

## **8th Grade Elective Classes**

As a part of the academic program, elective classes provide an education in and exposure to the visual and performing arts, the work place, and the trades. These courses strive to clarify the relationship of the arts and trades to other academic disciplines and to stress their importance as a humanizing force in both the past and the present. Elective classes explore the practical and theoretical aspects of various disciplines and help eighth grade students to realize their own unique interests and potential. There are no prerequisite classes so students are encouraged to explore a variety of topics of interest to them.

### **Art**

In this twelve-week class, students learn about two- and three-dimensional art through discussions of many examples of historical and contemporary artists and their work. Through hands-on projects, students use various painting and drawing media and acquire the skills necessary to create works of their own. Professional application of artistic techniques into graphic art is learned.

### **Art II**

This is a twelve-week, advanced class designed for students who have an interest in art and wish to further their learning about two- and three-dimensional art. This is a class for students who enjoy art and want to enhance their art skills with a community of similarly interested artists. Studies focus on enhanced drawing and painting skills using various media. Hands-on projects emphasize sculptural elements of space, form, representation, and the inclusion of emotional response; projects may include sculpture, wood design, ceramics, photography, or metal smithing and the process of creating jewelry. Proportion, spatial representation, design, and composition are emphasized.

### **Artistic/Technical Productions**

In this twelve-week class, students will hone their public speaking and performance skills along with gaining an understanding of all aspects of digital filmmaking and iMovie technology. Storyboard and script writing will accompany movie, documentary, and television commercial projects. Students learn to produce, direct, film, edit, and present their own digital video projects. This is an interactive class and will give students a more in-depth look behind the scenes of acting and digital film making with iMovie.

### **Band**

This yearlong class meets five days a week and is designed to develop skills in instrumental playing, as well as increase musical understanding through performance. The main emphasis at this level is performance. Students enrolling in this class should have three years of previous instruction in a school setting or private lessons. Band students may also sign up for choir; if taking both band and choir, students attend band and choir on an alternating daily schedule.

### **Choir**

Choir is a performance group, open to all students, devoted to the study and performance of music from a wide spectrum of styles. The chorus is a yearlong class and meets five days a week. Students enrolling in this class should have previous choral experience as we are building on their knowledge of sight-reading, rhythmic skills, note naming, and key signatures.

## **Foreign Language**

Eighth grade Spanish, French and German yearlong courses are equivalent to the Level I first-year courses at the high school. Students will study vocabulary and grammar and develop conversational skills enabling them to interact and communicate with native speakers in everyday cultural situations.

Students who attain a 70% or higher (A, B, or C) can continue with the second level at the high school. Students who do not earn the 70% can repeat the first-year course in high school. Previous experience in a language is not a prerequisite, but is highly recommended. Only students who have started their language study in eighth grade can qualify to take the fifth-year AP courses when they are seniors.

## **Information Skills/Technology Education**

Humans invent and create technology to modify their environment, solve problems, and make their lives better. In this twelve-week class, students use computers, video equipment, and other instruments to invent, design, and solve problems. Students study the process of design with a focus on application to everyday lives, the environment, and the future. Students create and evaluate technologies in relation to possible career choices. Students research, synthesize, and critique information to create useful technology and imagine the future.

## **International Awareness**

This twelve-week class is designed for students to become globally aware and gain appreciation for diverse cultures of the world. Students will be introduced to basic phrases in many different world languages, discuss current events, and participate in international issues and projects. Students will gain an understanding of how the world is increasingly interconnected due to technology, international trade, travel and career opportunities. Students will acquire skills that will enable them to become active and informed global citizens.

## **Orchestra**

This yearlong class meets five days a week and is designed to develop skills in instrumental playing, as well as increase musical understanding through performance. The main emphasis at this level is performance. Students enrolling in this class should have three years of previous instruction in a school setting or private lessons. Orchestra students may also sign up for choir; if taking both orchestra and choir, students attend orchestra and choir on an alternating daily schedule.

## **Reading/Writing Challenge**

This twelve-week course is designed to promote an appreciation of literature and increase critical reading and writing skills. Class time will be divided between whole-class discussion of short stories and poetry, independent reading and analysis of literature, and self-selected literary circle groups. Students will work toward utilizing more sophisticated descriptive language through figurative language, varied sentence structures, and developing their own voice as writers, and strive for competence in critical revision of their own writing, as well as

that of other students. The course will also provide students with various strategies to help them read nonfiction materials.

### **Technology Education Challenge**

This course involves the history, application and potential for technology. Students will learn through cross-curriculum, multi-cultural instruction. Students will be involved with various projects that demonstrate principles of technology.

### **World Music**

This is an exciting twelve-week class open to all students, is based on the drumming circles of the Native American Indian tribes, African tribes, and Latin American cultures. Students also study traditional music of Asia and learn about Blues and Jazz (in connection to African traditional music). Students learn music reading, rhythm, improvisation, listening, and ensemble teamwork.