



Seoul International School

2026- 2027 Middle School Course Guide



15, Seongnam-daero 1518beon-gil, Sujeong-gu,
Seongnam-si, Gyeonggi-do,
South Korea 13113
Telephone: +82-31-750-1200
Fax: +82-31-759-5133
Website: www.siskorea.org

Head of School:
Middle School Principal:
ES/MS Assistant Principal:
Middle School Counselor:

Dr. James Gerhard, gerhardj@siskorea.org
Michael Gohde, gohdem@siskorea.org
Lindsey Hagen, hagenl@siskorea.org
Alyssa Haugen, haugena@siskorea.org



[Seoul International School is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges](#)

SIS Guiding Principles

Mission and Vision

Tiger Values

Middle School Program Overview

Middle School Course Descriptions

Core Classes

Language Arts

Mathematics

Science

Social Studies

Physical Education and Health

Performing Arts Electives

Band

Strings

Choir

Drama

Visual Art, Design, and Technology Electives

Visual Art

Design and Technology

Technology

World Language Electives

Chinese

Spanish

Enrichment Electives

Additional Courses

Seoul International School Guiding Principles

Vision Statement

Seoul International School will foster an earnest passion for learning that inspires students to work with others in creating a better world for all.

Mission Statement

Seoul International School develops inquisitive, independent thinkers and collaborative learners, who acquire the essential knowledge necessary to be caring and creative contributors to the world around them.

Core “TIGERS” Values

Students at Seoul International School will be:

- **T**rustworthy individuals who:
 - Demonstrate academic and personal integrity
 - Strive to reach their potential and have a realistic understanding of themselves
 - Volunteer time, energies and talents to improve the quality of life in the school
- **I**ndependent, critical thinkers who:
 - Solve problems creatively
 - Analyze, evaluate, synthesize and apply information
 - Show competence in research and study skills
- **G**lobal citizens who:
 - Value and preserve the environment
 - Understand that physical and mental well-being is a lifelong commitment
 - Accept and respect the diversity inherent in a multicultural world
- **E**ffective communicators who:
 - Understand oral and written information
 - Express themselves clearly, logically and creatively in oral, written and visual forms
 - Have the ability to integrate technology
- **R**eflective learners who:
 - Demonstrate knowledge with understanding
 - Apply and integrate skills and knowledge from multiple disciplines
 - Recognize and develop their strengths and talents
- **S**ocially responsible individuals who:
 - Collaborate meaningfully and efficiently on teams
 - Value their own contributions and those of others
 - Demonstrate responsibility and effective leaders

2026-2027 Middle School Program Overview

Core Courses: SIS requires five core classes each year in middle school.

Language Arts, grades 6-8
 Mathematics, grades 6-8
 Social Studies, grades 6-8
 Science, grades 6-8
 Physical Education, grades 6-8

Required Electives

Grade 6 students are required to enroll in-

- One Performing Arts music elective
- One Visual Arts and Design elective
- One Technology elective

Grade 7 & 8 students are required to enroll in one Performing Arts elective (music or drama).

Performing Arts Elective- Music

Band and Strings Courses

Beginning Band, grades 6-7
 MS Band, grades 6-8
 MS Strings, grades 6-8
 MS Wind Ensemble, grades 6-8
 MS Chamber Strings, grades 6-8
 Coda Orchestra, grades 7-8

Choir

Prelude Choir, grade 6
 Opus Choir, grades 7-8

Performing Arts Elective- Drama

Drama, 6-8

Visual Arts and Design Electives

Studio Art 6, grade 6
 2D Art, grades 7-8
 3D Art, grades 7-8
 Fabrication and Design, grade 6
 Technology and Design, grades 7-8

Technology Electives

Introduction to Coding, grades 6-8
 Advanced Coding, grades 7-8
 Robotics 1, grades 6-7-8
 Robotics 2, grades 7-8
 Applied Robotics, grades 7-8
 Textile Design, grades 7-8

World Language Electives

Chinese

Chinese 7- Introduction to Chinese Language and Culture, grade 7
 Chinese 1 (*High school level course*), grade 8

Spanish

Spanish Foundations, grade 6
 Spanish 7- Introduction to Spanish Language and Culture, grade 7
 Spanish 1 (*High school level course*), grade 8

Enrichment Electives

Around the World, grades 6-8
Book Club, grades 6-8
Creative Writing, grades 6-8
Drama, grades 6-8
Exploring Data, grades 7-8
Exploring Psychology, grades 7-8
Leadership, grades 7-8
Mindfulness & Wellbeing, grades 6-8
Mock Trial, grade 6
Model United Nations, grade 8
Newspaper, grades 6-8
Wild Seoul, grades 7-8

Middle School Course Descriptions

Core Courses

LANGUAGE ARTS

Language Arts 6

This foundational course cultivates fluency and confidence across reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Students engage with a rich array of fiction and nonfiction texts, sharpening comprehension, inference, and vocabulary as they encounter increasingly sophisticated ideas, and they learn to support every interpretation with clear evidence drawn directly from the text, a core habit of mind that underlies success in every discipline. Major texts in Grade 6 include *The House on Mango Street*, *Hatchet*, *The Giver*, and *World Without Fish*.

Writing instruction encompasses narrative composition, the construction of well-organized paragraphs, and an introduction to literary and expository essay forms, with particular attention to organization, precision of language, and the discipline of revision. Grammar and mechanics are taught in context through direct instruction and guided practice, building the command of standard English that college-preparatory writing demands, while structured speaking activities cultivate poise and clarity of oral expression.

The course is designed to guide students through the transition from elementary reading to the more independent, analytical engagement with texts that middle school requires.

Language Arts 7

Building upon the foundation established in sixth grade, this course invites students to move beyond the surface of a story to examine how authors construct meaning and why their craft choices matter. Students undertake close analysis of theme, figurative language, literary devices, and other elements that shape a text's significance, developing the interpretive sophistication that college-preparatory literature courses expect. Major texts in Grade 7 include *The Outsiders*, *Ender's Game*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and a selection of short stories.

Writing assignments expand to include the argumentative essay, literary analysis, and reflective composition, with sustained emphasis on drafting, teacher feedback, and revision as an ongoing intellectual process. Students refine their command of grammar and usage at a more advanced level, while deepening their analytical capacity through the disciplined use of textual evidence to support every claim they make.

Instruction reinforces careful reading and clear communication, cultivating students who read as thinkers that question, interpret, and defend their own considered interpretations of literature with the confidence and rigor that advanced coursework will demand.

Language Arts 8

This capstone course extends students' literary study to a broader canon, including novels of mature thematic complexity, nonfiction, and media texts. Students refine their skills in close reading, thematic analysis, and comparative interpretation, learning to evaluate and synthesize ideas across multiple works with the intellectual maturity college-preparatory high school English will require. Major texts in Grade 8 include *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *Fahrenheit 451*, *Farewell to Manzanar*, *The Omnivore's Dilemma*, and *Antigone*.

Writing instruction centers on the multi-paragraph analytical essay, in which students construct a thesis, marshal evidence, and build a structured argument, alongside continued reflective writing. Grammar and

usage are applied with increasing sophistication within analytical and argumentative contexts, polishing the command of language that distinguishes truly college-ready writers.

Students undertake a guided research paper or project, gathering and evaluating information from multiple credible sources, to strengthen their research and citation skills- work that prepares them for the writing and analytical expectations of higher level English courses and beyond.

MATHEMATICS

Math 6 (Pre-Algebra)

Math 6 represents the first year of an accelerated two-year mathematics sequence designed to prepare students for high-level high school coursework. This course condenses foundational mathematical concepts, challenging students to develop deep conceptual fluency rather than mere rote memorization. Through an investigative approach, students analyze linear functions, proportional relationships, and variable expressions, building the rigorous toolkit required for advanced mathematics.

The classroom experience is intentionally designed to foster intellectual growth through collaborative problem-solving. Students engage daily in critical analysis, constructing evidence, and communicating complex mathematical arguments. By working in study teams, they learn to share diverse perspectives, investigate real-world scenarios, and recognize the interconnected nature of mathematical concepts. This approach ensures that students not only master procedures but also develop the strategic competence and adaptive reasoning required to approach new, unfamiliar challenges with confidence.

Upon completion, students will have mastered a sophisticated set of skills, including solving multi-step equations, analyzing statistical data, and manipulating geometric figures. Beyond technical proficiency, this course transforms how students approach difficulty, teaching them to iterate on their understanding and persevere through complexity. By fostering both a deep understanding of mathematical structures and a growth mindset, we prepare our students to excel in the second year of this accelerated sequence and beyond.

Math 7 (Pre-Algebra)

Math 7 serves as the final year of our intensive two-year accelerated sequence, propelling students directly into the demands of rigorous, college-preparatory high school mathematics. This course advances beyond previous foundations, challenging students to construct deep conceptual understanding by investigating complex systems, geometric transformations, and symbolic manipulation. By analyzing relationships between graphs, tables, and rules, students gain a sophisticated toolkit that empowers them to navigate advanced algebraic problems with precision.

The classroom environment continues to foster intellectual growth through high-level collaborative problem-solving. Students engage daily in critical analysis, gathering evidence, and communicating rigorous mathematical arguments to justify their thinking. Working within study teams, students explore abstract concepts and real-world applications, ensuring they do not merely memorize formulas but actively develop the strategic competence required for success in high-school level coursework.

Upon completion, students will have mastered a robust set of skills, including solving systems of linear equations, applying the Pythagorean Theorem, and analyzing non-linear functions. Beyond technical proficiency, this course transforms how students approach difficulty, teaching them to persevere through complex, multi-layered problems. By fostering both a deep understanding of mathematical structures and a growth mindset, we equip our students to excel in their future academic careers and think critically in any context they encounter.

Math 8- Algebra 1

Math 8, or Algebra 1, serves as the first course in our comprehensive five-year mathematics sequence designed to lead students directly to Calculus. Building upon the strong foundation established in our two-year accelerated middle school program, this course transcends traditional computation, challenging students to move beyond memorization to achieve deep conceptual fluency of algebraic concepts. By analyzing linear, quadratic, and exponential functions through multiple lenses—graphical, numerical, symbolic, and sequential—students cultivate the high-level reasoning skills essential for success in advanced high school and college mathematics.

The classroom experience is intentionally designed to foster intellectual growth through collaborative problem-solving. Students engage daily in critical analysis, constructing evidence, and communicating complex mathematical arguments. By working in study teams, they learn to share diverse perspectives, investigate challenging real-world scenarios, and recognize the interconnected nature of mathematical concepts. This approach ensures that students not only learn procedures but also develop the strategic competence and adaptive reasoning required to solve new, unfamiliar challenges with confidence.

Upon completion, students will have mastered a sophisticated toolkit, including solving systems of equations, analyzing statistical data through regression, and utilizing function notation with precision. Beyond technical proficiency, this course transforms how students approach difficulty, teaching them to revisit topics, iterate on their understanding, and persevere through complexity. By fostering both a deep understanding of mathematical structures and a growth mindset, we prepare our students to excel in their future academic careers and to think critically and solve problems in any context they encounter.

SCIENCE

Science 6

Science 6 introduces foundational concepts across Chemistry, Biology, Earth Science, and Physics through a three-dimensional, inquiry-based approach aligned with the Next Generation Science Standards. Students learn to think as scientists, posing questions through the disciplinary lenses known as Crosscutting Concepts, conducting investigations through the Science and Engineering Practices, and building understanding through the Disciplinary Core Ideas.

Students engage in hands-on investigation, laboratory experimentation, STEM challenges, and data analysis that encourage them to think and work as scientists and engineers. They explore real-world phenomena, such as examining how salt affects the freezing point of ice cream within the Chemistry unit. In Physics, the Newton's Laws Mini-Golf Design Challenge invites students to apply their understanding of forces and motion as they design, construct, and test their own mini-golf holes. In Biology, students employ microscopes to examine cells and organisms and investigate the human body, with particular attention to the brain and nervous system; through hands-on experiences, including dissection, they observe biological structures firsthand and deepen their understanding of the body's workings. In an era increasingly shaped by artificial intelligence, these experiences afford students the opportunity to engage in authentic scientific inquiry beyond the screen or the textbook.

Science 6 establishes a strong foundation for rigorous science learning throughout the middle school years while cultivating independence, problem-solving, and scientific communication. By nurturing curiosity and encouraging students to inquire into the how and why of the natural world, the course prepares confident, inquisitive thinkers for the challenges of Science 7 and beyond.

Science 7

Building on foundational science concepts from elementary school and 6th grade science, Science 7 guides students through an exploration of Geology, Meteorology, Environmental Science and Physics. Grounded in the Next Generation Science Standards, students use the Science & Engineering Practices to engage in hands-on learning, active research, data analysis and investigative labs. Using Crosscutting Concepts,

students are challenged to think deeply, make connections, look for patterns and draw evidence-based conclusions.

Science 7 uses a rigorous, inquiry-led and phenomenon-driven approach to investigate real-world mysteries and uncover core scientific principles. Rather than simply learning facts, students actively engage in the scientific process: they explore the geological forces behind Mt. Everest's continuous movement and growth, conduct quantitative hands-on labs to measure the impact of carbon dioxide on thermal energy absorption, and witness the atmospheric magic of cloud formation firsthand. Rigorous engineering challenges, such as designing, testing and refining a container to maximize heat retention, help students apply properties of heat transfer. Additionally, physics concepts come to life through labs where students investigate kinetic energy using K'NEX ramps and roller coaster carts.

By prioritizing inquisitive thinking and evidence-based writing, Science 7 equips students with the skills necessary for 8th grade science and high school coursework. In addition to science skills and concepts, this course fosters deep curiosity, independent-thinking and collaborative work - shaping students into analytical, open-minded thinkers ready to tackle complex, real-world problems.

Science 8

Building upon the strong foundation laid in the sixth and seventh grades, Science 8 deepens students' understanding of the natural world by examining complex, interconnected systems across Chemistry, Biology, Evolutionary Science, and Astronomy. Aligned with the Next Generation Science Standards, the course challenges students to act as analytical investigators, employing the Science and Engineering Practices and Crosscutting Concepts. Rather than treating scientific disciplines in isolation, eighth graders learn to trace overarching themes- such as energy transfer, scale, and cause and effect- that bridge microscopic interactions to vast cosmic systems.

Science 8 emphasizes rigor, critical thinking, and the capacity to articulate not merely what occurs, but why. Students begin by examining atomic structure and chemical phenomena, designing marketing campaigns for individual elements in the "Buy My Element" project and analyzing gas production and temperature change through the "Reaction in a Bag" investigation. They then bridge chemistry to biological systems, observing energy transfer directly by quantifying oxygen output in the Floating Leaf Disk Photosynthesis laboratory and measuring cellular respiration in real time. Next, attention turns to the mechanisms of life, as students investigate DNA architecture, model patterns of inheritance, and examine how populations adapt through natural selection. The year culminates in a unit on Space Systems, in which students grapple with extreme scales of time, distance, and proportion to model celestial mechanics.

Through rigorous claim-evidence-reasoning frameworks and collaborative research, Science 8 equips students with the argumentative writing and data-synthesis skills essential to higher level science study. The curriculum cultivates autonomous, inquisitive problem-solvers capable of constructing sound, evidence-based arguments about the natural world. By fostering intellectual independence, critical inquiry, and a holistic understanding of science's role in shaping our past, present, and future, Science 8 ensures that students leave middle school as confident, scientifically literate thinkers, well prepared for high school and beyond.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Social Studies 6

The Grade 6 Social Studies curriculum lays a foundation in the study of geography. Students examine the physical and human characteristics of the Earth, deepening their understanding of our planet and our place within it. In studying peoples around the world, students compare patterns of development, standards of living, systems of government, and economic structures across the globe, while gaining a rich appreciation of global cultures and the historical forces that have shaped the world we inhabit.

Drawing on the C3 Framework, students develop the skills to pose compelling questions, examine evidence and sources, and take informed action across disciplines. Through case studies, such as the chocolate trade of the Ivory Coast and the one-child policy in China, students learn to analyze contemporary issues from an informed perspective.

Students also examine phenomena such as urbanization in growing cities like Shanghai, adaptation to mountainous environments as in Machu Picchu, cultural traditions from across the globe, and patterns of human migration. This course establishes the foundation for subsequent Social Studies coursework and cultivates the habits of mind of an informed citizen, both within the classroom and beyond it.

Social Studies 7

Grade 7 Social Studies is a year-long course, aligned with the C3 Framework, that explores two essential questions: How do societies organize power, and how do they organize resources? Students pursue these questions across six units, beginning with the origins of government and law and progressing through modern systems of governance, political revolution and civic participation, economics, market systems, and globalization.

Throughout the course, students examine a range of primary and secondary sources, including Hammurabi's Code, the Mayflower Compact, political cartoons, propaganda posters, and historical texts. Students regularly compare the American experience with examples drawn from other countries, cultures, and historical periods, developing an appreciation for the diversity of political and economic systems across time and place. This comparative approach cultivates critical thinking about how societies make decisions, distribute power, and respond to change.

Learning is assessed through a combination of traditional assessments and authentic performance tasks, including comparative presentations, structured debates, and document-based question essays. By the conclusion of the course, students will be able to explain how governments and economies are structured, how and why they evolve, and how to marshal evidence from primary and secondary sources in support of their own arguments about civic and economic life.

Social Studies 8

In Grade 8 Social Studies, students explore the development and transformation of human societies from the earliest civilizations through the Middle Ages. Rather than simply memorizing historical facts, students will investigate compelling questions such as "What makes a society powerful?" "What makes a leader great?" and "Why do civilizations change?" Through the study of civilizations across Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Americas, students will examine how geography, government, economics, technology, belief systems, and individual choices have shaped human history.

The course is grounded in the C3 Framework for Social Studies Standards, with particular emphasis on developing students as historians and critical thinkers. Students will regularly develop questions, evaluate primary and secondary sources, analyze evidence, compare perspectives, identify patterns of continuity and change, and construct evidence-based arguments. Students will also consider the limitations of historical evidence and recognize how historical interpretations change as new evidence or perspectives emerge.

Students will be challenged to move beyond simply asking "What happened?" toward asking "How do we know?" "Why did it happen?" and "How should we interpret it?" Throughout the year, students will read challenging texts, participate in discussions and debates, analyze historical evidence, and write arguments supported by evidence. The overarching goal is for students to understand not only the civilizations they study, but also how historians make sense of the past and how the past helps us understand the world we live in today.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND HEALTH

PE/Health 6

Students in Grade 6 will participate in a comprehensive program of physical education activity. They will learn and develop physical skills in a variety of areas in many individual and team sports. The focus in this grade is learning proper techniques, biomechanics, and exposure to small sided games. During the year, students will participate in some of the following units: Soccer, Volleyball, Basketball, Swimming, Badminton, Fitness, Field Strike and Run Games, Ultimate Frisbee, Indoor Games, and Cooperative Games.

In Health, students explore the physical, emotional, social, and cognitive changes that occur during puberty and adolescence. Activities and discussions will investigate how different factors impact growth and development, how the brain changes, and how puberty related changes can impact emotions, decision-making, relationships, behavior, and more. Students will build the skills to better understand themselves and navigate changes throughout their lives.

PE/Health 7

Students in Grade 7 will participate in a comprehensive program of physical education activity. They are expected to build upon previously learned physical skills in a variety of areas in many individual and team sports. During the year, students will actively participate and learn skills related to some of the following units: Soccer, Volleyball, Basketball, Swimming, Badminton, Fitness, Field Strike and Run Games, Ultimate Frisbee, Indoor Games, and Cooperative Games. The focus in this grade is further developing proper techniques, gaining a greater understanding of biomechanics, and exposure to small and large sided games.

In Health, students explore nutrition, healthy eating habits, and factors that influence the way students view food and their bodies. Activities and discussions will investigate common food and diet myths, evaluate nutrition labels and information, and assess the risks associated with dieting and disordered eating. Students will build the skills needed to make informed choices, build healthy relationships with food, and think critically about messages related to nutrition.

PE/Health 8

In grade 8, students are continuing to develop skills leaning towards application into game play. This course is created to promote a healthy lifestyle through different fitness activities while reinforcing a spirit of cooperation, fair play, and sportsmanship. The focus begins to shift to dynamic application of the previously learned skills in larger sided games. By their final year in middle school, students are encouraged to internally reflect on their personal motivation with physical activity. They will be guided into a more independent approach to thinking about the variety of sports and activities, in both class and beyond the PE classroom.

In Health, students will explore the influence of media and society on self-image and relationships. Activities and discussions will investigate topics such as beauty standards, communication, consent and boundaries, relationships and sexual health, and decision-making. Students will build the skills necessary to evaluate outside influences in order to make responsible choices about their health and well-being.

Performing Arts Electives

Band

Overview of Music Classes

- Beginning Band, grades 6 & 7
- MS Band and Strings, grades 6,7,8, 1-3 years experience, no audition required
- Wind Ensemble, grades 6,6,8, 2-3+ years experience, audition required
- Chamber Strings, grades 6,7,8, 4-5+ years experiences, audition required
- Coda Orchestra- grades 7 & 8, audition required

Note music course placement- All students can be enrolled in MS Band and MS Strings. In order to best meet the needs of all of our musicians we will ask for an audition recording for all students who wish to enroll in Wind Ensemble, Chamber Strings, and Coda Orchestra. Students in MS Band or MS Strings can work their way into Wind Ensemble and Chamber Strings with demonstrated improvement.

Beginning Band, Year-long

Beginning Band is a year-long course designed for students in Grades 6–7 who are new to playing a woodwind or brass instrument. No previous musical experience is required. At the beginning of the course, students participate in a selection process designed to identify an instrument that is a good fit for both the individual student and the ensemble. Beginning Band instruction focuses primarily on flute, clarinet, trumpet, and trombone. Students interested in percussion will first explore a woodwind or brass instrument and then demonstrate additional musical benchmarks before being considered for placement in the percussion section.

Students begin by learning how their instruments produce sound and developing a characteristic tone before progressing to fundamental performance skills and music literacy. Through individual and ensemble playing, students learn to read musical notation, understand essential musical terminology and concepts, and develop the skills necessary to rehearse and perform collaboratively. As their abilities progress, students are introduced to scales and increasingly challenging ensemble repertoire while developing confidence, independence, and responsibility as musicians. These experiences provide the musical foundation necessary for continued participation in the SIS Band Program. Beginning Band performs at the SIS Winter and Spring Concerts.

Middle School Band, Year-long

Middle School Band is a year-long ensemble for students in Grades 6–8 who have previous experience playing a band instrument. Students typically enter the course after completing SIS Beginning Band or with approximately one to three years of prior instrumental experience. The ensemble includes woodwind, brass, and percussion instruments and provides developing musicians the opportunity to strengthen their individual skills while learning to perform successfully as part of an ensemble.

Instruction emphasizes continued development of characteristic tone, rhythm and music literacy, scales, articulation, listening skills, and ensemble musicianship. As students progress, they encounter increasingly challenging repertoire and more independent musical parts, requiring greater individual preparation and responsibility. Students are expected to collaborate positively with their peers and apply musical concepts introduced during rehearsal through continued individual practice.

Performance is an important part of the Middle School Band experience. In addition to SIS concerts, students may pursue optional opportunities including honor-band auditions, solo and ensemble performances, and various festival experiences. Middle School Band prepares students for continued participation in advanced SIS ensembles, including Middle School Wind Ensemble, Coda Orchestra, High School Band, and High School Orchestra.

Middle School Wind Ensemble, Year-long

Middle School Wind Ensemble is a year-long, placement-based ensemble for accomplished and highly motivated band students in Grades 6–8. Placement is determined by audition. Students entering the ensemble typically have two to three years of experience on their instrument. The Wind Ensemble combines a developing middle school music curriculum with a high-quality performance experience designed for students who are ready for greater musical and individual responsibility.

Unlike a traditional symphonic band setting, Wind Ensemble musicians frequently perform more exposed and independent parts. Students therefore work to accelerate and refine their technical and musical skills through the study of scales, extended range, rhythm, characteristic tone, articulation, listening, and advanced ensemble repertoire. Members are expected to prepare their individual parts, collaborate effectively with other musicians, and contribute positively to the artistic development of the ensemble.

The Wind Ensemble represents SIS through school concerts and festival performances. Students also have the opportunity to pursue additional musical experiences including honor-band auditions, solo and chamber music, and regional and international music festivals. The course prepares students for continued participation in advanced SIS ensembles, including Coda Orchestra, High School Band, and High School Orchestra.

Strings

Middle School Strings, Year-long

General string orchestra designed for middle school students with some prior experience (1-3 years) playing a string instrument. Students will develop their technique, musicianship, and ensemble skills through the study of intermediate-level string repertoire. Students will work on proper playing technique, musical expression, sight-reading, and collaborative ensemble skills. Exception: 6+ months of experience for viola and double bass students.

Students will prepare a variety of repertoire and develop their ability to perform as an ensemble in a supportive and challenging environment. This ensemble will perform at the Winter and Spring Concerts, as well as participate in two festival opportunities during the school year. Students are expected to come prepared, participate actively in rehearsals, and demonstrate consistent growth as musicians and ensemble members.

Middle School Chamber Strings, Year-long

Select string orchestra designed for middle school students with 4-5+ years of experience playing a string instrument. Students will study advanced string repertoire while further developing their technical skills, musicality, and ensemble awareness. The course emphasizes refined playing technique, musical expression, sight-reading, and the ability to perform effectively as part of an advanced ensemble. Exception: 1+ year of experience for viola and 6+ months of experience for double bass. Students will be placed in this ensemble after successfully completing an audition with the Strings Director.

Students will prepare and perform a variety of challenging repertoire while developing independence, musicianship, and collaborative skills. This ensemble will perform at the Winter and Spring Concerts, as well as participate in various festival opportunities throughout the school year. Students are expected to demonstrate consistent preparation, active participation, and a high level of commitment to the ensemble. The course will provide students with a strong foundation for continuing their string orchestra experience at the high school level.

MS Coda Symphony Orchestra, Year-long

Full orchestra designed for advanced 7th and 8th grade musicians who are concurrently enrolled in a middle school instrumental ensemble. This ensemble performs full orchestra repertoire and serves as the

student's second music class. Students will develop their musicianship, technical skills, and ensemble awareness through the study and performance of challenging orchestral repertoire.

Students playing string instruments (violin, viola, cello, double bass) or band instruments (flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, French horn, saxophone, trumpet, trombone, baritone, tuba, percussion) are invited to submit an audition recording for review by the Band and Strings Directors. Admission will be based on the audition as well as the student's work ethic, preparation, and behavior in their previous band or strings class. This class will perform at the Winter and Spring Concerts and may also be invited to participate in the KAIAC Large Group Orchestra Festival. The course will provide students with a strong foundation for continuing their full orchestra experience at the high school level.

Choir

Prelude Choir, Year-long

Prelude Choir serves as an introduction to ensemble singing, designed to build vocal confidence, foundational musicianship, and creative expression. By learning choral repertoire spanning multiple musical styles, students develop core vocal techniques including healthy breath support, vowel shape, tone quality, and ensemble balance. Prelude singers study music theory to build music literacy, developing the ability to read notation and sight-read both pitch and rhythm with the tools practiced in class.

Designed as a stepping stone to prepare singers for continuing into Opus Choir, this course also offers opportunities for students to audition and participate in the national (KIMEA) honor choir festival. At SIS, students in Prelude perform in both the Winter and Spring Concerts. No prior experience is required, though a passion for singing and an ability to hold a tune are desirable.

Opus Choir, Year-long

Opus Choir serves to develop the voice through the physical changes of the teenage years while advancing ensemble technique and creative expression. By exploring more challenging repertoire requiring three- and four-part harmony, students refine core vocal skills including tone production, breath mechanics, vowel shape, and balance and blend. Singers continue their music theory study to strengthen music literacy, advancing their skills in sight-reading pitch and rhythm.

This class prepares 8th grade students to join Concert Choir the following year, and 7th grade students to become future leaders of Opus Choir. Opus Choir students have opportunities to audition for national (KIMEA) and international (AMIS) honor choir festivals. Students in Opus Choir participate in the KAIAC Large Group contest in the spring semester. At SIS, students in Opus perform in both the Winter and Spring Concerts. No prior experience is required, though a passion for singing and an ability to hold a tune are desirable.

Drama

Drama, Semester-long

The drama course introduces students to the creative world of theatre through imagination, collaboration, play, and practical exploration. Students will develop their confidence and communication skills while learning how to work together as an ensemble to create and make theatre.

Through improvisation, drama games and storytelling activities, students will explore how ideas can be transformed into characters, scenes, and performances. They will also learn how to work with scripts, exploring how words, characters, relationships, and stories can be brought to life on stage.

The course also introduces students to the different areas in making theatre beyond performing. Students will have opportunities to explore backstage elements such as costume, set design and props. By working collaboratively, students will experience how performers, writers, directors, and designers contribute their ideas and skills to create a piece of theatre together.

Visual Art, Design, and Technology Electives

All Visual Art, Design, and Technology courses are semester-long.

VISUAL ARTS

Studio Art 6

This is a beginning art class that teaches the elements of art and the principles of design. Students will explore basic art, media and techniques, such as drawing, painting, graphic design, photography, collage, ceramics, printmaking, sculpture and more to create an art portfolio and website. They will also learn art history.

2D Art

Students will step into the studio to transform their ideas into visual reality using the elements of art and principles of design. Through hands-on experimentation with drawing, painting, and mixed media, students develop their unique artistic voice while exploring art history. Throughout the semester, they will curate a digital portfolio that captures their creative journey from initial sketches to resolved artworks.

3D Art

Students in this elective will build and manipulate form and structure to explore the third dimension. Using the elements of art and principles of design, they will engineer and transform materials into 3D artworks by shaping, modeling, and assembling various media. Students will investigate the history of sculpture while building a digital portfolio that highlights the tactile process and progress of their creative problem-solving.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Grade 6- Design and Fabrication

Design and Fabrication is all about introducing sixth graders to hands-on creation, spatial reasoning, and the core principles of design thinking. Students begin by mastering structural forms, knots, braids, and weaves using tactile materials to develop fine-motor precision and spatial awareness. They quickly graduate to modern 3D design using Tinkercad, architecting spatial layouts like "Dream Rooms" and building physical cardboard prototypes for functional products, learning that iteration is the secret to engineering success.

The course culminates in an interdisciplinary Mars Rover challenge where students design physical models, collect and evaluate performance data, and visualize their analytics using Canva graphs. By documenting every stage of their work, young designers build foundational skills in data analysis, digital literacy, and creative problem-solving. This course equips students with the confidence, technical foundation, and critical thinking habits needed to thrive in upper-level design, STEM, and technology disciplines.

Grade 7 & 8- Technology and Design

Technology and Design is all about bridging fine art and high technology, empowering students to become visionary designers and skilled builders who solve real-world problems. The journey begins with workshop safety and physical crafting, where students construct balanced wooden sculptures before moving into precision vector design with Adobe Illustrator. Drawing inspiration from global design history including Modernism, Bauhaus, and Art Deco. Students learn how historic aesthetics inform modern product design and brand identity.

Students translate their digital blueprints into tangible creations by engineering functional products, such as custom table lamps and precision-crafted clocks, utilizing laser-cutting technology. Throughout the design process, learners document their technical reasoning and artistic choices in digital Canva reflection

portfolios. This course develops highly sought-after capabilities in technical communication, spatial geometry, and digital fluency, preparing students for advanced STEM and creative pathways.

Grade 7 & 8- Textile Design: Creativity in Fashion Design

Textile Design is all about transforming raw materials and creative vision into wearable, sustainable fashion by merging traditional craftsmanship with modern technology. Students dive into material science and fiber classification, conducting burn tests to understand the functional properties of natural versus synthetic textiles. Through hands-on projects in hand and machine sewing, cyanotype photographic printing, and garment upcycling, students learn how eco-friendly practices intersect with high-end apparel design. Slowly the studio transforms into a digital production lab, students master Adobe Illustrator to create custom textile patterns, vector logos, and professional direct-to-film (DTF) prints. Through draping studio simulations and silhouette studies, students take original fashion concepts from flat sketches to three-dimensional garments. Every student curates a professional digital e-portfolio, mastering visual storytelling, creative problem-solving, and industry-grade digital tools that connect directly to modern global design industries.

TECHNOLOGY

Introduction to Robotics: Robotics I

In this introductory Robotics elective, students learn to design, build, program, and test robots using the VEX IQ platform. Utilizing snap-together components, smart motors, and real-world sensors, VEX IQ provides an accessible, industry-standard toolkit that allows beginners to transition smoothly from intuitive builds to real engineering concepts. Through hands-on challenges, students develop computational thinking, problem-solving, and collaboration skills using the engineering design process.

Throughout the course, students explore how mechanical systems, physics, and programming work together. They investigate gear ratios, center of mass, friction, and motor power while building custom robots. Using VEXcode IQ, students progress from basic coding sequences and loops to integrating sensors, conditional logic, and autonomous movement.

As students take on engineering challenges and robotics competitions, they learn that successful designs require iteration. They test ideas, collect data, identify issues, and refine their builds based on evidence. Students also practice communicating ideas, maintaining engineering notebooks, working in team roles, and learning from both successes and failures. No previous robotics or coding experience is required- beginners are encouraged to join!

Robotics II

Advanced Robotics builds upon the foundational knowledge gained in Introduction to Robotics, challenging students to apply robotics, programming, and engineering skills to increasingly complex problems. Students explore autonomous navigation, sensors, mechanical systems, robot manipulation, and competition through hands-on engineering challenges.

Students develop advanced programming skills using sensors, loops, conditional logic, and algorithms while investigating gear ratios, stability, friction, and mechanical design. Through building, testing, debugging, and refining, students learn to use data and evidence to improve their designs.

As students prepare for VEX IQ competition, they develop strategies, practice specialized team roles, and strengthen communication and collaboration skills. The course emphasizes iterative design, problem solving, and learning from failure to create more effective robotic solutions.

Applied Robotics

Applied Robotics is a hands-on, project-based course for students with a strong foundation in VEX IQ or similar robotics platforms. Students prepare for the annual VEX IQ Robotics Competition by developing engineering skills, studying competition rules, planning robot designs, and working in specialized team roles.

Students use the engineering design process to build, test, and refine their robots while developing driving skills and competition strategies. Teams analyze scoring data, evaluate performance, and make mechanical and programming changes to improve their results through multiple competition cycles.

As the season progresses, students focus on precision tuning, autonomous routines, alliance strategies, and consistent competition performance. Collaboration, goal setting, engineering documentation, and reflection are emphasized throughout the course as students work toward a final championship event.

Introduction to Coding - Scratch Programming

In this course, middle school students explore creative computing using Scratch, the block-based programming environment built by MIT. Designed to build problem-solving skills and creative expression, the class introduces key computational concepts like sequence, loops, events, parallelism, conditionals, and variables. Learners cultivate a supportive design culture, discovering how to approach computer science as an expressive tool for imaginative projects.

Students plan, build, and refine diverse interactive media creations, including digital collages, animated music videos, multi-scene stories, and original video games. Working independently and in groups, learners apply the engineering design process through rapid experimentation, hands-on iteration, code remixing, and systematic debugging to resolve programming challenges.

Beyond coding skills, students build essential communication and critical thinking habits. They reflect on their progress using digital design journals and practice giving meaningful peer feedback. By the end of the course, students gain confidence taking ideas from concept to completion.

Advanced Coding- Python Programming

Advanced Coding offers an engaging dive into computer science through text-based Python programming. Grounded in the idea that learning should be fun and interactive, this course uses visual graphics to bring code to life. Students solve problems in a creative environment where instant visual feedback guides their progress. No prior coding experience is necessary.

Students write Python code using geometric shapes, colors, and positioning to create custom artwork and animations. As skills build, they incorporate mouse and key inputs, custom properties, and logic to build interactive projects and games. Through systematic debugging, students refine their code to solve real challenges.

By breaking complex ideas into manageable steps, students gain lasting logical thinking habits. They leave with strong problem-solving skills and confidence as digital creators.

World Language Electives

CHINESE

Chinese 7- Introduction to Chinese Language and Culture, Year-long

In 7th Grade Chinese, students will develop their listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills through a variety of engaging activities. This year-long course introduces students to basic Chinese language skills and cultural knowledge. The course is open to students with little or no Chinese.

The course incorporates the ACTFL Five C's: Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities. Students will learn the language needed to communicate meaningfully with others while gaining an understanding of Chinese culture. Students will also participate in hands-on cultural activities, such as making Chinese food and practicing calligraphy. Topics covered throughout the year include introductions, numbers, animals, festival celebrations, food and more.

Chinese 1, Year-long

Chinese 1 is a high school-level course that serves as the first step in an articulated Chinese language program leading to AP Chinese. Designed as an introduction to Mandarin Chinese, the course helps students build a strong foundation in the language through communicative classroom activities and online practice.

Throughout the course, students will develop essential language skills with an emphasis on accurate pronunciation, vocabulary, and basic grammar. By the end of the year, students will be able to participate in simple everyday conversations and read and write short passages in Chinese. Topics include self-introductions, date and time, family members, body parts, hobbies, occupations, and other aspects of daily life. Students will also explore various aspects of Chinese culture to deepen their understanding of the cultural context in which the language is used. Through language learning and cultural experiences, students will build a foundation for continued study in the Chinese language program.

SPANISH

Spanish Foundations, Semester-long

This course introduces the fundamentals of the Spanish language and the culture in which it is embedded. With the support of video, music, image, text, and game-based learning, students acquire an initial command of colors, numbers, greetings, family, friends, and community, and the course welcomes students with no prior exposure to Spanish.

As students continue their transition from elementary into middle school, the course's methodology relies less upon explicit grammatical instruction, allowing students instead to discover the principles of the language through inductive reasoning, supported by level-appropriate texts and instructor guidance. Culture occupies an important place in the course. Students learn to locate Spanish-speaking countries on a world map, understand the historical forces that made Spanish one of the world's most influential languages, and pursue independent research into topics of their own interest.

Spanish 7- Introduction to Spanish Language and Culture, Year-long

This year-long course will cover all the basic vocabulary and structures required for elementary interactions in Spanish, including expressing feelings, giving and receiving directions, describing surroundings, and engaging in basic conversation. The class will also devote time to culture in the Spanish speaking world. The culture segments of the class may include English.

As the first full year second language elective course students will take in middle school, students get to more deeply explore ACTFL Five C's: Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and

Communities. Special attention will be given to communication and cultures; the former with a solid foundation of grammar and vocabulary, the latter by understanding the history and culture of Latin America and Spain. The first two months of instruction will be traditional in nature: frontal instruction heavy approach. This is designed to ensure proper understanding of core language mechanics. After this period, the class shifts into a more project based rhythm, mixed with periodic summative assessments.

Spanish 1, Year-long

Anchored in the ACTFL World-Readiness Standards for World Languages, this course is the first in an articulated Spanish program culminating in AP Spanish. Students acquire additional tenses and grammatical structures, expanding their conversational range, while projects and games reinforce the concepts and vocabulary introduced in class. Vocabulary is organized thematically around subjects of relevance to students' lives, including family, technology, community, and the environment.

Spanish 1 is, for all intents and purposes, a high school course, and its pace and intensity reflect that standard, with several summative assessments each term. Though designed for beginners, students who wish to derive the greatest benefit from the course are encouraged to study at home and complete assignments using the online Vista Learning Component.

Enrichment Electives

SIS Middle School values promote exploration and well-roundedness. To that end, we offer enrichment elective courses to our sixth, seventh, and eighth graders. Courses vary year-to-year based on student interest and are one-semester long.

Around the World

This course focuses on explorations of the world around us and culminates in by-monthly presentations. Students will work in small groups and be given a different country every other week. They will research several aspects of the country, guided by the instructor, and they will present their findings orally and with minimal written aid. This course provides an excellent opportunity to practice public speaking and research skills.

Book Club

This class blends academic rigor with student choice, creating a dynamic, collaborative space for critical thinking and personal growth. Every 6 weeks, students vote on a selection of diverse books spanning genres, cultures, and topics, ensuring variety and shared ownership. After reading, students engage in discussions, creative projects, and written reflections to explore themes, character development, and real-world connections. Choice extends to final projects for each book, where students can write essays, craft multimedia presentations, or even lead mini-discussions. This flexible yet structured format fosters engagement, builds analytical skills, and nurtures a lifelong love of reading. By valuing both choice and scholarship, this class empowers students to connect deeply with literature and their peers.

Creative Writing

This dynamic course explores the art of creative writing. Students will experiment with various genres, including fiction, poetry, and creative nonfiction, while developing their unique voice and storytelling skills. Through workshops, prompts, and peer feedback, this course fosters creativity, self-expression, and a deeper appreciation for the written word.

Debate

In Debate students will explore the art of 'organized arguing.' Students will be discussing current issues and if they don't already have a strong voice and good presentation skills, they will learn these skills in a fun and highly rewarding environment. Students will learn to create factual/logical, ethical and emotional arguments to persuade others that their "side" is correct. The club uses the formal debate format.

Exploring Data:

Have you ever wondered how numbers can tell a story about you, your school, or the world around you? Students will learn how to use data to explore questions, spot patterns, and explain what is happening in the world around them. They will investigate real-life situations by collecting, comparing, and interpreting data using numbers, graphs, and technology. Students will make predictions, test ideas, and decide how well data tells a story.

Exploring Psychology: How the Brain Works

This fun and interactive course introduces the basics of psychology by exploring how the brain works and how people think, feel, and act. We'll study how the brain processes information, how we learn and remember, and how culture shapes who we are. Through hands-on activities, mini-experiments, and group discussions, students will discover what makes the human mind tick. Perfect for curious minds, this course makes psychology easy to understand and exciting to explore.

Leadership

Our Leadership course is for students who would like to make our middle school better. We will work to develop leadership skills in real-life situations. Students will work on planning and running assemblies,

improving communication to all community members, and improving logistics around the middle school. Students will get to create activities and events that they are passionate about. We are looking for students who would like to take a chance and learn what it takes to be a leader who makes things better for others.

All students are welcome to sign up. Due to limited space, not all students may get into the class.

Mindfulness and Well-Being

What does it mean to be truly happy? Can science help us understand and improve our happiness? In this course, students will explore the science of well-being, drawing insights from psychology, neuroscience, and behavioral science. Inspired by courses offered at Yale and Harvard, this class empowers students to build skills and habits that support mental health, foster strong relationships, and create a sense of purpose.

Mock Trial

Mock trials have proven to be an effective learning tool for students. It helps students understand the law, practice critical thinking, increase proficiency in writing, and enhance confidence in public speaking by assuming the roles of attorneys and witnesses in a fictional criminal or civil trial. In this Mock Trial class, students will read and analyze specific court cases, perform mock trials, argue cases, and come to a verdict. To prepare for a mock trial, students will learn the techniques used to conduct trials, including the importance of evidence, preparing opening statements, direct examinations and cross examinations of witnesses, closing arguments, and objections.

Model United Nations 8 - Applications for class will open in September

This class is for students who would like to go to the next level in MUN. Students taking this course will have the opportunity to attend the MUN conference in Taipei American School in Taiwan (TASMUN). Since space is limited to go to TASMUN, students will apply for the class in September. Selection criteria will be based on in-school application writing, in-class work, attendance, behavior, and in-class participation. If needed, student interviews will be included.

Newspaper

Middle School Newspaper is an engaging class where students become reporters, editors, and designers, creating a publication for our MS community. Students will explore journalistic principles such as researching, interviewing, writing, and editing while developing critical thinking and teamwork skills. This hands-on class encourages creativity, responsibility, and collaboration, empowering students to use their voices to make an impact.

Wild Seoul

Wild Seoul is an outdoor adventure class for middle schoolers who like to move, explore, and get curious. You'll hunt for the secret nature hiding all over the city, spot birds, plants, and trees, and sketch and write in your own field notebook. You'll learn tricks real naturalists use to understand the living world, read beautiful nature writing, and try out your own creative ideas brought to life with the written word or drawings. We'll also explore how people in Korea have understood nature for generations, and you'll do mini research projects on the things you're most curious about. If the weather's okay, we're outside every single class walking, observing and discovering what our area has to offer.

Additional Courses

Learning Lab

The Middle School Learning Lab is designed to support students in building essential math, reading, and executive functioning skills. Through a differentiated curriculum, students receive individualized instruction tailored to their specific needs and learning styles. Students explore a wide range of mathematical concepts, from basic operations to problem-solving strategies, using hands-on activities while providing lessons to enrich learning in their grade level math class. In addition, students develop critical reading skills, including comprehension, analysis, and inference, through a variety of literature genres and informational texts. The executive functioning skills component focuses on helping students develop effective strategies for time management, organization, and fostering independence to achieve success in their academic pursuits. With a supportive and inclusive learning environment, the Middle School Learning Lab equips students with the foundational skills and strategies necessary for academic achievement and lifelong learning.

Teachers and administration recommend student placement in Learning Lab classes based on past work, standardized test scores, parent recommendations, and more. The goal is to give students the skills and habits necessary to be successful without support.

Advisory

Advisory period occurs Monday-Friday and provides an opportunity for students to check in and ensure that every student knows he/she has an important place in the school community. All Middle School students have a faculty advisor who serves as a trusted adult, mentor, and advocate in the life of the student, and who leads the lessons and activities provided to them. Grade-levels have specific curriculum covering topics that are relevant and appropriate to their developmental stage. Each advisory group is also responsible for coordinating several grade-level assemblies throughout the year.