Briarcliff School

Mountain Lakes, New Jersey
Course of Studies
2026 - 2027



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ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

LANGUAGE ARTS (READING) - Grade Six

The primary purpose of the sixth-grade reading program is to create a supportive classroom environment rich in learning opportunities that help students grow into competent, confident, and joyful readers. Students engage with a wide range of literary materials, including novels, biographies, interviews, short stories, poems, magazines, newspapers, and one another's writing. Through literary analysis, students regularly practice making comparisons, predictions, and connections while developing critical and creative thinking skills. Students are encouraged to ask thoughtful questions, participate in both small- and whole-group discussions, value their own ideas, and respect diverse interpretations. They explore themes and values within texts, prepare and share written responses, and, through this collaborative process, develop into reflective, critical readers and thinkers.

LANGUAGE ARTS (WRITING) - Grade Six

The sixth grade English Program is designed to promote student competence in the areas of writing, including grammar, syntax, spelling, mechanics, as well as style and writing as an art form; speaking and listening, including formal speeches and individual and group presentations; and research, including projects and inquiry based reports. Students are engaged in many projects throughout the year that promote skills in planning, organizing, researching, analyzing and evaluating. The approach for delivering instruction is based on the philosophy that education is most effective when students are engaged in meaningful activities in which they can develop skills in English while enjoying themselves. The daily activities and projects give the child the experience and skills for a sound educational foundation in the Language Arts.

LANGUAGE ARTS - Grade Seven

The seventh grade Language Arts course utilizes the research-proven structures of best practice teaching. These include but are not limited to small group activities, reading as thinking, representing to learn, classroom workshops, authentic experiences, and reflective assessment, all integrated into thematic units. Through the use of whole books, primary sources, and digital materials, students use hands-on learning to develop higher-order thinking skills through a

deep study of a smaller number of topics. By teaching the students to connect new concepts with existing understanding, the students respond actively to explore and acquire new information so as to best shape it into meaningful knowledge.

LANGUAGE ARTS - Grade Eight

The eighth grade Language Arts program is designed to help students further develop and strengthen skills in several areas, including: reading literature and informational texts, writing for various purposes and audiences, speaking and listening and language skills. The course is designed around thematic units that contain varied genres and assignments to engage the students in the learning process. Through class work, short-term assignments and long-term projects, students are actively involved in their education and are self-directed learners. To ensure that students are exposed to a wide variety of texts, students explore novels, short stories, poetry and dramas, as well as informational texts such as news articles, journals and essays. These works cover issues that transcend time and place and connect directly to the lives of the students.

Writing stems from the ideas in these works. Students write routinely over short and extended time frames for varied purposes – to persuade, inform and narrate. Mastery of specific skills is associated with each type of writing. Peer-editing, one-on-one teacher conferences, self-reflection and portfolio building are all parts of the writing process. A final writing assessment occurs through a research project that culminates in an MLA style research paper.

The use of technology is employed to produce writing that demonstrates a command of grade-appropriate language skills. Language skills are strengthened through extensive vocabulary assignments, also stemming from the texts. In addition to defining the vocabulary words, students show mastery of definitions by using these words in their own writing assignments. A student-centered approach discussion of the literature allows students to be active participants in the learning process. Students work creatively and collaboratively with their peers to engage in small group and whole class discussions, research projects and group presentations. With a strong emphasis on reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language skills throughout the year, students are well prepared to enter high school.

MATHEMATICS

MATHEMATICS - Grade Six

The Math 6 course aligns with the New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS), building upon the knowledge gained in previous grades. This course is designed to make math relevant and rigorous for every child. Students will engage in meaningful learning experiences that enhance their ability to apply procedures efficiently, flexibly, and accurately. Additionally, they will learn to transfer these procedures to real-world problems and contexts. Teachers will differentiate the level of rigor in this course according to individual student needs.

The Grade 6 Math curriculum covers a diverse range of topics. Students will acquire a solid understanding of ratio concepts and apply ratio reasoning to solve problems. Expanding on their prior knowledge, students will interpret and calculate quotients of fractions, tackling word problems involving the division of fractions by fractions. They will also engage in dividing multi-digit numbers and performing operations with multi-digit decimals, including addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division using the standard algorithm.

Additionally, the curriculum covers the identification of common factors and multiples, extending numerical understanding to the system of rational numbers. Students will further apply and extend arithmetic principles to algebraic expressions, developing the skills to reason about and solve one-variable equations and inequalities. They will also learn to represent and analyze quantitative relationships between dependent and independent variables. Real-world applications will be explored, including areas such as surface area and volume. Moreover, students will delve into statistical concepts, fostering an understanding of variability and gaining proficiency in summarizing and describing distributions. Throughout the course, there will be a consistent emphasis on mathematical reasoning, mathematical modeling, as well as problem-solving in real-world settings.

MATHEMATICS - Grade Seven

Math 7

Math 7 aligns with the New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS), building upon the knowledge gained in previous grades. This course is designed to make math relevant and rigorous for every child. Students will engage in meaningful learning experiences that enhance their ability to apply procedures efficiently, flexibly, and accurately.

Additionally, they will learn to transfer these procedures to real-world problems and contexts. Teachers will differentiate the level of rigor in this course according to individual student needs.

The Math 7 curriculum covers a broad array of topics, including the analysis of proportional relationships for solving both real-world and mathematical problems. It extends the application of prior knowledge on operations with fractions to encompass the addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division of rational numbers. Students will leverage properties of operations to create equivalent expressions and address practical challenges through numerical and algebraic expressions and equations. They will also engage in drawing, constructing, and describing geometrical figures, elucidating the relationships between them. Problem-solving extends to real-life and mathematical scenarios, incorporating angle measurement, area, surface area, and volume. The curriculum introduces the use of random sampling for making inferences about populations and encourages informal comparative inferences between two populations. Additionally, students will explore chance processes and develop, apply, and assess probability models. Throughout this course, emphasis will be placed on mathematical reasoning, mathematical modeling, and problem-solving in real-world settings.

Math 7 Accelerated

Math 7 Accelerated covers the same New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS) and topics that are taught in Math 7, as well as topics that are found in Math 8 New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS). This course also advances at an accelerated pace, presenting students with more challenging coursework. Furthermore, this course serves as preparation for accelerated entry into Algebra 1 in the 8th grade. Students enrolled will not only cover the grade 7 NJSLS as well as topics that are found in grade 8 NJSLS, but will also extend their knowledge to delve into crucial algebraic topics related to the number system, expressions, and equations, thereby laying a foundation for the study of Algebra. Throughout this course, emphasis will be placed on mathematical reasoning, mathematical modeling, and problem-solving in real-world settings.

MATHEMATICS - Grade Eight

Math 8

Math 8 aligns with the New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS), building upon the knowledge gained in previous grades. This course is designed to make math relevant and rigorous for every child. Students

will engage in meaningful learning experiences that enhance their ability to apply procedures efficiently, flexibly, and accurately. Additionally, they will learn to transfer these procedures to real-world problems and contexts. Teachers will differentiate the level of rigor in this course according to individual student needs.

The Math 8 curriculum covers various topics. Students will delve into the number system, recognizing the existence of non-rational numbers and approximating them through rational numbers. They will gain an understanding of the properties of both rational and irrational numbers, working with radicals and integer exponents. There is also a focus on the interconnections between proportional relationships, lines, and linear equations. Students will analyze and solve linear equations, including pairs of simultaneous linear equations. Additionally, they will define, evaluate, and compare functions, utilizing functions to model relationships between quantities.

The course also extends into the realm of geometry, where students will grasp concepts of congruence and similarity using physical models, transparencies, or geometry software. Students will learn and apply the Pythagorean Theorem. Real-world and mathematical problem-solving will involve applications of these mathematical principles, particularly in determining the volume of cylinders, cones, and spheres. Statistics and probability topics include the exploration of patterns of association in bivariate data, adding a statistical dimension to the comprehensive understanding of mathematical concepts. Throughout this course, emphasis will be placed on mathematical reasoning, mathematical modeling, as well as problem-solving in real-world settings.

Algebra 1

This traditional high school Algebra 1 course is open to students who have completed Math 7 Accelerated, as well as a small cohort of extremely high-achieving math students who qualified to skip Math 7 Accelerated.

Algebra 1 will prepare students with a solid algebraic foundation necessary for advanced mathematics courses. Students will explore the properties of the real number system and rational numbers, along with their relationships. Topics include the arithmetic of polynomials, rewriting expressions, solving systems of equations, as well as solving and representing equations and inequalities graphically. Additionally, students will study linear and quadratic functions and engage in a foundational exploration of exponential functions. The foundations of statistics, such as interpreting categorical and quantitative data, and linear models, will also be investigated. Throughout this course,

emphasis will be placed on mathematical reasoning, mathematical modeling, as well as problem-solving in real-world settings.

Geometry

This traditional high school Geometry course is open to grade 8 students who have completed Algebra 1. The course emphasizes topics inherent to the Euclidean plane and solid geometry, with a focus on using deductive reasoning and proofs to develop a conceptual understanding of geometric properties. Topics include similarity and congruence, the transformation of such figures, angle relationships, perpendicular lines, parallel lines, properties of triangles, other polygons, and circles, as well as exercises involving constructions and loci. Coordinate geometry will be developed and applied algebraically. Students will study applications in the area of 2-dimensional shapes, as well as the surface area and volume of 3-dimensional figures. Foundational trigonometry will also be explored. Throughout this course, emphasis will be placed on mathematical reasoning, mathematical modeling, and problem-solving in real-world settings.

SOCIAL STUDIES

SOCIAL STUDIES - Grade Six

The sixth grade Social Studies curriculum continues the focus of American history that began at Wildwood. Students will continue their exploration of U. S. history from the Constitutional Convention to Reconstruction (1787- 1877). During the second half of the year, the students will focus on civics education to ensure students see themselves as active citizens. The chronology of events, which occurred in the United States, is examined through a thematic approach. The concepts of society, politics, economy, industry and technology, as well as American ideals, will be traced throughout these time periods. Students will come to recognize these themes, their interplay and their impact on life in America. In the 6th grade Social Studies Curriculum students will develop skills in research and organization, geography, and historical analysis.

SOCIAL STUDIES - Grade Seven

Students explore the history of mankind from its earliest beginnings through the ancient civilizations that had a great impact upon the Western World. Special emphasis is placed on examining how the ancient civilizations of Mesopotamia, Egypt, Israel, Greece and Rome have impacted our culture and lives today. Historical content is combined with the practice of important Social Studies skills such as map reading, timeline construction, historical research, non-fiction reading and note-taking, persuasive writing and public speaking. This is the first of a two-part sequence continued in the eighth grade.

SOCIAL STUDIES - Grade Eight

The eighth grade Social Studies program constitutes the culmination of the three-year sequence of study for the middle school. Students will learn about how the world changed after the collapse of the Roman Empire exploring civilizations and cultures from around the globe between the 5th and 18th centuries CE. They will be introduced to the development of countries, governments, language, and culture while delving deeper into how the changes they wrought continue to affect our modern world. In addition, students will learn about how the Age of Exploration and colonization continues to impact our present. While covering these groups and their interactions with one another, we will

consider multiple perspectives, value diversity and promote cultural understanding.

SCIENCE

SCIENCE - Grade Six

The sixth grade introductory Earth Science program focuses on five basic units of study: The Metric System, Earth in Space, Meteorology, Oceanography, and Geology. Students are engaged in labs, and problem-solving activities (both indoor and out), including STEM projects.

The major goal of science in grade six is to nurture in the student an appreciation and enthusiasm for science. It shows students how earth science is incorporated into their everyday life and how ethical decision-making relates to the health of the planet.

SCIENCE - Grade Seven

The Life Science curriculum in grade seven introduces students to basic biological concepts using a "hand-on" approach. The year begins with an introduction to the scientific method, the development of controlled experiments, and metric measurement. Once these are mastered, the students discover what it really means to be "alive" by identifying the characteristics and needs of living things.

A unit on the use of the microscope allows the students' understanding of life to move to the cellular level by studying the function of the organelles and the many processes cells must perform to keep an organism functioning. These include diffusion, osmosis, photosynthesis, cellular respirations, DNA replication, protein synthesis, mitosis, and meiosis. Basic genetics, heredity, mutations, natural selection, survival of the fittest, and evolution are taught to explain the development of and diversity among the species. The remainder of the year is spent exploring how organisms are classified and named and the characteristics that place them into particular taxonomic groups.

PHYSICAL SCIENCE - Grade Eight

Eighth grade Physical Science is an introductory course in chemistry, physics, and energy designed to provide students with a basis for further study in the high school science courses, as well as having practical applications to the student's everyday life. Included are student activities, laboratory experiments, demonstrations, and many opportunities for written and oral expression, application of math skills, note-taking, test-taking, and media-based research.

WORLD LANGUAGES

INTRODUCTION TO LANGUAGE & CULTURE: FRENCH OR SPANISH - Grade Six

This course is designed for all students in the 6th grade as a survey in the World Languages discipline, specifically French or Spanish. The class is structured as a thirty-five day classroom experience whose goal is to expose students to the various cultural and linguistic topics that they will explore in further detail as they move forward into full-year World Language study in the 7th and 8th grades. In addition, the course will include activities that foster the goals of the district's former and current Long Range Education Plans, including our 21st Century Skills initiative.

Students entering 6th grade will have had world language instruction at Wildwood Elementary School. Wildwood's program provides their students with a full year of study in each language, allowing them to compare and make an informed decision at the end of 5th grade. Briarcliff's 6th grade World Language Course will allow students to build on their previous knowledge and empower them to make a decision in the choice of world language study going into the 7th and 8th grades.

SPANISH I - Grade Seven

Spanish Ia (grade 7) is presented as the first part of a two-year alternative curriculum to the comparable one-year curriculum offered at the high school level. Although the topics of both curricula vary little, the Spanish Ia (grade 7) course employs a style of presentation geared to the middle school student. There is more emphasis on oral communication, and less on written communication. There is also less emphasis on grammar. The course is organized in manageable increments using an on-line textbook and aims to develop linguistic proficiency, cultural awareness and study/time management skills. Achievable functional objectives are attained using a variety of instructional techniques, activities and technology. Basic study skills such as note taking, organization and time management will be covered. Evaluation of students' performance will include various assessment strategies such as quizzes, group projects and graded assignments.

FRENCH Ia - Grade Seven

French Ia (grade 7) is presented as the first part of a two-year alternative curriculum to the comparable one-year curriculum offered at the high school level. Although the topics of both curricula vary little, the French Ia (grade 7) course employs a style of presentation geared to the middle school student. There is more emphasis on oral communication, and less on written communication. There is also less emphasis on grammar. The course is organized in manageable increments using an on-line textbook and aims to develop linguistic proficiency, cultural awareness and study/time management skills. Achievable functional objectives are attained using a variety of instructional techniques, activities and technology. Basic study skills such as note taking, organization and time management will be covered. Evaluation of students' performance will include various assessment strategies such as quizzes, group projects and graded assignments.

SPANISH Ib - Grade Eight

Spanish Ib (grade 8) is presented as the second part of the two-year alternative curriculum to the comparable one-year curriculum offered at the high school level. Although the topics of both curricula vary little, the Spanish 1b (grade 8) course employs a style of presentation geared to the middle school student. There is more emphasis on oral communication, and less on written communication. There is also less emphasis on grammar. This course is organized in manageable increments with an aim to develop linguistic proficiency, cultural awareness and study skills. Achievable functional objectives are attained using a variety of instructional techniques, activities and technology. Basic study skills such as note taking, organization and test taking will be covered. Evaluation of students' performance will include various types of assessment strategies such as tests, quizzes, class participation, and homework and group projects.

FRENCH Ib - Grade Eight

French Ib (grade 8) is presented as the second part of the two-year alternative curriculum to the comparable one-year curriculum offered at the high school level. Although the topics of both curricula vary little, the French 1b (grade 8) course employs a style of presentation geared to the middle school student. There is more emphasis on oral communication, and less on written communication. There is also less emphasis on grammar. This course is organized in manageable increments with an aim to develop linguistic proficiency, cultural awareness and study skills. Achievable functional objectives are

attained using a variety of instructional techniques, activities and technology. Basic study skills such as note taking, organization and test taking will be covered. Evaluation of students' performance will include various types of assessment strategies such as tests, quizzes, class participation, and homework and group projects.

STRATEGIES INTERVENTION

STRATEGIES INTERVENTION - Grades Six, Seven, & Eight

The Strategies Intervention Program provides targeted academic and study skills support for students who require reinforcement. Eligibility is determined through standardized test data, classroom observations, teacher or parent recommendations, or as part of a formal intervention plan. Depending on their needs, students may receive instruction one to three periods per week during Physical Education, Allied Classes, or Reinforcement time. Interventions focus on addressing specific areas of weakness and reinforcing grade-level skills aligned with the curriculum. Collaboration with content area teachers ensures students develop effective strategies to support their academic success.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

SPECIAL EDUCATION - Grades Six, Seven, Eight

Teachers in the Special Education Department work to meet the needs of each individual student, by following the guidelines set forth in each Individualized Education Program (IEP). Most Special Education teachers are assigned to various subject areas and provide In-Class Support. Most Special Education students are scheduled for Supplemental periods throughout the week where they are taught important skills necessary to help them manage the demands of their curriculum.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

PHYSICAL EDUCATION & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Students will be exposed to personal training and various individual and team sports and activities.

Personal Training

All students will be pre and post-tested yearly. Beginning in sixth grade, students will be introduced to foundational exercises, methods, and techniques for developing their personal training repertoire. Seventh and eighth grade students will continue to build upon these areas toward individual mastery.

Sport and Cooperative Games
All grade levels will focus on life lessons learned as the main component of fair play, while developing personal skills, game strategies, and leadership through various team and individual sports and activities.

ALLIED

ART - Grades Six, Seven, Eight

Art is constantly growing and changing. Here in Briarcliff Middle School's Visual Art Program the students are challenged and given the opportunity to see what the world of art has to offer with a comprehensive, progressive program that builds on skills year after year.

In **6th Grade Art,** students are exposed to various drawing techniques to create a foundation for illustrating a range of subject matter. This foundation in drawing builds into developing painting and sculpting techniques (two-dimensional and three-dimensional art).

7th Grade Art provides students a knowledge of various techniques of urban typography from around the globe. Students will experience art as it is viewed and created through the influence of cultures in different parts of the world.

8th Grade Art helps students see the possibilities of art as a graphic design career. By combining the knowledge gained through 6th grade art foundations and their experience with typography techniques learned in 7th grade, students consider and use graphic design elements such as logo design, package design, advertising, and illustration.

Grades 6 through 8 provide comprehensive instruction and application of the elements and principles of art. Students will be able to create various works that are seen in different artistic cultures. Throughout their experience, art history is infused so that students can grasp the meanings and cultures underlying each piece they create.

LAKE DRIVE 8th PERIOD ART

In this full year course, students work on projects focusing on the elements of art and principles of design through various art mediums. Students experience comprehensive instruction and application of the elements and principles of art. Students will be able to create various works that are seen in different artistic cultures. Throughout their experience, art history is infused so that students can grasp the meanings and cultures underlying each piece they create.

COMMUNICATIONS - Grade Seven

In today's world of excessive text messaging and electronic mail correspondence, interpersonal verbal communication skills continue to be a necessary need of instruction in our school. The 7th Communications Allied class will be taught the elements of communication and furthermore, learn how these elements satisfy one's social and professional needs and overall decision-making. The students will be able to identify the six ingredients to becoming an effective communicator, which will be assessed in a variety of speeches. These speeches include: Persuasive, Impromptu, and a demonstration speech.

COMPUTERS - Grades Six, Seven, Eight

The Allied Computers 8-week cycle course is based on the 2020 NJSLS Computer Science and Design Thinking standards, as well as the Career Readiness, Life Literacies, and Key Skills' Personal Financial Literacy standards. Using technology tools such as Google Workspace for Education, Canva, Code.org, and Everfi, students engage in units on coding, financial literacy, design thinking, and digital citizenship while integrating concepts from math, science, language arts, and creative arts. Students work both independently and in small groups, with opportunities to advance at their own pace or receive additional support to meet their individual needs and potential.

HEALTH - Grade Six

This is the beginning health class for Briarcliff students. The six-grade health class focuses on eleven different body systems; students learn the purpose and function of each system. With this health knowledge, the students learn to respect and care for their bodies. They understand healthy eating habits and daily exercise can lead to whole body wellness.

HEALTH - Grade Seven

This course is the second part of a two-year program to give each student a greater understanding of the concept of optimum health and wellness. Seventh graders will start by reviewing the three components of health (mental, physical and emotional). Content includes resolving conflict, understanding positive and negative aspects of behavior and knowing what stress is and how it can be resolved. Students are introduced to mindfulness promoting activity, including yoga & mediation. Decision making, mental fitness, communication skills, and

relationships will also be thoroughly reviewed and expanded upon. Diseases - communicable and noncommunicable, including HIV, will be included. The decision making process is emphasized, encouraging the student to make sound choices as he/she matures. Through the integration of mindfulness, the student will develop the skills necessary to help protect him/her from risk behaviors identified by the Center of Disease Control and Prevention and in turn continue their journey towards optimum health and wellness.

HEALTH - Grade Eight

The purpose of the eighth grade health course is to develop an awareness and understanding of the physical and emotional changes, which occur during adolescence. Emergency first aid and safety skills are also studied. The course is designed to foster the development of sound judgments and decision-making, especially in reference to personal fitness & diet choices and how it impacts their lives.

MUSIC - Grades Six, Seven, Eight

Allied Music is a comprehensive general music course designed to develop a foundational understanding of music theory, history, and performance techniques. Through the study of key musical concepts, students will enhance their listening and analytical skills while exploring the fundamentals of music appreciation. Utilizing classroom instruments and music technology, students engage in both individual and collaborative music-making experiences. The course also provides exposure to various historical musical eras, essential elements of music theory, and discussions on the aesthetics of music and its significance in society.

Allied Music 6: This course's main focus is studying the main elements of music such as rhythm, melody, form, style, dynamics, tempo and how they are used to make music.

Allied Music 7: This course's main focus is studying World Music and the connection it has to all different region's music.

Allied Music 8: This course's main focus is studying the Music Industry, Music Technology, and emerging music media in the 20th century.

SIGN LANGUAGE – Grade Eight

The Sign Language allied rotation course is an introduction to basic expressive and receptive Sign Language and an overview of the history of the Deaf community and "Deaf Culture." Students will learn the

Manual Alphabet and will develop a sign language vocabulary base of 250 signs or more of common conversational words and phrases. The students will explore cultural and historic events of the Deaf community through selected readings, films, news articles and class discussions.

PERIOD 9 OVERVIEW

Period 9 provides students with various opportunities to enrich and support their learning. During this time, students may participate in music ensembles, elective courses, enrichment classes, supplemental support, or reinforcement sessions.

- Music Ensembles – Students enrolled in Band, Strings, or Chorus meet twice a week with their respective teacher, while Select Choir meets once a week.
- Elective Classes – If their schedule allows, students may enroll in electives such as Advanced Art, Movie Production, Computer Programming, and Introduction to the Stock Market.
- Enrichment Classes – Students who do not take an elective will participate in one to three Enrichment (PEP) Classes, which change each semester.
- Supplemental Support – Students receiving services from the Special Services Department have the opportunity to meet with their Special Education Teacher during Period 9, with scheduling coordinated by their Case Manager.
- Reinforcement Classes – If a student does not have a scheduled class (Elective, Enrichment, or Supplemental) on a particular day, they will be placed in a Reinforcement Class, similar to a study hall. During this time, students are expected to work quietly on assignments and may visit teachers for extra help.

ELECTIVES

ADVANCED ART

In Advanced Art, students develop their artistic skills through independent study projects. They select a personal artistic theme and express it visually through project prompts using various media, including drawing, painting, mixed media, sculpture, digital painting, and graphic design. To inspire their work, students explore both modern and historical artists. By the end of the course, they will have a well-crafted portfolio showcasing diverse media and techniques, suitable for high school and art portfolio reviews. Students select **two** days per week to attend.

BAND - Grades Six, Seven, Eight

Students that participate in the Briarcliff band program will have the opportunity to perform and experience the art of music twice a week as a large ensemble and once a week in a like-instrument lesson. Students will expand their knowledge of their instrument and further develop their technical skills. Students will also explore musical concepts such as harmony, rhythm, pitch, and musicality through performance and discussion. Students will develop vital life skills such as responsibility, compassion, and integrity. All students are welcomed regardless of experience. The students perform a winter and spring concert.

CHORUS - Grades Six, Seven, Eight

The choral program is designed to provide students with experiences which center around good choral singing. Students are challenged to examine principles of good tone production. Through diligent co-operative experiences in singing, students explore the necessary discipline required to elevate performance materials to works of art. Diction, blend, pitch, breath control, phrasing, mood-interpretation and tone color form the foundation of concepts and skills which engage students in their efforts to honor the intentions of each composer's work. Students are expected to exhibit poise, focus and responsiveness to the conductor's gestures during performance. Moreover, students are expected to don performance dress, in a manner directed by the conductor.

INTRODUCTION TO COMPUTER PROGRAMMING - Grades Six, Seven, Eight

In this semester-long elective, students will explore the fundamentals of Python, JavaScript, and HTML through interactive online platforms and hands-on experience with Finch 2.0 robots. They will work both collaboratively in small groups and independently, with teacher guidance and support. Through self-paced, self-guided lessons, students will develop problem-solving skills while gaining a deeper understanding of the code behind "block-type" programming.

INTRODUCTION TO THE STOCK MARKET

In this elective semester course, students will explore the fundamentals of the stock market and investing using the interactive online platform *How The Market Works*. Through engaging lessons, students will build a foundation in investment concepts and develop practical skills by creating and managing their own simulated portfolios. Students will learn to analyze market trends, understand economic factors, and research SEC filings to make informed investment decisions. The course will also cover the advantages and disadvantages of various investment types, including stocks, bonds, ETFs, REITs, and mutual funds, offering hands-on experience and a deeper understanding of effective investment strategies.

MOVIE PRODUCTION

Stop motion animation films are a huge inspiration to modern animation films today, and they have even become a respected form of film-making in its own right. In this elective, students will explore the history of stop motion and gain insight into the behind-the-scenes work involved in creating an animated film. They will learn how to create character and environment designs as well as storyboards. Ultimately, students will create their own short stop motion film. By the end of the course, they will have a completed portfolio documenting their creative process, along with a finished film to present. Students select **two** days per week to attend.

MATH PLACEMENT

MIDDLE SCHOOL PLACEMENT RUBRIC

Students take a series of assessments in grade 6 to evaluate their math aptitude and progress during the year. The assessment scores are converted into rubric points (see table below). The grade 7 math course placement is determined by the total number of rubric points earned.

Middle School Placement Rubric 2025-2026		
Assessments	**Rubric Points**	**Rubric Weighting**
Summative Quarterly (End of Q1, Q2, Q3)	24	40%
NJSLA Math 6	24*	40%
CogAT*	12	20%
Total Rubric Points	**60**	**100%**

*Opt Out - if typical math progression is preferred

Math Course Placement	Total Rubric Points
Math 7	0-25
Math 7 Accelerated	26-45
Algebra	46-60