

GET IN THE LAKER SPIRIT

Middle School Elective Descriptions

The following courses will be offered to our Middle School students during the 2020-2021 school year. The final schedule of classes will be determined by the number of students interested in each. Unless otherwise noted, these classes will run for one quarter.

UNDERCOVER: Handmade Journals and Books

Students will learn a variety of techniques for creating handmade journals and books. Although there will be guided instructions, students will have time for experimental, independent work. By the end of the quarter, students will have created several pieces.

LAUGHING MATTER: Creating Comics

Students will express their creativity by creating their own comic world, developing characters and storylines. During this class, students will be introduced to historical comics and techniques.

OH, SNAP!: Introduction to Digital Photography

Along with a brief history of the camera, students will learn about the parts and functions of today's digital versions. They will gain fundamental skills and examine careers in photography. Using the process of self-reflection, students will begin to build a photographic portfolio. Photos may be entered into art shows and online locally.

A STITCH IN TIME: Introduction to Sewing

Students will learn how to sew by hand as well as use a machine, creating their own wearable art. Basic life skills such as mending holes, hemming pants, and attaching buttons will be covered. Students will examine the historical art of sewing, fashion, and patchwork quilts. They will create a variety of items, such as mini stuffed animals, a pillow, tote bag, and pencil case with a zipper.

EARLY HIGH SCHOOL ART: 2D/3D Art (8th Graders Only)

In this **year-long** class, students will develop basic perceptual and organizational skills in preparation for advanced courses in the future. Art will be examined as a basic form of communication, using various media and techniques. Students will study historical trends while developing an appreciation of contemporary visual art using two-dimensional art processes and production. This classical class focused on the elements of art, specifically drawing, painting, and 2D design.

TELL ME MORE: Saints - Role Models for Today

Students will closely examine the lives of eight saints, learning what it is about these men and women that can enrich their own lives and inspire positive change.

A QUIET PLACE: Academic Enrichment

During this period, students will have time to work independently on other course work, or at the suggestion of their teachers, receive academic support from a faculty member or assigned tutor. This period may be used to complete homework, catch up on missing assignments, or study for tests. This positive environment allows students to utilize school resources or otherwise request teacher assistance in any subject they do not fully understand.

HOT OFF THE PRESSES: Middle School Newspaper

Students will create a quarterly newspaper to be distributed to grades 6-8. This class will teach all stages of newspaper creation: pitching a story, scheduling and holding interviews, writing, revising, and newspaper design. We'll explore how newspapers decide what is news-worthy and how they form the information for specific purposes and audiences. We will compare the basic structure of news articles, feature stories, and opinion/editorials. Students will also learn interview skills and basic photography to use in their reporting. In addition to articles for the school newspaper, students will create an individual issue-based newspaper.

BELIEVE ME: Persuasion and Propaganda

This class will explore primary sources of persuasion and propaganda in society. By applying Aristotle's three pillars of persuasion, we'll analyze Super Bowl commercials, World War II propaganda posters, and how advertisements for cigarettes in the 1980's targeted certain audiences. Students will also examine the persuasive techniques used in modern commercials and famous speeches. Finally, we'll identify examples of the different types of logical fallacies that are often used to manipulate an audience.

SPIDEY APPROVED: Website Design

Students in this class will use a website design platform to create their own site that is clear and interesting. As part of the process, common mistakes will be discussed and avoided. Students will take their own photos and videos to add to their websites. The class may even include learning Google Analytics to track website traffic and discussions on how bloggers and youtubers spread their links to increase views.

A FACE FOR RADIO: Laker Podcast

In this class, students will work in groups to make a weekly podcast for the Middle School. We'll pitch ideas as a team, learn audio recording and syncing using Audacity software, create program notes, discuss and create audio special effects, and publish the finished podcast.

VOCATION - A GIFT FROM GOD: Vocation - Career - Job: Do I Need One?

Students will learn to discern their vocation. They will assess their talents and interests. During this class they will research a possible Career Pathway.

NEWS YOU CAN USE: CNN for Middle School

CNN 10 is an age-appropriate way for students to keep current with what is happening in the world today. In addition to analyzing the provided content, students will learn to look for bias and fairness in reporting. Using the information provided and their own broadcasting skills, students may even create their own student newscast.

CHECKMATE!: Introduction to Chess

Want to learn your way around a chess board? Would you like to be able to tell a bishop from a pawn? Students will learn the basics of this two-player strategy board game enjoyed by millions around the world and compete against one another in daily matches.

MILLION DOLLAR BABY: Foundations of Personal Finance for Middle School

Everything you wish you had learned about managing personal finances years ago. This class dives into the nuts and bolts like saving and budgeting, credit and debt, as well as looking into education, careers, and entrepreneurship. Students will then go beyond the basics with topics such as investing, insurance, and identity theft. They'll even cover global economics, marketing, and consumerism.

BRIDGE THE GAP: Middle School Engineering 101

Students will first study the geometric designs of four common bridge types. Next, they will analyze data from a hypothetical toothpick bridge contest to determine the winner. Then the fun begins! Students will be given a budget and supply list with the cost of materials. They will design, build, and test their own toothpick bridges in a class-wide competition, testing their engineering skills.

MATH MANIA: Math You Can Live In

Math plays various roles in architecture and geometry plays a crucial part in design. Students will use their math skills to create floor plans and both 2-D and 3-D architectural models including zoos, escape rooms, tiny homes, and tree houses.

THAT'S LIFE!: The Game of Life Jumps Off the Playing Board

This is a project-based learning simulation. Students will experience the financial aspects of being on their own. They will choose a job based on their interests, and will then have to find a place to live, a company to work for in their community, and figure out a way to get to work. They'll pay bills, plan meals, shop for groceries (field trip), and dine out. All purchases and bills will be paid with checks and students will reconcile their checkbook at the end of each month. They will also experience a few bumps and setbacks along the way! Who will be the first to bounce a check? Who will save the most?

KNIT ONE, PURL TWO: The Basics of Knitting

Students will learn the basics of knitting in this fun course, including, but not limited to: casting on, knit, purl, casting off, and picking up dropped stitches. Several items will be created such as washcloths, scarves, hats, and baby booties. Students may be able to put their new skills to use for a community service project.

GOING FOR THE GOLD: Champions for Life

Students will explore healthy living in a variety of ways from nutrition to physical activity. They will practice and participate in multi-week activities including a variety of sports, and will follow a tournament format at the end of each unit.

TOTAL IMMERSION: Spanish Culture and Cuisine

This course will examine the various cultures among the Spanish speaking countries. Through discussions, role play, skits, phone conversations, etc., the students will learn about the culture of a country based on specific evidence which includes: geography, history, literature, folklore, cuisine, art, and more. This class will enrich the life of each student with a new cultural dimension.

HABLA ESPANOL: Spanish Composition and Conversation

Students will learn the structure for vocabulary and grammar during this course. They will also gain the tools to improve vocabulary retention, recollection, proper pronunciation, as well as effective writing, reading and listening skills. A truly beneficial class for those planning on high school Spanish credits.

BEYOND ROOMBA: Middle School Robotics

Whether you want to be a part of our FIRST Robotics team, or just enjoy building robots, take this class and join the fun! This will be a hands-on introduction to the field of robotics, which blends computer science and engineering. Students will be using various robotic software and hardware to allow small groups to experience many kinds of challenges and successes. They will build skills such as teamwork, creative problem solving, construction, communication, and engineering. Students will have the opportunity to join our school team, and competition will take place in the Fall, Spring, or both (depending on our team size and skill level). Coding skills will also be worked on using Blockly, Java, and Python, to name a few. Come in at any level, you'll fit right in!

GET WITH THE PROGRAM: Beginning Coding

This class will focus on developing and strengthening coding skills. While some applications will be necessary to test out our building coding skills, emphasis will be on the programming. Students will work with Blockly and JavaScript, and will utilize programs such as Code.org and Scratch at the start. Students may even progress into Ruby or Python as their ability and time allow. This class is targeted towards the beginning coder. Topics we will explore include coding games and websites as skill levels advance.

JUST BREATHE: Mindfulness and Self-Care

Students will be taught and practice strategies and activities that can help manage stress and anxiety, self-consciousness, body awareness, and social interactions. They will work on developing observation techniques to enable them to recognize their own levels of mindfulness. Activities may include writing, journaling, practicing yoga, deep breathing, mini games and self-checks, acts of kindness, practicing gratitude and other calming methods.

DIVINE DECORATION: Bible Journaling

Learn about this growing type of scripture study in a fun and interactive way. All you need is a Bible, some fun pens or stencils, and a desire to learn more about the word of God. Students will learn a variety of techniques to journal in their Bibles, including watercolor, pencil, and pen and ink. They will learn the proper way to prepare pages so ink won't bleed through and block out words. Students will create a keepsake to reflect upon throughout their lives.

PLAN AHEAD: Planner Girls (and Guys!)

Do you love pens, stationary, stickers, stamps, and photography? Are you organized? Or wish you were? This is the class for you! Planners are all the rage and come in so many styles and sizes! Students will explore the varieties available and experiment with different ways to keep track of all the important things in their lives. No boring lists here - today's planners help keep your life together and reflect your personality at the same time.

JUST BEAD IT: Jewelry Making

Students will learn a variety of skills such as beading, wire work, metal stamping, attaching snaps and closures, elastics, and more. They will put that newly acquired knowledge to use to create their own pieces of jewelry such as necklaces, earrings, and bracelets.

BILL NYE'S PROTEGE: Mad Scientist Laboratory

Do you love making slime? Enjoy watching things react and change properties? Students in this class will have fun in the Science lab making crazy concoctions and conducting exciting experiments.

WRITTEN IN THE STARS: Astronomy 101

Have you ever looked up at the night sky and wondered what is going on out there? Students in this class will learn the names of solar systems and galaxies, along with constellations and how to identify them.

BRAINS AT WORK: STEM Challenges

Students in this interactive, hands-on course will combine and refine their skills in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math as they work together through a series of exciting challenges. This class requires some serious creativity to solve the assigned problems, but students will be rewarded with a tremendous sense of accomplishment in the end.

YOU'RE PLAYING MY SONG: Middle School Band (Full Year)

***Choose either 6th Grade or 7th & 8th Grade Band**

Middle School Band is an introduction to formal performance oriented music. Emphasis is on the large ensemble concept with much attention given to both the concert & competition opportunities. The 7th & 8th grade band also has the opportunity to perform at one High School Football game per year. Individual performance opportunities are also encouraged and available with participation at Jr. High Solo & Ensemble Festival.

SPANISH 1: Spanish for High School Credit (8th Graders Only)

This course introduces the students to the four skills; speaking, listening, reading and writing Spanish, with an emphasis on speaking and listening. It also provides an introduction to the Spanish speaking world and its people. Sentence structure is practiced for correct writing and intelligent reading ability.

FRENCH 1: French for High School Credit (8th Graders Only)

This course introduces the students to elementary French conversation and being able to express themselves in everyday situations. This course addresses basic elementary grammar, the reading of simple French stories, beginning French composition, authentic listening activities and the culture of French speaking places and people. Main conversation topics include: introducing oneself, talking about food, family, interests and different actions in the present and past tenses.

HALLELUJAH CHORUS: Middle School Choir

Students will study choral music from various periods of musical history, as well as concentrate on the fundamentals of music while developing musicianship skills. Emphasis will be placed upon the development of the choral sound and the individual voice. Class members will sing at the weekly school Masses. Students will participate in the Christmas and Spring Concerts and are encouraged to participate in solo and small ensemble singing opportunities.

AN ARTIST'S EYE: Middle School Art (Full Year)

Students will be learning the rudiments of drawing, painting in tempera, and watercolor. They will construct simple dimensional art works. Color theory will be explored and used after tints, tones and shades are mastered. Harmonies such as: Complementary, Monochromatic, and Analogous will be taught. Calligraphy will be taught to Eighth Grade. Many of the drawing and painting projects are tied to teaching across the curriculum.

OOH LA LA!: French Culture and Cuisine

Students will explore French culture, customs, and cuisine. They will examine the geography, history, art, famous citizens, and even stereotypes. This class is a fun introduction to the country and may inspire students to take French as their high school foreign language credits.