

2023-2024

7th & 8th Grade Electives Descriptions

Band:

Band placement will be determined by ability and experience levels, per Band Director. Band class includes Woodwind, Brass, and Percussion instruments that play in an ensemble together. Students perform in concerts, school assemblies, parades, festivals, and more. Field trips are a large part of the band experience. If you like to play an instrument, enjoy being involved in school functions, and going on trips, this is the class for you. Students bond and make music together in so many different settings in band.

Choir:

Choirs are available for different experience levels – all singers are welcome to join and more experienced singers are encouraged to audition for our smaller choir. All groups perform a mixture of works from a variety of time periods, languages, and students' requests. Field trips and festivals are offered each year and performing at school assemblies, sporting events, and other opportunities may be offered.

Creative Writing:

This course builds upon the student's current writing skills. They will learn an imaginative approach that expresses their ideas/thoughts by way of short stories, poems, advertisements, commercials, mysteries, etc. Emphasis is placed on "show writing". Elements of short story and six traits.

Digital Photography:

This course introduces students to the basics of photography, including camera functions and photo composition. Students will learn what it takes to create a good photograph and how to improve photographs.

Investigations:

NOTE: This course is designed for Gifted identified students. PBL/Genius Hour format: student driven opportunity to engage in meaningful research and exploration of a topic of the students' choice which culminates in a multi-media presentation as the demonstration of knowledge. Students will adhere to a timeline aligned to their topic of exploration meeting checkpoint benchmarks throughout the course. Each checkpoint will be highlighted with a key artifact.

Robotics:

This course is designed to teach core computer programming logic and reasoning skills using a robotics engineering context. It will provide an introduction to robotics for students with some, limited or no programming background using LEGO MINDSTORMS NXT and EV3 kits. Students will learn to construct, control and program these robots through investigative and exploration activities. Research projects will expose the students to the STEAM engineering process.

Student Government:

This course is designed to provide students with an opportunity to develop and enrich their leadership skills while promoting a positive school climate, school spirit and community involvement. Throughout this class students will implement strategies and techniques involving literacy in relation to various forms of communication.

Mathematics Intervention Support:

Successful completion of middle school coursework is essential. Students who experience challenges in math may be scheduled to attend a specified academic Math for Success course during the school day in lieu of electives. This course is designed to provide targeted, structured intervention to students who would benefit from support in Math.

Orchestra:

Orchestra is a year course for beginning and advancing strings players learn in a group setting. Previous experience is recommended but not required. Students give public performances, compete regionally, and travel. All students are required to have and care for an instrument and may need to purchase a textbook. Students are also expected to practice outside of the school day. Strings violin, viola, cello and string bass. Guitar, electric bass and piano are not taught, although they may be featured as a second instrument.

Physical Education:

This course is a semester-long course but may be taken both semesters during any or all middle school academic years due to differentiated curriculum at each grade level. Physical Education students learn the value of exercise, proper nutrition, sun safety, cardiovascular fitness, health physiology, and how to incorporate fitness in their everyday lifestyles. A strong emphasis is placed on promoting a positive self-image for all students. Our objective is to assist each student to develop physically, emotionally, and mentally. We believe these skills will help students establish a lifetime appreciation of the value of fitness. Character and fair play are incorporated into all activities, including individual, team and lifetime sports, and fitness activities. Students take part in cross curricular activities to consider how Wellness integrates into other content areas. SUSD Middle Level Physical Education aims to promote the development of healthy habits and an awareness of wellness as students are encouraged to consider physical fitness plans for life.

Public Speaking & Debate:

This course develops and improves students' communication skills. Students will learn techniques for building and delivering successful speeches. Activities will include preparing and delivering speeches as well as participating in formal and informal debates.

Spanish 1 (8th grade only):

This class introduce the student to the Spanish language and culture through authentic resources that allow students to listen, speak, read, and write in the target language. Methods are used to emphasize the three modes of communication: presentational, interpersonal, and interpretive. The targeted proficiency level is Novice-High. The class is predominantly conducted in the target language with the end goal of 90% usage.

Theatre Arts:

At varying levels, the Theatre Arts courses introduce a variety of opportunities to explore performance and technique development. Early concepts include public speaking, pantomime, monologues, puppetry, and stage performance. Additional opportunities may include improvisation, theatre history, theatre tech, staging, storytelling and script writing.

Technology & 3D Print Design:

This course will provide the students the chance to learn programs for digital video production, web-based programs including Google Apps/Sites, and a computer-aided design (CAD) program using STEAM learning to create project based 3-D print design. Students will explore digital citizenship resources, their "digital footprint", digital privacy and technology in historical content. Students will complete a 20 Time Project for real-world problem solving. Some keyboarding practice is included.

Video Production/Journalism:

This course is intended for students who are interested in the aspects of video production. Students will learn skills to design, write and edit in a variety of video genres. The focus will be to create and produce the DCTV9 news daily announcements via live streaming and/or the DCTV9 News website. Students will learn about developing concepts, script writing, acting on camera, filming, directing, editing, Google Sites and producing a video production.

Yearbook:

This course gives students the opportunity to record the school's history for the year. Students focus on using digital photography and publishing software to produce a digital yearbook. Emphasis is on teamwork, time management, and responsibility. Students also learn marketing and budgeting skills.