

MILL VALLEY MIDDLE SCHOOL
2014 – 2015 7th / 8th Grade Elective Descriptions

Seventh and eighth grade students are able to choose two different electives in their course schedule. In addition to the Art or Music electives twice a week, we offer Spanish, French, Technology, Drama, and Global Citizenship classes as course electives at the middle school. Parents and students should read the class descriptions and decide which elective choices would be most appropriate. Students will be enrolled in **ONE** Art or Music elective and **ONE** Foreign Language, Technology, Drama, or Global Citizenship elective. Please number your choices 1, 2, and 3 for each section on the Elective Class Placement Form. Space is limited in many electives, and some require pre-requisites or a minimum GPA, please read each description carefully.

CHOOSE ONE FROM THE FOLLOWING ART OR MUSIC OPTIONS:

ART

Art – 7th Grade concentrates on the creative exploration of the elements of art: color, form, line, value, shape, space and texture. Students also learn the principles of design: balance, contrast, rhythm, unity, emphasis, pattern and movement. Students apply the elements and principles as they further explore a variety of media and techniques and expand upon knowledge gained from the K-6 art program.

Art – 8th Grade is based on in-depth studio based art projects. Students use their knowledge of art principles to create, invent, experiment, take risks and solve artistic problems. Students study art history and aesthetics while expressing themselves in ceramics, printmaking with the printing press, painting, drawing, sculpture and photography.

MUSIC

Chorus - Choral music students will develop sight-reading and ear training skills, proper vocal technique, and basic musical elements such as phrasing, dynamics, diction, and artistic expression. A variety of literature in multiple languages, styles, and eras will be chosen at the teacher's discretion. Repertoire will be challenging, but appropriate to the group's ability level. Although this is a one-year course, it is most successful for students (and the program) with a multi-year commitment (6th, 7th, and 8th grade). This course includes public performances outside of school hours (calendar to be given at the beginning of the school year).

World Chorus Ensemble: This elective is open to students who want to explore music from many cultures through percussion and voice. While a major component of this class will focus on the continued study of West African drums, students will also branch out into the traditions of percussion from other indigenous cultures around the world, as well as collaborating with the choral program vocally, participating in the all-choir pieces at MVMS Choral Concerts.

***Band** - Band is open to any student with at least 1 year of playing experience. This class is designed to develop the musical skills of the student, foster an appreciation for music, promote teamwork and encourage all students to strive for excellence. There will be several performances during the school year. *Students interested in beginning an instrument should contact Mr. Carnahan directly at ccarnahan@mvschools.org.*

Music Technology: THIS ELECTIVE IS FULL.

~~Music Technology is designed to introduce students to the world of digital audio and MIDI computer recording. By using the tools of digital recording, the students will be able to create their own music compositions and arrangements to produce audio recordings. The course will explore MIDI and audio recording, composition, music production and sound engineering using programs such as Garage Band and Music Studio.~~

***Beginning Guitar** - Beginning Guitar is open to all MVMS students interested in playing the guitar. Students will learn to play chords, read sheet music (no tabs), and the fundamentals of playing guitar. Students must provide their own six-string acoustic guitar for class (no electric guitars will be used in class, although they may be used at home). This class also covers the history of Rock and Roll and lineage of influential guitarists. There will be two performances during the school year. Space is limited for this elective.

***Intermediate Guitar** - Intermediate Guitar is only open to students who have completed the Beginning Guitar class. Students will learn to play chords, improvise, read sheet music, tabs, and the fundamentals of playing guitar. Students need to provide their own six-string acoustic guitar for class (no electric guitars will be used in class, although they may be used at home). There will be two performances during the school year.

***Advanced Guitar** - Advanced Guitar is only open to students who have completed the Intermediate Guitar class. Students will learn to play chords, improvise, read sheet music, tabs, and the fundamentals of playing guitar. Students need to provide their own six-string acoustic guitar for class (no electric guitars will be used in class, although they may be used at home). There will be two performances during the school year.

***Beginning Strings** - Students with no prior instrumental experience on a stringed instrument can learn the rudiments of playing the violin, viola or cello. Note reading and instrument technique are learned side by side. There is a string method book that accompanies the course as well as supplementary materials from the teacher. There will be two informal performances in the winter and spring semester. Students will perform music of various styles such as folk, classical and pop. Students at the end of a year of study may be eligible to perform with the middle school orchestras if enough skill is developed. This course may be repeated. Daily practice is required.

***Orchestra** - Orchestra is open to all students with at least one year of previous instruction on violin, viola, cello or bass. In this class students learn and perform a variety of music, explore music theory, history, cover concepts of musicality and string sound, develop sight reading, and learn how to work together and rehearse as a string orchestra. Students will be placed according to their skill level. This course includes public performances outside of school hours (calendar to be given at the beginning of the school year).

***All instrument classes require 30 minutes of practice per day (as homework) and the student is responsible for transporting his/her instrument between home and school.**

CHOOSE ONE FROM THE FOLLOWING ELECTIVE OPTIONS:

Spanish or French I or II - These classes are communication-based and aimed at the development of the four skills of language learning: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Frequent oral work in pairs and small groups will be used to reinforce acquisition of the new language. Homework is assigned most days and there will be projects that will be completed outside of class. Students who successfully complete Spanish 1/French 1 in 7th grade will proceed to Spanish II/French II in 8th grade. This program is designed so that students who successfully complete the 2-year course of study at MVMS are eligible to enter the second year of Spanish or French as high school freshmen. Students who take a language class need to have a minimum 2.5 GPA.

Technology II or III - *THIS ELECTIVE IS FULL.*

~~Technology II or III is for students who are interested in expanding the technology skills introduced in the sixth grade technology Wheel elective. The class will be in a project-based learning environment. Students will work with desktop publishing, digital image editing and manipulation, animation, video production, web design, robotics, and coding. Students who take Technology II must have successfully completed the Technology I in the 6th grade Wheel elective as a prerequisite. Students who take Technology III must have successfully completed the Technology II as a pre-requisite.~~

Drama:

This year-long elective course will exercise your body (through pantomime), voice (through voice exercises, reader's theater, and speech), and mind (through improvisation, scene study, and a trimester dramatic play). Each trimester has an in-depth focus all its own that together will make you a more courageous and skilled performer. You will learn to be quick witted, whether it's pantomiming that you're a member of an orchestra, giving an impromptu speech on the existence of extraterrestrials, performing an improv of unlikely superheroes, or participating in a final trimester dramatic play. This will be a safe and enriching learning experience. Come join the fun! We need a minimum of 25 students to be able to offer this class.

Global Citizenship and Debate: *THIS ELECTIVE IS FULL.*

~~In this elective, students will have the opportunity to study current events and delve deeper into the important issues that impact our world today. Students will explore the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and discuss the rights and privileges of global citizenship. Students will research topics that impact people on a local as well as a global level, exposing various viewpoints. Students will learn the art of persuasion, participate in debates, and develop projects to make a positive impact on our world community. We need a minimum of 25 students to be able to offer this class.~~

PLEASE NOTE:

- **Students who have an IEP are scheduled for an Academic Support period instead of one of the electives from the second category.**
- **Electives have a limited space available in them as most are offered as a single section.**
- **Students who would like to work as an Office Aide or Teacher's Aide instead of one of the above electives OR Art or Music should mark the box on the registration form and also make an appointment to meet with their counselor.**