



Merit Academy
School of Logic
Course Description Catalog
2024-25

The concept of Merit Academy began with families and local community members, for families and the greater Ute Pass community. It started with conversations among families and area members about a different education choice, one that embraces a classical and content-rich approach, involves parents to a much greater level, and allows area experts to teach in their field through charter waivers. This school is the culmination of these conversations and efforts.

Merit Academy's unique academic model utilizes the Core Knowledge sequence, long recognized for its rich content and academic rigor. The school is founded on a liberal arts education (Arts of language, mathematics, science, history, Latin, music and art) combined with a constant emphasis on character and leadership development.

MERIT ACADEMY: A CHOICE-IN SCHOOL

Merit Academy is a Woodland Park School District choice (charter) school. By enrolling your students with Merit Academy, you are choosing an intensive, engaging, classical, Core Knowledge academic curriculum of excellence. You are choosing a commitment to our vision and mission. You are choosing to abide by our Code of Honor and virtues. You are choosing the culture and procedures in which we thrive. We realize Merit Academy may not be the choice of school for every family, but families who desire these facets of education have found Merit Academy to be the school they've been searching for.

With a highly qualified and well-trained staff, an academic environment of excellence, and a commitment to character, MA is a great place to be. Welcome!

OUR COMMITMENT *and* STATEMENT OF COMPELLING INTERESTS

Merit Academy recognizes that while there are other school models available in the Ute Pass area, we are committed to the moral character and civic virtue emphasis we have chosen. We will ensure academic excellence within our chosen framework. This model is not for everyone, but it is at the core of what we do.

The statements and purposes that follow here define the identity of Merit Academy. They inform the community of what we are about. They guide those who would enroll students in our school and those who would seek employment with us. They are central to our mission and activities. They will define and be the measures of our success.

PRINCIPLES THAT GUIDE OUR SCHOOL

EDUCATION IS, FIRST OF ALL, A RESPONSIBILITY OF PARENTS. We recognize that parents are education consumers and must choose the product and delivery method that they determine is best for their child and family. We operate as a business that respects that duty of parents.

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE through the use of the *Core Knowledge* sequence and other curricular tools that challenge students is a priority. We will not waste our students' time with meaningless busywork, screentime, or mediocre content. We will not be a warehouse. With an intensive

sequence throughout grade levels, students will connect to core subjects through activities that make learning come alive.

KNOWLEDGE-RICH PEDAGOGY, classical liberal arts curriculum, experiential/hands-on study, and Socratic method are the means by which our mission is executed.

CIVIL AIR PATROL (CAP) curriculum provides additional aerospace education and STEM projects. Students learn and abide by military customs and courtesies, obtain rank and promotion and learn to lead other students. They participate in flight opportunities and aerospace events. CAP membership is not mandatory, but CAP classes and events are restricted to CAP members only.

CHARACTER EDUCATION for the development of the whole child will include many traits or Core Virtues.

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Merit Academy has a compelling interest in maintaining the integrity of the school and its mission. This includes an insistence that persons associated with it are committed to its educational principles and maintain lives that model strong moral character. This alignment is congruent with and complementary to the statements above that guides our work.

OUR VISION

Students prepared for success in a free society, promoting civic responsibility and contributing their talents in a flourishing republic by pursuing beauty, truth, and good.

OUR MISSION

Merit Academy will cultivate the minds and nurture the hearts of K-12 youth in the Ute Pass/Woodland Park region with instruction in the principles of moral character and civic virtue, employing honored foundations of classical education and Core Knowledge®.

OUR MOTTO

Hodie Determinat Cras, Today Determines Tomorrow.

This will be discussed on many levels throughout the academy. Today's effort determines tomorrow's results, as applied to learning, decisions, choices, actions, athletics, practice, etc. It also connects to the importance history plays in the events of today and tomorrow.

The House System and Our Virtues

The House System fosters student engagement and school spirit through the assignment of every student, teacher, and staff member into one of five groups known as Houses. Houses create smaller cohesive groups where students interact among all grade levels while

encouraging friendships, communication, tradition, academic excellence, student government, and competition.

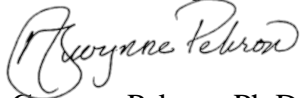
The House System is quite common in British education systems but is not as common in the United States. Schools that have utilized a House System have found more unity and pride in their school and a heightened civic service. Our House System is an additional component to prepare students for post-graduate success through increased team building and leadership opportunities.

Our Houses are named after our local rocky mountain animals: Falcon, Big Horn Sheep, Bobcat, Elk and Wolf.

The House system and our character education is centered on the five core virtues of Merit Academy: Friendship, Valor, Goodness, Perseverance, and Responsibility.

It is my great honor to introduce you to this mighty and magnificent school. We're the school you've been waiting for!

With Kind Regards,



Gwynne Pekron, Ph.D.
Industrial/Organizational Psychologist
Headmaster & Founder
Merit Academy

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HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

The following chart shows comparisons of what Colorado universities currently require. If you go to college without the proper requirements already met, you will be required to take remedial courses, for which you will be billed by the college.

To receive a high school diploma from MA, student must:

1. Meet or exceed the state and school academic standards by completing the school's minimum course and credit requirements (***those listed as Career/Military Enlist Path***), **AND**
2. Complete an Individual Career and Academic Plan (ICAP),
3. Demonstrate College and Career Readiness through one of the following: a.) meet or exceed the cut score or criteria on a state-approved measure of College and Career Readiness in English and Math, OR b.) Complete the requirements and goals as listed on a student's Individual Education Plan (IEP), English Language Development Plan (ELDP), or Advanced Learning Plan (ALP), **AND**
4. In culmination of training and education, graduating seniors at Merit Academy will be required to design and orally defend a senior thesis. This defense will encompass the trivium of grammar (facts, research, and principles), logic, and rhetoric. Each senior will answer a question that transcends typical essay questions found in other courses. It may be a question that encourages thought and preparation of responsible citizenry, discussion of a core virtue, or promotes deep reflection (i.e. "Describe what a life of goodness means to you"). A satisfactory performance on the senior thesis will be required for graduation. Each thesis will be defended (presented with Q & A) in front of members of their House.

ENGLISH

- College/Academies Path: 4 Credits
- Career/Military Enlist Path: 4 Credits

Includes but not limited to: Concurrent Enrollment English Courses, Literature & Composition I, II, III, IV, Mythology, Creative Writing & Others

MATH

- College/Academies Path: 4 Credits
- Career/Military Enlist Path: 3 Credits

Includes but not limited to: Concurrent Math Courses, Algebra 1, Algebra II, Geometry, Trigonometry, Pre-Calculus, Calculus, Statistics, Business Math, Accounting, Financial Literacy & More.

HISTORY

- College/Academies Path: 4 Credits
- Career/Military Enlist Path: 4 Credits

Required: US History; World History; Economics; US Civics/Government. Transfer-in credits will be reviewed to satisfy requirements.

SCIENCE

- College/Academies Path: 4 Credits
- Career/Military Enlist Path: 3 Credits

Includes but not limited to: Concurrent Enrollment Science Courses, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Astronomy, Aerospace, Aeronautics, Genetics, Geology, Zoology, Integrated Science, Science Olympiad & More. (at least one lab science, preferably two, required)

FINE ARTS/PERFORMING ARTS/INDUSTRIAL ARTS

- College/Academies Path: 2 Credits
- Career/Military Enlist Path: 1 Credit

Includes but not limited to: Concurrent Enrollment Arts, Theater, Art, Performance, Choir, Band, Music Appreciation, Metals or Wood Works, & More.

LANGUAGES

- College/Academies Path: 2 Credits Language plus 1 Credit Latin
- Career/Military Enlist Path: 1 Credit Latin; 1 Credit Additional Language (including 2nd year Latin)

Students who passed Latin in both 7th and 8th grades with a C or better will have met the Latin requirement for a Latin waiver and will only need 1 additional Language credit, which could include Latin II. **Graduating Class of 2026: .5 Latin required (not 1.0) due to 2022-23 full year scheduling **

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS:

- Senior Capstone/Rhetoric
- 1.0 PE or PE/Athletic Waiver
- Enhancements to Total a minimum of 24 Credits:
 - Civil Air Patrol, Forensics, PE, CTE, STEM, Internship, Additional Academic & Non-Academic Courses (may include concurrent enrollment courses)

PLUS: Students will engage in a post-secondary readiness ICAP program to explore postsecondary career options and interests and to plan a path required to meet those postsecondary interests (military vs vocational vs college and what is involved in each).

Updated Dec. 2022

CO also requires that students pass one of these options for reading, writing, communicating and one of these options for mathematics:

Menu of Options	Reading, Writing, Communicating	Mathematics
<u>Classic ACCUPLACER</u>	62 on Reading Comprehension or 70 on Sentence Skills	61 on Elementary Algebra
<u>Next Generation ACCUPLACER</u>	241 on Reading or 236 on Writing	255 on Arithmetic (AR) or 230 on Quantitative Reasoning, Algebra, and Statistics (QAS)
<u>ACT</u>	18 on ACT English	19 on ACT Math
<u>ACT WorkKeys National Career Readiness Certificate</u>	Bronze or higher	Bronze or higher
<u>Advanced Placement (AP)</u>	2	2
<u>ASVAB</u>	31 on the AFQT	31 on the AFQT
<u>Concurrent Enrollment</u>	Passing grade per district and higher education policy	Passing grade per district and higher education policy
<u>District Capstone</u>	Individualized	Individualized
<u>Industry Certificate</u>	Individualized	Individualized
<u>International Baccalaureate (IB)</u>	4	4
<u>Scores update for new SAT (2016)</u>	470	500

MA capstone project
multifaceted body of work that serves as a culminating academic and intellectual experience for students. School team are developing Capstone criteria to be approved.

School Team developed criteria to be approved.

School Team developed criteria to be approved.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

KNOWLEDGE

Merit Academy has selected the Core Knowledge Foundation's Curriculum Sequence as the framework of its curriculum. The Core Knowledge is distinguished by planned progressions of specific knowledge in history, geography, mathematics, science, language arts, and fine arts. The ninth grade classical honors program includes US History; biology, college composition & literature; algebra I, algebra II and college algebra. Our students also have the option to take courses in foreign language, Latin, physical education, band, choir, computer technology, and other electives.

Children learn by building on what they already know. Thus, it is important for them to begin building foundations of knowledge in the early grades when they are most receptive to attaining an organized body of knowledge. Children are by instinct driven to construct a contextual view of the world. Thus, it is important to provide them an educational framework that assists them in developing the constructs upon which their viewpoints will be based. Academic deficiencies in these areas in the first nine grades can permanently impair the quality of later schooling.

By specifying the knowledge that all children should share, all students can achieve equal access to that knowledge. At risk children especially suffer from low expectations, which often translate into watered-down curricula. In schools using the Core Knowledge Sequence, however, all children are exposed to a coherent core of challenging, interesting, interwoven knowledge. This knowledge not only provides a foundation for later learning but also defines a common heritage and establishes a common ground for communication and cooperation in a diverse society.

In addition to its specificity, the Core Knowledge curriculum is characterized by knowledge that is shared, solid, and sequenced. Literacy in every subject requires a set of mechanical skills and a shared background. The shared, many-cultured knowledge that promotes effective classroom learning also promotes cooperation and respect among students, both in the classroom and in society. Merit's teachers will be able to rely on that shared background knowledge about the students, which will enable them to build sequentially on that knowledge year by year. The ninth grade classical curriculum continues the goals of this curriculum with rich knowledge and skills that build on previous knowledge and prepares students for further high school study. As used above we define knowledge not in the simplistic sense of mere facts but in the broader sense of the word, as follows: Knowledge consists of the facts, the relations between them, the thinking about them, and the effort to understand and connect them. It is not out of ignorance that we discover understanding. It is exactly because of what we already know that we can know more, that we can discern organizing principles, make and test hypotheses, and act rationally.

HOMEWORK

Merit Academy is proud to have a challenging, deep curriculum. This is one of the many things that make Merit a great school. With such a rich and intensive curriculum, the students need time to work at home. We are aware that the student is involved with other interests and activities outside of school. The staff and administration will attempt to coordinate their schedules and calendars so the students are not inundated with work on the same day. It is understood that homework will be given and will vary depending on the work assigned on a given day, the students' organizational skills and study habits, and the nature of the assignments. Students are expected to learn how to use their free time effectively to complete the required work at each grade level. Parents are expected to support their children in this endeavor. Advanced classes may require additional homework time.

Homework is the responsibility of the student. It is not the parent's job to remind the student to do the homework. Young students may need help at first but encourage students to take initiative in doing homework shortly after school or after dinner. School planners and notes home for parent signatures are students' responsibility. Students should ask parents to sign paperwork, rather than parents carrying the responsibility to remember. A good prompt for an inexperienced student would be, "Do you have anything for me?" rather than the parent rummaging through the backpack or folder to find the item and then sign it. This will assist in promoting responsibility and capability.

HOMEWORK TURNED IN LATE

Teachers explain to students at the beginning of the year what their policy is on homework turned in late (other than for excused illness). Consequences may include grade reduction, or loss of credit for the assignment. Repeat offenses may result in detention.

MAKE-UP WORK

If a child is absent from school, it is the family's responsibility to contact the school office to request make-up work for the day(s) missed. Please call no later than 9:00 a.m. to request make-up work on the day of absence. You may pick up the make-up homework at the school office at the end of the school day or we can send it home with a sibling.

Students participating in school or district athletics or extra-curricular activities will be able to make up assignments/tests due to games or competitions. It is the student's responsibility to discuss and plan make-ups with the teacher prior to missing class for these events.

Assignments may also be posted on the Infinite Campus or Google Classroom portal.

READING AT HOME

Students who are learning to read need time to re-read the stories and selections they have read at school during the day. This improves fluency and comprehension. All student should have 15-20 minutes reading time in the evening after school. Family reading time is a joy! Try a continued story or a cliffhanger to get your child hooked on reading. Read aloud while traveling or use audio books to help engage imagination and creativity.

REPORT CARDS AND MID-QUARTER PROGRESS REPORTS

MA is on a semester calendar, with mid-quarter reports. Parent-Teacher conferences are scheduled on MA's yearlong calendar. Grades and assignment status are available in Infinite Campus to keep parents well informed about students' progress and give opportunity for improvement well before the quarter report and semester grades are posted. Please let us know if you need assistance with connecting to Infinite Campus.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent-teacher conferences are held each quarter by scheduling an appointment with the teacher. **At least one parent from each family is highly encouraged to attend.** Both are welcome. Please bring your student to participate in the discussion. If you cannot be there during the requested time frame, another time may be scheduled with your teacher.

MA welcomes the attendance of students at Parent-Teacher conferences as well. This is an opportunity to complete the loop of conversation and ensure that all parties are hearing the same reports, affirmations, and concerns. Students' participation is encouraged.

GRADING SCALE

MA uses the following grading scale.

A 94-100; A- 90-93.99;

B+ 87-89.99; B 84-86.99; B- 80-83.99;

C+ 77-79.99; C 74-76.99; C- 70-73.99;

D+ 67-69.99; D 64-66.99; D- 60-63.99;

F 59.99 and below

Although a 70% might appear to be passing at grade-level understanding, test scores under 70% will require additional work to be determined by the teacher. Projects might include correcting missed work, covering a weak area over again, or similar activities designed to ensure students do not continue in subject matter and create "gaps" in their learning.

ENHANCEMENT CLASSES

MA offers "Enhancements" classes such as Art, PE, Music, Latin, and more for grades K-5. Middle school and high school electives include language (Spanish, Latin, German, French), Art, PE, Music, Computer Technology, and much more.

ASSESSMENTS

Merit Academy administers several tests, which currently includes the CMAS (Colorado Measure of Academic Success), the PSAT, and the SAT tests. MA will also provide the NWEA MAP (North West Evaluation Association Measure of Academic Progress) and DIBELS, both of which are nationally normed instruments that helps us track how our students are doing.

We encourage families to participate and assist the school in managing academic growth. We understand that a test is a snapshot in time, and just like a photo, sometimes we have a bad one. Taken together over several tests and years, we can tell how students (and our staff) are doing. MA does not “teach to the test,” but seeks a clear understanding of growth. Students may do some practice activities in advance to prevent test-taking fear or misfires with our computers.

PRE-ARRANGED ABSENCES

Occasionally family events or medical procedures necessitate a pre-arranged absence. Parents are encouraged to plan such times for regularly scheduled school vacation days when possible. Because our funding to provide educational services is based on student count, it is important that students are in school as much as possible through a 10 day window, centered around October 1.

A form must be filled out at the office, and parents may request homework three or more days in advance. Teachers may provide it if it is available. If it is not available in advance, work will be given upon return to school, with one school day allowed for each school day missed before work is due back to the teacher. Absences or work spanning the end of a quarter may not be counted after that quarter is closed out and report cards issued.

Students with more than four unexcused absences per month or 10 days per school year will be termed “habitually truant” under Colorado law.

Absences during CMAS Testing will not be excused except for illness. A doctor’s note may be required. Testing dates will be announced in the parent newsletter.

PLACEMENT, RETENTION AND PROMOTION

Incoming students may be tested for placement. MA Administration and staff will decide on placement in math and reading groups, and on promotion and retention of students through the use of various assessment tools, some nationally standardized and some teacher-created.

Promotion to a higher-grade level is viewed and determined on two areas: academic performance and emotional and social readiness. Students who show decided and documented deficiencies in both areas will be considered for retention. Retention decisions will be based upon:

- Teacher documentation and anecdotal information
- Parent anecdotal information
- Developmental and achievement test scores.
- Consistently scoring 60% or less in assessment instruments (test, quizzes, CMAS, MAP, etc).

Retention concerns will be discussed beginning no later than third quarter by staff and with parents. MA reserves the right to determine final placement of any student. **“Social promotion” of students who have not successfully completed academic work is not allowed.** We recognize the social and emotional pressures created by retention, but affirm the priority of academic success for each students’ future well-being.

School of Logic (Grades 6-8)

It is our goal for parents, teachers, and students to work together during the year to insure students are developing responsible work habits and achieving at passing levels. We do not force a bell curve. A student with a failing year-end grade (F) in a core course (Math, English, History, or Science) may be required by the course instructor to remediate his/her grade by successfully completing a summer school packet prior to promotion to the next level course in the fall.

Students with a cumulative failing grade at year-end in any three or more classes (including specials and electives) will fail the grade and will not be promoted to the next grade. Students receiving special education services will be considered on a case by case basis.

High School (School of Rhetoric) (Grades 9 –12)

Student must have a minimum amount of credits from the proper courses in order to be promoted to the next grade. To be promoted to a sophomore a student is required to have 6 credits, to be promoted as a junior a student is required to have 12 credits and to be considered a senior a student is required to have 18 credits. All students must meet the minimum credits required for each core content area as detailed in the high-school graduation requirements.

We do not force a bell curve. A failing grade is defined as an F in a subject. If a student fails the indicated class or classes, he or she may not have earned enough credit to move on to the next grade level at the end of the year, and will need to repeat any failed semester of a required course.

Course credit is awarded for all courses on a semester basis, whether the course is a semester or year-long course. Students earn 1/2 (.5) credits for each semester course completed with a 60% or higher. However, with a score less than 70%, students may be required to complete additional work to improve comprehension and knowledge base.

HOMESCHOOL ENHANCEMENT

Because we respect and honor school choice and a parent's primary right to selecting the education that suits their students the best, we provide opportunities for our community homeschoolers to engage in enhancements through our program.

K-5 homeschoolers will participate in STEM, art, music, American Sign Language and other courses selected by our homeschool coordinator, following conversations with our homeschool coordinator. Grades 6-12 are able to join in our enhancements with our full time students. Enhancements include classes like those in fine arts, career/tech ed, languages, or additional courses. Students in high school may choose to join our full-time students in college-level courses, science labs, math classes, or the like. These are all available to our homeschool students free of charge.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Based on the entrance requirements of top universities, Merit Academy has outlined a comprehensive set of college preparatory courses. The recommended pathways are indicated through the prerequisite courses. Changes from the recommended pathways may only occur through department level or instructor consent.

Merit Academy will continue to add courses based on student and faculty interest. Certain classes may be offered only one term per year or may be offered every other year depending on demand. Note: Merit Academy reserves the right to cancel classes due to insufficient enrollment.

Concurrent Enrollment: College courses at Merit Academy are offered as Concurrent Enrollment through Pikes Peak State College or University Colorado at Colorado Springs. Those classes are indicated in the class descriptions for high school/School of Rhetoric.

Advanced Placement: Merit Academy offers Advanced Placement (AP) Courses. These courses have additional requirements that will be placed on the student in order to receive credit for this course. AP and college classes are weighted on a 5.0 scale. Advanced Placement (AP) is indicated in the class description, available in high school/School of Rhetoric.

Honors Classes: Honors classes are more intensive in their delivery and carry a heavier weight for the additional preparation, time and studying. Honors courses (H) or College Prep (CP) receive an additional .5 point for a passing grade. A=4.5 points, B=3.5 points, C=2.5 points, D=1.0 points, F=0.0 points. Honors classes are indicated in the class descriptions.

Foundational Classes: As the name suggests, these classes build upon the foundational pieces of learning that students will need to become productive adults. Foundational classes move at a slower rate and help the student build their skill set. These course are not higher education ready courses and are marked as 090 level classes on the transcript. Foundational classes are indicated in the class description.

CAREER/TECHNICAL

ANIMAL AND RANGE SCIENCE

Friday, 2 semesters

This is an introduction to the study and management of ranches with special emphasis on rangeland plants, soils, watersheds, and the study of livestock and wildlife. Focus is on the Temple Grandon model of ranching. Students will participate in field trips to local ranches to study first-hand the elements of a successful ranch, from rangeland ecology to livestock care. Advanced courses in the animal science/range science program will develop in future years.

CAP (Civil Air Patrol)

Friday, 2 semesters

The Civil Air Patrol, established by Congress on Dec. 1, 1941, is the auxiliary to the US Air Force. Today they have 3 main missions: Cadet Programs, Aerospace Education, and Emergency Services. The cadet program offers many opportunities to cadets both while in the program and after graduation. Students receive 10 hours of flight time within CAP. CAP is open to 6th-12th, with 9th-12th eligible for high school credit with additional expectations.

COMPUTER DISCOVERIES 2

Friday, 2 semesters

This course is an introduction to Computer Science. Students will learn about problem solving, using computers to solve problems, game design and development, and physical computing using the Adafruit Circuit Playground Express. This course will be based on the Computer Science Discoveries curriculum developed by code.org. This course is open to both students who took CS Discoveries 1 in '22-'23 and those who did not. Max 16 students.

ENGINEERING EXPLORATIONS

Friday, 2 semesters

In this course students will learn about and practice the Engineering Design Process. They will explore different branches of Engineering. And they will develop Engineering Projects including projects for the 3D Printer. Max 16 students.

INTRODUCTION TO CULINARY ARTS

Friday, 1 semester

Culinary Arts begins with the fundamentals and principles of the art of cooking and the science of baking and includes management and production skills and techniques. Students will learn about sanitation, preparation, nutrition, and presentation.

ROBOTICS

Friday, 2 semesters

The main focus of the course is to program, design and build robots. Course will introduce students to the basics of electrical circuits, mechanical design, and programming using Arduino boards. Students will learn basic control of robot systems using various motors and sensors. Experience and skill set will be a prerequisite for advanced robotics.

WOODWORKING FUNDAMENTALS

Offered both M-Thurs, and for those who only have available on Friday, it is offered as a 2-semester Friday course

Woodworking Fundamentals is a course that allows you to build projects using tools, machines and skills you acquire during the class. Class begins with learning about basic hand tools, machines, safety in the shop, and reading a ruler to the 16th of an inch. After successfully passing a proficiency test on the power tools, students will have the opportunity to use them to build projects. Basic operations, measurements, and construction techniques will be used to create several projects. This is a hands-on class, allowing you to be proud of the projects you build and take home.

ENGLISH

6TH GRADE ENGLISH (also Honors)

Sixth-grade core English is where the students begin to stretch their reading and writing skills. Students will demonstrate knowledge of analyzing a multitude of literature, with grammar weaved within the curriculum. In addition, the class will begin to take what they are reading and learning in history to research and synthesize information to produce essays.

7TH GRADE ENGLISH (also Honors)

Seventh-grade core English introduces students to Naturalist, Romantic, Realist, and Modernist short stories and novels. Literature is studied from a historical, cultural, and literary perspective. The class looks to other disciplines, like history, to understand literature in context and look inward to learn moral lessons from books. In addition, students are exposed to various poetry spanning hundreds of years. Grammar and mechanics are taught and practiced throughout the year, along with literary devices and concepts. In addition to writing daily, students will also practice public speaking and academic discussion.

8TH GRADE ENGLISH (also Honors)

Eighth-grade core English weaves an intensive Grammar unit throughout the year. The class introduces its literature study with books that connect their reading with their history units. Students will understand narrative elements and students will learn how literature is crafted, and as such, will learn to analyze literature. Shakespeare, poetry, short stories, and George Orwell's *Animal Farm* are significant pieces read. Throughout the year, Latin and Greek roots are studied alongside further Grammar instruction.

FINE ARTS

MUSIC-Choir

Cantare Choir

Offered M-Thurs. 1st semester or full year.

Students study proper vocal production and techniques, sight-reading, music theory, ensemble skills, musicianship, and music appreciation. Repertoire is selected to represent a variety of genres, musical time periods, composers, musical techniques, and languages. Students are graded on their preparation and participation during class and in public performances, with Ascend Ensemble having auditions, greater expectations, and additional practice, performance, and research requirements for high school credit.

MUSIC-Instrumental

CADET BAND (YEAR 1)

2 semesters (M-Thurs.)

Flute, Clarinet, Saxophone, Trumpet, Trombone, Euphonium, Percussion

Need to borrow, rent or purchase an instrument (snare drum for percussion), a good supply of reeds for clarinets/saxophones, folding music stand for home practice, and Essential Elements Book 1. Practice Log requirements of 20 minutes per day, 3 days per week. There will be 2-5 performance opportunities outside of school times. This is a year-long class, not a semester. Signing your student up for this class indicates agreement with these basic requirements.

CONCERT BAND

2 semesters (M-Thurs.)

Must have been in Band Yr 1 or audition with the Director.

Flute, Clarinet, Trumpet, Trombone, Percussion

Need to borrow, rent or purchase instrument (snare drum for percussion), a good supply of reeds for clarinet/saxophone, folding music stands for home practice, and Essential Elements Book 2. Practice Log requirements of 20 minutes per day, 3 days per week. There will be 2-5 performance opportunities outside of school times. This is a year-long class, not semester. Signing your student up for this class indicates agreement with these basic requirements.

JAZZ BAND

2 semesters: Friday only

Flute, Clarinet, Saxophone, Trumpet, Trombone, 2 Percussion with kit experience, 2 keyboards, 2 electric guitar, 2 bass guitar. Need to borrow, rent or purchase instrument, folding music stand for home practice, a good supply of reeds for clarinets/saxophones, and Essential Elements Jazz Book 1. There will be 2-5 performance opportunities outside of school times. This is a year-long class, not semester. Signing your student up for this class indicates agreement with these basic requirements.

STRINGS

2 semesters: M-Thurs

This course is designed to give students a foundation in the rudiments of playing an instrument of the orchestral string family. Alongside playing techniques; students will learn various theoretical rudiments such as musical notation and reading, as well as listening skills. These will be facilitated by an introduction to theory and ear training. Grades will be based on attendance and punctuality, testing, writing assignments and overall progress. This is a year-long course commitment.

UKULELE & GUITAR

2 semesters: Fridays

Need to borrow, purchase or rent a concert or soprano ukulele. Baritone ukuleles may break out with the guitar class since the strings/fingerings are the same as the guitar top 4 strings). Students also are required to have a folding stand for home practice, and Everybody's Ukulele Method Book 1. Practice Log requirements of 20 minutes, 3 days per week. There will be 2-5 performance opportunities outside of school times. Signing your student up for this class indicates agreement with these basic requirements.

THEATER

THEATER I: ENTER STAGE RIGHT

Friday, 2 semesters

This course is for all SOL students interested in exploring the wide world of performing arts. We will begin with improvisational theater games designed to build confidence and form a classroom ensemble. From there, we will study acting methods, scene and character work, memorization, and movement. Students will also be introduced to a variety of career opportunities on stage and film. SOL students will be welcome to audition for Merit Academy Theater Productions. Bring your creative energy and let's have fun while you learn!

VISUAL ART

ARTS APPRECIATION

M-Thurs: students may select one semester or full year

Students will explore both music and art in history and modality. Historical artists, musicians, and composers will also be studied, as well as the period pieces in which their art/music was created.

STUDIO ART

M-Thurs OR Friday opportunity available: students may select one semester or full year

This course will be an applied hands-on course. Specific projects will be at discretion of the Art teacher and students (drawing, painting, sculpting, mixed media...). This is a practical art class, in that students will engage and design creative projects, from 2D to 3D applications.

HISTORY

6th GRADE HISTORY

This program of history covers topics of history that lead up to the industrial and urbanization era. Topics include:

- World Deserts
- Ancient Greece and Rome
- The Enlightenment
- The French Revolution and Romanticism
- The Industrial Revolution: Changes and Challenges
- Independence of Latin America
- Immigration
- Industrialization and Urbanization in America
- Reform in Industrial America

All of these history courses include topics, questions, and activities that focus on the rights and duties of citizenship, including key historical events, ideas, documents, laws, and the structure of American government.

7th GRADE HISTORY

The history of the United States is in many ways a story of the interactions among groups of people. These groups include indigenous nations, European explorers, European settlers and their descendants, enslaved Africans and their descendants, and generations of immigrants from Europe, Asia, and Latin America. These interactions were, at times, shaped by conflicts over land, over freedom, and over power. And it was these very groups of people who also brought about extraordinary achievements. Together, they helped create and shape the nation we are today.

First Semester:

1. Early Americans and the First Europeans
2. European Exploration and Colonization
3. English Colonies Take Shape
4. The American Revolution
5. Creating A Constitution for the United States
6. The New Republic and the War of 1812
7. Westward Expansion Before the Civil War
8. Division, Civil War, and Reconstruction
9. Westward Expansion After the Civil War

Second Semester:

1. A Time of Great Change: Immigration, Industrialization, and Urbanization (1865-1914)
2. The Progressive Era, Social Movements, and Reform
3. America Becomes a World Power
4. America from the Twenties to the New Deal
5. World War II (1939-1945)
6. Postwar America: The Cold War, Vietnam, and the Age of Civil Rights (1945-1975)
7. The United States at Home and on the World Stage (1975-2000)
8. The Challenges Ahead and Powerful Voices (2001-Present)

8th GRADE HISTORY

The world is made up of many different places and people, so the history of the world is also not a single story. It is a collection of stories about how people on different continents built civilizations, about how different civilizations came into contact with each other, and about how this contact led to conflict, cooperation, and change.

First Semester:

- Mesopotamia
- Ancient Egypt & Kush
- The Israelites
- Ancient Greece
- Ancient India
- Early China
- Rome: From Republic to Empire

- Islamic Civilizations
- Maya, Aztec, & Inca Civilizations
- Imperial China
- Civilizations of Korea, Japan, & Southeast China
- Europe & Russia in the Middle Ages
- West African Kingdoms

Second Semester:

- The Renaissance & the Reformation
- Exploration, Trade, & Settlement
- The Scientific Revolution & the Enlightenment
- Political & Industrial Revolutions
- A World at War
- World War II & Postwar World
- East & Southeast Asia in the Second Half of the Twentieth Century
- Europe in the Second Half of the Twentieth Century
- Africa & the Middle East in the Second Half of the Twentieth Century
- Latin America in the Second Half of the Twentieth Century
- Challenges & Change in the Modern World

LANGUAGES

7th -8th GRADE FRENCH OR GERMAN

Exposure to French and German through Mango Languages interactive lessons, which involve a rich mix of listening and reading activities, enabling students to make sense of written and spoken contexts. Students will be challenged to practice through critical-thinking exercises, memory building exercises, grammar notes, and cultural notes. Classes will include teacher led discussions and activities, such as cultural food research, travel planning, flag and map discovery, and foreign architecture.

7th-8th GRADE SPANISH

Class Objectives: Build a confident foundation for Spanish language acquisition, to be utilized in real world applications and situations.

Philosophy: To immerse students in Spanish habitually to build confidence and exponentially increase language acquisition. (I will speak easy Spanish in class to immerse and optimize time and learning.) We will **listen, speak, expand, practice, connect, and have fun.**

Curriculum and Themes: We will study a theme each week/bi-weekly. First semester we will have 7 themes: Each theme contains vocabulary, easy grammatical concepts, high frequency themed phrases and cultural study.

As students progress through the School of Logic, some themes will repeat themselves and an expansion of vocabulary, grammar and usage will be utilized to prepare students for Spanish at the high school level.

INTRO TO AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE

Friday, 2 Semesters or, if student demand is high: M-Thurs for 1 semester.

Students will learn the basic aspects of ASL. This course can create a base for ASL 1 as a high school language course. Students will explore vocabulary, the start-up components (alphabet, numbers, practices, and culture) to engage their knowledge of the language.

LATIN for SCHOOL OF LOGIC

It is designed to fully prepare students to continue their study of Latin in higher-level courses, but also to cover the historical and cultural achievements of the Romans and how they affect = Western Civilization. The course also emphasizes English vocabulary that comes from Latin roots and the study of both Latin grammar and English grammar.

MATH

6th GRADE MATH (H)

This course works to build students a strong mathematics foundation through the use of the Singapore Dimensions Math 6 curriculum. The year is broken into two sections; A and B. The following concepts are introduced and expanded on in section A: order of operations, factors and multiples, multiplication, divisions, multiplication and divisions of fractions, decimals, negative numbers, ratios, rate, and percent. The second portion, *6B*, covers algebraic expressions, equations and inequalities, coordinates and graphs, area of plane figures, volume and surface area of solids, and displaying and comparing data.

7th GRADE MATH

This course continues to build students' math foundation and strongly focuses on introductory algebraic thinking through the use of the Singapore Dimensions Math 7 curriculum. The year is broken into two sections; A and B. *7A* covers factors and multiples; real numbers; introductory algebra, algebraic manipulation; equations in one variable; ratio, rate, and speed; percents; and angles, triangles, and quadrilaterals. *7B* continues with number patterns, coordinates and linear graphs, inequalities, perimeter and area of plane figures, volume and surface area of solids, proportions, data handling, and probability.

HONORS 7th GRADE MATH

This course follows the Department of Mathematics College of the Redwoods Second Edition Pre-Algebra Textbook and the Singapore Dimensions Math 7 curriculum. This curriculum covers whole numbers, integers, fundamentals of algebra, fractions, decimals, ratio and proportion,

percent, graphing, data handling, and probability of events. This class moves at a very quick pace and covers material at a deep level. Enrollment requires instructor approval.

8th GRADE MATH/Algebra 1 (Honors)

This course follows the Singapore Math curriculum. It focuses on the fundamentals of algebra while introducing topics of geometry and statistics as well. Section A covers exponents, scientific notation, linear equations in two variables, expansion and factorization, quadratic factorization and equations, algebraic fractions, congruence and similarity, and parallel lines and angles in triangles and polygons. Section B covers graphs of functions, Pythagorean Theorem, coordinate geometry, measurement of common 3-D shapes, data analysis, and quadratic equations.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

BASKETBALL

1 semester or full year, Friday

Students will practice skills and proper technique on both offense and defense, helping to grow their game and understanding of the rules. Students will also learn plays and help to draft their own plays and practice those. If students are interested in developing their abilities on the basketball court, this is a great class for them.

COURT SPORTS

1 semester or full year, Friday or, if demand is high, M-Thurs

Students will participate in a number of various court sports (basketball, volleyball, tennis, and more). Rules, techniques, plays, and style are all explored. This is a great course for students who wish to enhance their physical fitness, increase their skills in various court sports, or learn more about those particular sports.

KARATE/ SELF-DEFENSE

2 semesters, Friday

Students will study and practice activities in karate, self-defense, and physical fitness. There is great focus on building strength and confidence with each student. Students work on proper karate form and are able to advance in belts as they move through the course.

OLYMPIC SPORTS

Friday, 1 semester or full year

Requirement met: PE

Students will discover and participate in different Olympic sports. Explore the origin, purpose, methods, strategies, equipment, and people needed for chosen sports. Organize and

participate in the playing of the different sports, whether as an athlete, coach, referee, judge, or whatever else the sport requires!

OUTDOOR ED: MODERN SURVIVAL

(Friday block, 1 semester or full year)

The Outdoor Education/ Modern Survival course is designed to teach students outdoor survival skills and modern survival skills to use outdoors or at home. Possible topics include but not limited to: Making solar stills, various methods of making fire, flintknapping, knife sharpening, making shelters, camping skills, small animal snares, identifying edible plants, Basic first aid. We will also study ways to integrate technology in survival situations and everyday life.

STRENGTH & CONDITIONING

M-THURS offer OR Friday, 1 semester or full year option

This course will give students the tools to be physically fit and healthy for a lifetime. The variety of exercises and equipment will allow students to experience many different ways to exercise, including weight lifting, plyometrics, and aerobic activity, hopefully leading to a lifelong interest in fitness. Students will also learn how to create their own Health and Fitness plans that work towards specific health, fitness and career goals.

SWIMMING

Monday-Thurs option OR Friday, 1 semester.

Students will learn techniques of proper strokes: freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke, and butterfly. As swimmers advance, they will also practice starts, turns, and the underwater stroke. Water safety and breathing techniques are foundational components to the course.

TEAM SPORTS

M-Thurs, either semester or full year option

Students will participate in a number of various team sports (basketball, volleyball, softball, and more). Rules, techniques, plays, and style are all explored. This is a great course for students who wish to enhance their physical fitness, increase their skills in various team sports, or learn more about those particular sports.

SCIENCE

6th grade – EARTH SCIENCE

The 1st semester is an introduction to astronomy . Scholars will study constellations, stars, galaxies, nebulae, deep space objects, moon, planets, and tools. The 2nd semester is an Introduction to Geology. Students will study rocks, minerals, rock cycle, mountain building, volcanoes, earthquakes, glaciers, weather, and erosion.

7th grade – LIFE SCIENCE

During the second grade, students will explore life sciences. This course covers topics of: Metric System, Cells, DNA, genetics, nutrient cycles, bacteria, protists, fungi, plants, human body systems, dissections, invertebrates, and vertebrates.

8th grade – PHYSICAL SCIENCE

The 1st Semester is an introduction to chemistry. Students will study the metric system, atom, elements, periodic table, mixtures, solutions, formulas, compounds, chemical reactions, inorganic vs organic, hydrocarbons, equipment, and safety procedures.

During the 2nd Semester, which is an introduction to Physics, scholars will learn about the scientific method, speed, velocity, vectors, friction, acceleration, gravity, energy, pressure, simple machines, electricity and magnetism, waves, thermodynamics.

SCIENCE OLYMPIAD

M-Thurs, 2 semesters

This is a year-long class for all grade levels. This is an enhancement course and does not replace the appropriate science course.

B Division – 6th – 8th – National, state, regional and local competitions that consists of students working in 2's or 3's while competing in 23 different events that cover all areas of science.

Events consist of taking tests, doing labs, or building an apparatus. This is a STEM activity that requires in-class and out of class preparations. Students must attend all competitions (3-5) (held on Saturdays) that occur throughout the year. Events and rules are set by National Science Olympiad organization and change each year. Lab-based class.

ADDITIONAL ENHANCEMENT COURSES

ADVISORY

This time allows for students to seek out additional assistance within their courses. Advisory is also when students are able to explore career options, complete homework, or work on group projects.

BASIC PSYCHOLOGY

Fridays, 1 semester

This course is an introduction to the scientific study of human nature. It is a wide-ranging introduction to the field of psychology, the scientific study and understanding of behavior and cognition.

Students will learn how the brain and behavior are related. They will learn about perception, learning, thinking, development of the brain, social behavior, personality and behavior from birth to old age.

Students will also become acquainted with some of the theoretical approaches in the field of psychology.

SHERLOCK HOLMES – ENHSHRLK101

Fridays, 1 semester

Journey to Victorian England, where mysterious figures and deceptive disguises abound on and around Baker Street. We'll study iconic detective Sherlock Holmes and his trusty assistant, Dr. Watson, as they follow clues and attempt to solve complex crimes. Students will investigate key themes and concerns of the age, as they are represented in literature of the period. We'll read various stories of Arthur Conan Doyle's classic novels. We'll engage in critical thinking, reading, and solving our own mysteries through some escape room games!



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