates in-depth inferences and applications beyond what was taught in class |
| B+ | 3.2 - 3.4 | = Advanced Proficient - applies the concepts, vocabulary, and skills independently |
| B | 2.7 - 3.1 | = Proficient - demonstrates understanding of the concepts, vocabulary, and skills consistently and independently |
| C+ | 2.3 - 2.6 | = Approaching Proficient - some minor inconsistencies and gaps exist |
| C | 1.7 - 2.2 | = Developing - demonstrates basic understanding; omissions, errors, and misconceptions exist |
| D+ | 1.3 - 1.6 | = Emerging - ability to identify concepts and skills, needs support to make connections or to use skills |
| D | 0.6 - 1.2 | = Beginning - demonstrates limited understanding of the learning outcome, needs instructor assistance in order to complete work |
| F | 0.5 & below | = Minimal - demonstrates slight progress on the learning outcome assessed |

TNCS IS ACCREDITED BY

Southern Association of Independent Schools
Virginia Association of Independent Schools
Virginia Council for Private Education

AND IS A MEMBER OF

The Association of LD Schools
The Dyslexia Foundation
International Dyslexia Association
National Association of Independent Schools
Southern Association of Independent Schools
Virginia Association of Independent Schools



5th GRADE

LANGUAGE FUNDAMENTALS (LF)

Basic language instruction is carefully sequenced and structured and emphasizes a multi-sensory approach to learning. It is based on phonetic principles with the aim of improving the student's reading and spelling accuracy through structural word analysis. Instruction encourages an analytical, problem-solving approach to reading and spelling difficulties rather than dependence on rote memory. Daily lessons include fluency-building drill and practice. Students are taught cursive handwriting as appropriate, with emphasis on legible form, accuracy, and stamina. Direct teaching of comprehension skills focuses on developing vocabulary, understanding sentence structure, recalling details, and recognizing and summarizing main ideas.

Instruction for advanced LF students provides opportunities to apply learned skills, interact with complex text and language, and acquire new learning strategies. Comprehension strategies include identifying the author's purpose, analyzing text structures, distinguishing between direct and implied statements, and making inferences. Writing instruction aims to develop clear and coherent writing in which the ideas, organization, and style are appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience. Techniques for proofreading written work are emphasized at all levels of instruction.

PRE-IMPACT MATH

Before entering the IMPACT Math program, students must demonstrate proficiency in place value, addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. Students requiring additional instruction or reinforcement are placed in the Pre-IMPACT math curriculum. Pre-IMPACT Math classes are personalized based on each student's needs. Students review and strengthen previously learned concepts individually or in small groups while building math confidence. After successfully demonstrating understanding of Pre-IMPACT concepts, students transition to the IMPACT math program.

IMPACT MATH

IMPACT Math is an individualized student-centered program that allows students the chance to develop math confidence while progressing at their own pace. Its underlying philosophy is to help students develop success skills, including Independence, Mindfulness, Problem-solving, Adaptability, Communication, as well as Tenacity (IMPACT). The IMPACT Math program begins with fraction operations and culminates with algebraic concepts such as slope and multi-step equations. IMPACT I aligns with traditional 5th and 6th grade material. Throughout the program, students will review previous skills, as well as practice problem solving strategies using written text. Students will analyze, summarize, and effectively choose the correct method to solve real-world problems.

HUMANITIES

This gateway course allows students to develop an understanding of the TNCS community and learn the applicable study skills needed to support their academic success. The Humanities class also focuses on writing, which includes sentence structure, grammar, editing/revising, and paragraph organization. Using a cross-curricular approach, students will also be exposed to group work and hands-on projects which enables them to gain a deeper understanding of the content material.

SCIENCE

Initially, fifth grade students learn the eight science practices. Students apply these practices throughout the year. Students examine the properties of matter and study Earth's systems and how matter cycles within those systems. Students explore how the rock cycle and major geologic events affect Earth's crust. In addition, students examine the dynamic relationship

between the moon and our planet while noting different types of tides. Students investigate the direct link between the sun's energy and Earth's winds and ocean currents. Finally, students make connections between matter and energy as they explore how energy is transformed.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Health and Wellness in fifth and sixth grade introduces students entering puberty to a purposeful and positive approach to their mental, emotional, and physical well-being. Investigating the functions of skeletal, muscular, and digestive systems, students will learn how to care and create healthy habits for their physical growth. Students will transfer the way these body systems function to help develop stronger social and emotional skills. Students will investigate the 'bare bone' basics of decision making. They will flex the muscles of interpersonal communication to build better relationships. Students will learn healthy ways to 'digest' their own feelings while also considering the feelings of others.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The Physical Education program at TNCS provides all students the access to standards-based instruction that promotes health literacy and the motivation to engage in health-enhancing physical activity needed to achieve and maintain a balanced, healthy life. Middle School Physical Education recognizes the changes in physical and social growth. The program focuses on the students' cooperation, open-mindedness, willingness, and self-expression. Emphasis is placed on the understanding of rules of play, proper playing form, skill development, and game strategy. Sportsmanship and leadership are also fostered in each activity. In addition, emphasis is placed on acquiring an appreciation for the mastery of each sport/activity at various levels. Students develop a respect for healthy physical activity and recognize it as a necessary part of a healthy lifestyle.

ELECTIVES

The exploratory rotation of electives courses in fifth grade provides students with the opportunity to select some of TNCS's most popular electives. In these quarter length courses students learn the fundamentals that will prepare them for a full-length version in the future.

ART

In Art, students will develop visual communication skills. Students will begin to form an understanding of the essential elements of art and principles of design. Students will create artworks that are inspired by famous artists, art movements, and other cultures of the world.

DRAMA EXPLORATORY

In this class, students will get a small introduction into the basics of drama while also being able to express and challenge themselves through the art of theater. Students will gain an understanding of theater directions and characterization to help get them prepared for their final project. The final project goal is to showcase what students learned and how much they have grown through acting, song, and dance. This course will begin every day with a series of warmups for each student to connect with and get into their artistic beings. Throughout this course, students will regularly self-evaluate and stretch their performance abilities to new norms. This class is for students who have never done theater and for those who have done it before.

INTRODUCTION TO CODING

This course will teach students the basics of coding. Students will learn that coding is a language which encourages the mindset that multiple attempts may be necessary as they work toward solutions. Also, through everyday situations, students will build their problem-solving skills. Opportunities to specifically develop fundamental coding concepts and to use creativity will be provided through online applications such as Tynker.

MUSIC

Music is a powerful force - it takes us places, connects us, and makes us feel! Making music also provides many benefits - for instance, it activates our brains more than any other activity. By making it easy to create and share music, this course opens the door to learning about and experiencing music - from ancient rhythms to today's hits. No previous musical experience required!

STEAM

This introductory STEAM course provides students opportunities to develop skills in science, technology, engineering, and math through applying the engineering design process to develop solutions to a series of challenges. Students work both individually and collaboratively to develop solutions to these challenges. Students first identify the important characteristics of the challenge to be overcome. They then research, ideate, implement, and test ideas to develop the best possible design for their solution. Artistry is woven through the design of each solution.

WRITING GRAPHIC NOVELS

This course empowers students to practice their written expression, logic skills, problem-solving abilities, and other creative paths that incorporate chronological art. Students will be taken on a journey to learn the history of graphic novels. From their history in the 1930s, to analyzing different graphic novels in class, students will create their own story. Each student will carefully pick what their novel will look like, including the characters and scenes, which creates great ideas and imagination.



6th GRADE

LANGUAGE FUNDAMENTALS (LF)

Basic language instruction is carefully sequenced and structured and emphasizes a multi-sensory approach to learning. It is based on phonetic principles with the aim of improving the student's reading and spelling accuracy through structural word analysis. Instruction encourages an analytical, problem-solving approach to reading and spelling difficulties rather than dependence on rote memory. Daily lessons include fluency-building drill and practice. Students are taught cursive handwriting as appropriate, with emphasis on legible form, accuracy, and stamina. Direct teaching of comprehension skills focuses on developing vocabulary, understanding sentence structure, recalling details, and recognizing and summarizing main ideas.

Instruction for advanced LF students provides opportunities to apply learned skills, interact with complex text and language, and acquire new learning strategies. Comprehension strategies include identifying the author's purpose, analyzing text structures, distinguishing between direct and implied statements, and making inferences. Writing instruction aims to develop clear and coherent writing in which the ideas, organization, and style are appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience. Techniques for proofreading written work are emphasized at all levels of instruction.

PRE-IMPACT MATH

Before entering the IMPACT Math program, students must demonstrate proficiency in place value, addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. Students requiring additional instruction or reinforcement are placed in the Pre-IMPACT math curriculum. Pre-IMPACT Math classes are personalized based on each student's needs. Students review and strengthen previously learned concepts individually or in small groups while building math confidence. After successfully demonstrating understanding of Pre-IMPACT concepts, students transition to the IMPACT math program.

IMPACT MATH

IMPACT Math is an individualized student-centered program that allows students the chance to develop math confidence while progressing at their own pace. Its underlying philosophy is to help students develop success skills, including Independence, Mindfulness, Problem-solving, Adaptability, Communication, as well as Tenacity (IMPACT). The IMPACT Math program begins with fraction operations and culminates with algebraic concepts such as slope and multi-step equations. IMPACT I aligns with traditional 5th and 6th grade material. Throughout the program, students will review previous skills, as well as practice problem solving strategies using written text. Students will analyze, summarize, and effectively choose the correct method to solve real-world problems.

ENGLISH

Sixth-grade English is focused on building a strong classroom culture of literacy, encouraging students to confidently read, write, and think about the world around them. Students will engage with both narrative and informational texts, learning to analyze texts for the main idea, underlying theme, and the techniques an author uses to convey their message. In writing, students will practice the full writing process - from planning and drafting to revising and editing - using a variety of exemplary "mentor texts" to guide their work across different modes of writing, such as storytelling and persuasive essays. Throughout the year, students will systematically develop their vocabulary, reading comprehension, and mastery of standard written conventions, ensuring they gain the skills necessary for clear, powerful written expression.

HISTORY

This sixth grade history course introduces students to the world's earliest civilizations, emphasizing how geographic features influenced settlement, government, and civic life. Students then apply this understanding to the study of North America and the development of the United States. Throughout the course, students build historical and geographical analysis skills through the use of primary and secondary sources, including maps, globes, charts, and graphs

SCIENCE

In sixth grade, students build on the foundational understanding of the previous year's key concepts as they delve deeper into the eight science practices. After they review matter, students study basic atomic structure as they explore how elements are organized within the Periodic Table. Students compare Earth's spheres to specific spheres of other planets within our solar system. Furthermore, students examine why asteroids provide clues about our solar system, and they note the difference between meteors, meteoroids, and meteorites. Through the study of continental drift theory, students learn a brief introduction to Earth's history. Additionally, students explore the climate within each biome, Earth's weather patterns, and our ocean's significant role in mitigating climate change. Finally, students investigate human impact on our planet and its biodiversity.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Health and Wellness in fifth and sixth grade introduces students entering puberty to a purposeful and positive approach to their mental, emotional, and physical well-being. Investigating the functions of skeletal, muscular, and digestive systems, we will learn how to care and create healthy habits for our physical growth. Students will transfer the way these body systems function to help us develop stronger social and emotional skills. Students will investigate the 'bare bone' basics of decision making. They will flex the muscles of interpersonal communication to build better relationships. Students will learn healthy ways to 'digest' their own feelings while also considering the feelings of others.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The Physical Education program at TNCS provides all students the access to standards-based instruction that promotes health literacy and the motivation to engage in health-enhancing physical activity needed to achieve and maintain a balanced, healthy life. Middle School Physical Education recognizes the changes in physical and social growth. The program focuses on the students' cooperation, open-mindedness, willingness, and self-expression. Emphasis is placed on the understanding of rules of play, proper playing form, skill development, and game strategy. Sportsmanship and leadership are also fostered in each activity. In addition, emphasis is placed on acquiring an appreciation for the mastery of each sport/activity at various levels. Students develop a respect for healthy physical activity and recognize it as a necessary part of a healthy lifestyle

ELECTIVES

The exploratory rotation of electives courses in sixth grade provides students with the opportunity to sample some of TNCS's most popular electives. In these quarter length courses students will learn the fundamentals that will prepare them for a full-length version in the future.

ART

In Art, students will develop visual communication skills. Students will begin to form an understanding of the essential elements of art and principles of design. Students will create artworks that are inspired by famous artists, art movements and other cultures of the world.

DRAMA EXPLORATORY

In this class, students will get a small introduction into the basics of drama while also being able to express and challenge themselves through the art of theater. Students will gain an understanding of theater directions and characterization to help get them prepared for their final project. The final project goal is to showcase what students learned and how much they

have grown through acting, song, and dance. This course will begin every day with a series of warmups for each student to connect with and get into their artistic beings. Throughout this course, students will regularly self-evaluate and stretch their performance abilities to new norms. This class is for students who have never done theater and for those who have done it before.

INTRODUCTION TO CODING

This course will teach students the basics of coding. Students will learn that coding is a language which encourages the mindset that multiple attempts may be necessary as they work toward solutions. Also, through everyday situations, students will build their problem-solving skills. Opportunities to specifically develop fundamental coding concepts and to use creativity will be provided through online applications such as Tynker.

MUSIC

Music is a powerful force - it takes us places, connects us, and makes us feel! Making music also provides many benefits - for instance, it activates our brains more than any other activity. By making it easy to create and share music, this course opens the door to learning about and experiencing music - from ancient rhythms to today's hits. No previous musical experience required!

STEAM

This introductory STEAM course provides students opportunities to develop skills in science, technology, engineering, and math through applying the engineering design process to develop solutions to a series of challenges. Students work both individually and collaboratively to develop solutions to these challenges. Students first identify the important characteristics of the challenge to be overcome. They then research, ideate, implement, and test ideas to develop the best possible design for their solution. Artistry is woven through the design of each solution.

WRITING GRAPHIC NOVELS

This course empowers students to practice their written expression, logic skills, problem-solving abilities, and other creative paths that incorporate chronological art. Students will be taken on a journey to learn the history of graphic novels. From their history in the 1930s, to analyzing different graphic novels in class, students will create their own story. Each student will carefully pick what their novel will look like, including the characters and scenes, which creates great ideas and imagination.



7th GRADE

LANGUAGE FUNDAMENTALS (LF)

Basic language instruction is carefully sequenced and structured and emphasizes a multi-sensory approach to learning. It is based on phonetic principles with the aim of improving the student's reading and spelling accuracy through structural word analysis. Instruction encourages an analytical, problem-solving approach to reading and spelling difficulties rather than dependence on rote memory. Daily lessons include fluency-building drill and practice. Students are taught cursive handwriting as appropriate, with emphasis on legible form, accuracy, and stamina. Direct teaching of comprehension skills focuses on developing vocabulary, understanding sentence structure, recalling details, and recognizing and summarizing main ideas.

Instruction for advanced LF students provides opportunities to apply learned skills, interact with complex text and language, and acquire new learning strategies. Comprehension strategies include identifying the author's purpose, analyzing text structures, distinguishing between direct and implied statements, and making inferences. Writing instruction aims to develop clear and coherent writing in which the ideas, organization, and style are appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience. Techniques for proofreading written work are emphasized at all levels of instruction.

IMPACT MATH II

IMPACT II is an individualized student-centered program designed to meet each learner's unique needs. IMPACT II allows students the chance to develop math confidence while progressing at their own pace. Its underlying philosophy is to help students develop success skills, including Independence, Mindfulness, Problem solving, Adaptability, Communication, as well as Tenacity (IMPACT). Throughout the program, students will review previous skills, as well as practice problem solving strategies using written text. Students will analyze, summarize, and effectively choose the correct method to solve real-world problems.

ENGLISH

In seventh grade English, students will study grammar, mechanics, the structure of the academic paragraph, and literary comprehension and analysis. Students will sharpen writing, critical thinking, close reading, and speaking skills through a variety of approaches. Some of these methods include daily independent reading, Socratic Seminar, creative writing, annotating, multi-sensory instruction, and the use of mentor texts as models to improve writing. Literature study will include the use of whole-class novels and student-chosen book clubs.

HISTORY

The seventh grade history course examines the rise of civilization in ancient China, Greece, India, and Rome and considers these issues: How do we learn about the past? How did early civilizations develop? What is a civilization? What causes civilizations to rise and fall? How are ideas transferred from one civilization to another? How can we compare civilizations that are different from one another? What impact does religion have on society? How can ancient civilizations still impact our lives today? Students will polish skills developed in earlier social studies classes utilizing a variety of multi-sensory instructional techniques and a wide range of materials. Field trips and shorter research projects enhance the classroom experience.

SCIENCE

The seventh grade life science course gives students opportunities to explore the living world through scientific investigation, observations, and inquiry. Students will explore basic biological topics including cell structure, cell processes, genetics,

evolution, ecosystems, energy flow, biomes, and the human impact on ecosystems. By the end of their seventh-grade year, students will have a deeper understanding of the relationship between living things, their environment, and the non-living things that affect them.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Health and Wellness in grades seven and eight continues to build on life-enhancing skills and behaviors covered in Health and Wellness in grades five and six. As puberty paves the way to adolescence, understanding how students develop physically, mentally, and emotionally helps to provide students with greater insight into how they behave, think, and learn. Students look at the journey of life from conception to death, focusing on reproduction and human development. Applying theories of developmental psychology, students gain perspective into how genetics, family, friends, and our environment influence who we are. Investigation of the cardiovascular and respiratory systems is both literal and metaphorical, as we explore matters of the heart, and learn how to “take a deep breath.”

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The Physical Education program at TNCS provides all students access to standards-based instruction that promotes health literacy and the motivation to engage in health-enhancing physical activity needed to achieve and maintain a balanced, healthy life. Middle School PE recognizes the changes in physical and social growth. The program focuses on the students’ cooperation, open-mindedness, willingness, and self-expression. In seventh and eighth grade, students begin to apply their understanding of the rules of play, proper playing form and game strategy while making connections with and further developing many life-skills. Life-skills are a focus in each class, including mindfulness, sportsmanship, adaptability, and understanding the different roles you can play on a team or activity. The course emphasizes the impact health and wellness can make in and out of the school. Students develop a respect and understanding of creating and maintaining a healthy, physically active lifestyle to better themselves in and out of TNCS.



ELECTIVES

Elective classes at The New Community School offer opportunities to learn new skills, develop artistic talent, or pursue a well-defined interest. Most often, these courses are heavily weighted with “hands-on” productive activities and emphasize both individual growth and positive group interactions. Each course has goals that address subject knowledge, social and recreational opportunities, community involvement, and leadership.

ART

Art focuses on developing creativity skills, self-expression, and confidence. Students will have the opportunity to explore a wide range of art mediums. Content focuses on building basic skills while also encouraging student’s personal expression. Art projects are inspired by other cultures, master artists, and historical art periods. Students will use their artistic understanding to create works of art that represent their growing understanding of who they are.

BEGINNER BAND

Beginner Band is designed for students who are interested in learning how to play a musical instrument and become part of a collaborative musical ensemble. This course aims to provide students with a solid foundation in instrumental music through hands-on instruction, individual practice, and ensemble playing. Students will also learn the importance of teamwork and cooperation as they work together to create beautiful music as part of the band ensemble. Through regular rehearsals and performances, students will develop their musical skills while building confidence and a sense of accomplishment.

Please note: Students are required to provide their own instruments for this band course. If you do not own an instrument, please consult with Mr. Chung for guidance on instrument rental or purchase options. Having access to your own instrument will ensure that you can fully participate and engage in the learning process throughout the duration of the course.

DESIGN, BUILD, REPEAT

This course will introduce students to the technologies of the TNCS makerspace. Students will learn how to design a product using the design thinking process, build a prototype of their idea, and then refine the idea into a final product. Areas that will be covered include 3D printing, robotics, electronics, VR and AR technologies, drone/UAV building and flight, and digital media. Students will be encouraged to utilize their own ideas in each build. By the end of the course, students will have a strong set of skills and foundational knowledge about the emerging technologies used in the makerspace.



DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY

In this hands-on course students will learn to operate a DSLR camera through participation in a variety of projects. Each unit project will incorporate a variety of composition and design elements that allow students to become familiar with camera features, as well as what it takes to compose and set up a well-crafted photo. Students utilize a variety of editing tools to enhance and refine their photographs. Students will reflect upon their learning and share photographic works in a digital format.

INTRODUCTION TO 2D AND 3D ANIMATION

Dive into the captivating world of animation with this semester-long course designed specifically for middle school students. Whether you're dreaming of creating your own animated short or simply curious about how animated movies are made, this course offers a comprehensive introduction to the fundamentals of 2D and 3D animation. Through hands-on projects, students will learn the art of bringing characters and stories to life, understanding the mechanics behind animation, and exploring the principles of good storytelling.

INTRODUCTION TO GUITAR AND UKULELE

Introduction to Guitar and Ukulele is a beginner's course of fundamental guitar or ukulele instruction. Students receive individual and group instruction in tuning, notes, scales, chords, tablature and strum charts, basic song structure, and small group performance. Students can progress at their own pace and are encouraged to focus on music and songs they find most appealing. The emphasis is on contemporary guitar music, though there are brief introductions of classical guitar and standard notation. In addition, students have opportunities to try other instruments such as keyboard, percussion, banjo, and bass guitar.

MUSICAL THEATER

Dive into the dynamic world of musical theater in our comprehensive class! Students of all levels will explore singing, dancing, and a touch of acting, with a strong focus on vocal training. From Broadway classics to modern hits, students will tackle diverse styles and genres, preparing them for potential performances, including Christmas caroling events and Valentine's Day serenades. Through individual and group exercises, they'll hone their vocal skills, creativity, and collaboration abilities, while also delving into character development and stage presence. Whether seasoned performers or newcomers, all will find a supportive environment to shine. Join us for an enriching journey into the magical realm of musical theater!



ROBOTICS

This course allows students to develop an understanding of how robots function, their applications, and how to program them to perform specific tasks.

STEAM

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8th GRADE

LANGUAGE FUNDAMENTALS (LF)

Basic language instruction is carefully sequenced and structured and emphasizes a multi-sensory approach to learning. It is based on phonetic principles with the aim of improving the student's reading and spelling accuracy through structural word analysis. Instruction encourages an analytical, problem-solving approach to reading and spelling difficulties rather than dependence on rote memory. Daily lessons include fluency-building drill and practice. Students are taught cursive handwriting as appropriate, with emphasis on legible form, accuracy, and stamina. Direct teaching of comprehension skills focuses on developing vocabulary, understanding sentence structure, recalling details, and recognizing and summarizing main ideas.

Instruction for advanced LF students provides opportunities to apply learned skills, interact with complex text and language, and acquire new learning strategies. Comprehension strategies include identifying the author's purpose, analyzing text structures, distinguishing between direct and implied statements, and making inferences. Writing instruction aims to develop clear and coherent writing in which the ideas, organization, and style are appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience. Techniques for proofreading written work are emphasized at all levels of instruction.

IMPACT III MATH

IMPACT III Math is an individualized student-centered program designed to meet each learner's unique needs. IMPACT III allows students the chance to develop math confidence while progressing at their own pace. Its underlying philosophy is to help students develop success skills, including Independence, Mindfulness, Problem-solving, Adaptability, Communication, as well as Tenacity (IMPACT). IMPACT III aligns with traditional 8th grade material, as well as algebraic concepts. Throughout the program, students will review previous skills, as well as practice problem-solving strategies using written text. They will analyze, summarize, and effectively choose the correct method to solve real-world problems.

Upon completing IMPACT III, students will have mastered the prerequisite skills necessary for success in Algebra I, including a strong foundation in problem-solving, equations, and mathematical reasoning.

ALGEBRA I

Algebra I is offered to students who have demonstrated computational and application skill levels sufficient for the study of Algebra. The primary focus in Algebra I is instruction on graphing linear equations and problem-solving techniques of various types of equations. Additional topics include operations with integers, systems of equations, operations with polynomials, and factoring. The students will discover how patterns and relationships are incorporated into the real number system. Throughout the year, problem-solving skills are taught and practiced. Teaching techniques include warm-ups for computational practice, lecture and note-taking, manipulative and written practice of new topics, and one-to-one instruction when needed. Students are also introduced to the graphing calculator.

ENGLISH

Eighth grade English provides students with the opportunity to read literature, analyze the authors' methods and purposes for writing, and communicate such analysis in a clear, understandable written format. Literature is chosen to reflect values and real-life experiences. Grammar skills are strengthened and built on the foundations of previous knowledge and are used to improve writing. Students also apply their reading and writing skills to the creation of their own short story following the formats reflected by our literature. Structured support and organizational methods are intended to promote independence as students look toward entering Upper School.

WORLD HISTORY

In eighth grade World History, students continue many of the themes from the seventh-grade course, as they learn about world civilizations from the fall of Rome through the Middle Ages in Europe, Asia, and Africa. They examine the impact of geography, resources, government, religion, and ideas on human societies. Students learn about Medieval Europe, the Byzantine Empire, and the rise of Islam. They will conclude the course with an examination of Imperial China and Japan, and how these civilizations continue to impact our world today. The course utilizes a variety of multi-sensory instructional techniques and a wide range of materials.

SCIENCE

Eighth grade physical science course takes an in-depth study of physics and chemistry. This foundational course combines project-based learning, hands-on experimentation and activities, and skill development support to outfit students with the skills and knowledge they need for success in the upper grade sciences. Students will explore experimental design skills, forces and motion, gravitational forces, energy and heat, matter, and the periodic table. By the end of the course, students will have a deeper understanding of matter and its interactions.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Health and Wellness in grades seven and eight continues to build on life-enhancing skills and behaviors covered in Health and Wellness in grades five and six. As puberty paves the way to adolescence, understanding how students develop physically, mentally, and emotionally helps to provide students with greater insight into how they behave, think, and learn. Students look at the journey of life from conception to death, focusing on reproduction and human development. Applying theories of developmental psychology, students gain perspective into how genetics, family, friends, and our environment influence who we are. Investigation of the cardiovascular and respiratory systems is both literal and metaphorical, as we explore matters of the heart, and learn how to “take a deep breath.”

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The Physical Education program at TNCS provides all students access to standards-based instruction that promotes health literacy and the motivation to engage in health-enhancing physical activity needed to achieve and maintain a balanced, healthy life. Middle School PE recognizes the changes in physical and social growth. The program focuses on the students’ cooperation, open-mindedness, willingness, and self-expression. In seventh and eighth grade, students begin to apply their understanding of the rules of play, proper playing form and game strategy while making connections with and further developing many life-skills. Life-skills are a focus in each class, including mindfulness, sportsmanship, adaptability, and understanding the different roles you can play on a team or activity. The course emphasizes the impact health and wellness can make in and out of the school. Students develop a respect and understanding of creating and maintaining a healthy, physically active lifestyle to better themselves in and out of TNCS.

ELECTIVES

Elective classes at The New Community School offer opportunities to learn new skills, develop artistic talent, or pursue a well-defined interest. Most often, these courses are heavily weighted with “hands-on” productive activities and emphasize both individual growth and positive group interactions. Each course has goals that address subject knowledge, social and recreational opportunities, community involvement, and leadership.

ART

Art focuses on developing creativity skills, self-expression, and confidence. Students will have the opportunity to explore a wide range of art mediums. Content focuses on building basic skills while also encouraging student’s personal expression. Art projects are inspired by other cultures, master artists, and historical art periods. Students will use their artistic understanding to create works of art that represent their growing understanding of who they are.

BEGINNER BAND

Beginner Band is designed for students who are interested in learning how to play a musical instrument and become part of a collaborative musical ensemble. This course aims to provide students with a solid foundation in instrumental music through hands-on instruction, individual practice, and ensemble playing. Students will also learn the importance of teamwork and cooperation as they work together to create beautiful music as part of the band ensemble. Through regular rehearsals and performances, students will develop their musical skills while building confidence and a sense of accomplishment.

Please note: Students are required to provide their own instruments for this band course. If you do not own an instrument, please consult with Mr. Chung for guidance on instrument rental or purchase options. Having access to your own instrument will ensure that you can fully participate and engage in the learning process throughout the duration of the course.

DESIGN, BUILD, REPEAT

This course will introduce students to the technologies of the TNCS makerspace. Students will learn how to design a product using the design thinking process, build a prototype of their idea, and then refine the idea into a final product. Areas that will be covered include 3D printing, robotics, electronics, VR and AR technologies, drone/UAV building and flight, and digital media. Students will be encouraged to utilize their own ideas in each build. By the end of the course, students will have a strong set of skills and foundational knowledge about the emerging technologies used in the makerspace.

DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY

In this hands-on course students will learn to operate a DSLR camera through participation in a variety of projects. Each unit project will incorporate a variety of composition and design elements that allow students to become familiar with camera features, as well as what it takes to compose and set up a well-crafted photo. Students utilize a variety of editing tools to enhance and refine their photographs. Students will reflect upon their learning and share photographic works in a digital format.



INTRODUCTION TO 2D AND 3D ANIMATION

Dive into the captivating world of animation with this semester-long course designed specifically for middle school students. Whether you're dreaming of creating your own animated short or simply curious about how animated movies are made, this course offers a comprehensive introduction to the fundamentals of 2D and 3D animation. Through hands-on projects, students will learn the art of bringing characters and stories to life, understanding the mechanics behind animation, and exploring the principles of good storytelling.

INTRODUCTION TO GUITAR AND UKULELE

Introduction to Guitar and Ukulele is a beginner's course of fundamental guitar or ukulele instruction. Students receive individual and group instruction in tuning, notes, scales, chords, tablature and strum charts, basic song structure, and small group performance. Students can progress at their own pace and are encouraged to focus on music and songs they find most appealing. The emphasis is on contemporary guitar music, though there are brief introductions of classical guitar and standard notation. In addition, students have opportunities to try other instruments such as keyboard, percussion, banjo, and bass guitar.

MUSICAL THEATER

Dive into the dynamic world of musical theater in our comprehensive class! Students of all levels will explore singing, dancing, and a touch of acting, with a strong focus on vocal training. From Broadway classics to modern hits, students will tackle diverse styles and genres, preparing them for potential performances, including Christmas caroling events and Valentine's Day serenades. Through individual and group exercises, they'll hone their vocal skills, creativity, and collaboration abilities, while also delving into character development and stage presence. Whether seasoned performers or newcomers, all will find a supportive environment to shine. Join us for an enriching journey into the magical realm of musical theater!

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