

**MILL VALLEY MIDDLE SCHOOL**  
**2017-2018 7<sup>th</sup> / 8<sup>th</sup> 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, Global Citizenship, and Drama electives that meet four times per week. 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, Global Citizenship, or Drama 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 have pre-requisites or a required minimum GPA. Please read each description carefully. Please note that numbering all selections with 1 will not guarantee you get that elective, and if needed, we will select an alternative for you.

**CHOOSE ONE FROM THE FOLLOWING ART OR MUSIC OPTIONS:**

**ART**

**Art: 7<sup>th</sup> 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: 8<sup>th</sup> 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, painting, drawing, and sculpture.

**MUSIC**

**Chorus: 7<sup>TH</sup> GRADE CLASSES FULL as of 4/10/17** 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 (6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade). This course includes public performances outside of school hours (calendar to be given at the beginning of the school year). New chorus students are welcome in all grades for 2017-2018. Please note that beginning in the 2018-2019 school year, 8<sup>th</sup> grade students joining chorus will be required to have prior experience in 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> grade.

**World Music Ensemble: 7<sup>TH</sup> AND 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE CLASSES FULL as of 4/10/17** This elective is taught by Anna Stearns and 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 and participating in the all-choir pieces at MVMS Choral Concerts.

**\*Intermediate Band:** Intermediate Band is open to all woodwind, brass and percussion students with at least **one year** of instrumental 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 musical 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](mailto:ccarnahan@mvschools.org).*

**\*Advanced Band** – Advanced Band is open to all woodwind, brass and percussion student with at least **2 years** 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](mailto:ccarnahan@mvschools.org).*

**\*Beginning Guitar** - Beginning Guitar is open to all MVMS students interested in learning to play the guitar. Students will learn the fundamentals of playing the guitar, including how to read music (no tabs) and how to play chords. While we do spend a small amount of time learning to play pop and rock music, the focus of this class is on learning proper technique and how to read standard notation sheet music. 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 discusses the history of Rock and Roll and lineage of influential guitarists. There will be two performances during the school year. Space is limited in this elective.

**\*Advanced Guitar** - Advanced Guitar is open to students who have successfully completed the Beginning Guitar class (no exceptions). Students will continue to learn to read standard notation, but will also learn to improvise, read tabs, and learn to play various types of chords (power chords/ bar chords). Students will also break into small groups to work on pop/rock songs of their choice. 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 multiple performances during the school year.

**Music Technology 1 – 7<sup>TH</sup> AND 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE CLASSES FULL as of 4/10/17** Music Technology 1 is a music appreciation class that teaches audio recording and composition. Students will learn how to compose music for film, write a pop/rock song, and compose a jingle to accompany a commercial. Students will be using GarageBand and iMovie on their school assigned iPads to complete these projects. No prior musical experience is required. (max 50 students)

**Music Technology 2: 7<sup>TH</sup> AND 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE CLASSES FULL as of 4/10/17** Music Technology 2 is a continuation of Music Technology 1 with an emphasis on recording and live sound. Students will begin the year by composing a pop/rock song using the virtual instruments in GarageBand. Next, they will learn to use the app MultiTrack DAW to record and mix real musicians who will play their song. To complete the year, they will have their song performed live as they work the soundboard. Prerequisite- Music Tech 1 (max 20 students).

**\*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 20 minutes of practice per day and the student is responsible for transporting his/her instrument between home and school.**

## **CHOOSE ONE FROM THE FOLLOWING ELECTIVE OPTIONS:**

**Spanish and French are two-year programs.** Upon successful completion of Spanish 1 or French 1 (7<sup>th</sup>Grade) *and* Spanish 2 or French 2 (8<sup>th</sup>Grade), students will skip the first year of high school-level Spanish or French in the Tamalpais High School District. Students who take a language class must have at least a 2.5 GPA overall. A student must earn a C - or better to continue with the second year of Spanish or French in 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Taking a language at the middle school level does not meet the language requirement for colleges. Students still need to take three years of the same language in high school to meet college entrance requirements.

**Spanish 1 or French 1, 7<sup>th</sup>Grade:** This is a full-year communication-based class. It aims to build proficiency in the four skills of language learning: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Homework is assigned up to three days per week and there may be projects to be completed outside of class. Students will explore language and cultures through music, storytelling, reading, puppetry, games and technology.

**Spanish 2 or French 2, 8<sup>th</sup> Grade:** This full-year class is a continuation of Spanish 1 or French 1 and each focuses on expanding vocabulary, developing fluency and creating a deeper understanding of language and diverse cultures. Homework is assigned up to three days per week and there may be projects completed outside of class.

### **TECH 2 – 7<sup>th</sup> Grade:**

Tech 2 is an advanced technology course with a STEAM focus (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics). The course is made up of two parts: Tech 2 Lab and Tech 2 Engineering. Each trimester students rotate between these two sections.

**Tech 2 Lab** builds on the sixth grade Tech Wheel class. Areas of focus include increased mastery of Internet navigation and storage, expansion of skills in applications students already know, and exposure to new applications, all while fostering independence and problem-solving skills. This course broadly covers a range of topics - especially those that enhance learning students do in other classes. Examples of applications and topics students will explore include, but aren't limited to, word processing, spreadsheets, coding, Google Docs, iMovie, GarageBand, SketchUp, and TinkerCad.

**Tech 2 Engineering** students work collaboratively in teams to design, build, test and refine solutions to a variety of challenges. Students are engaged for much of the year on building and programming robots made with LEGO EV3 software and hardware to develop their understanding of engineering and programming concepts. There is an emphasis on critical thinking and working cooperatively in a team.

**TECH 3 – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade:** Tech 3 builds upon the STEAM concepts worked on in Tech 2. Like Tech 2, Tech 3 consists of two sections: Tech 3 Lab and Tech 3 Engineering. These classes meet in both the computer lab and the Maker Space. On some projects the two sections will combine into one larger group. This class is open to all 8th graders.

**Tech 3 Lab** students work on digital storytelling, digital art, and visual communication projects. Projects in Tech 3 Lab are often extensions of projects started in the Maker Space. Students will develop and use their digital storytelling skills in off site projects with the Redwoods Retirement Community and the MVSD elementary schools. Examples of applications students will use include, but are not limited to, iMovie, Photoshop, GarageBand, and Illustrator.

**Tech 3 Engineering** students will be making, tinkering and engineering. They will be given opportunities to design, experiment, build and invent to solve a problem. They will work individually and in collaborative groups to work through the design process and reflect on

the process. They will also explore simple machines, basic circuitry and physical computing by building Rube Goldberg Machines, designing and programming robots built from electronic components and craft materials and other individually designed projects.

**Global Citizenship - 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade:** 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 rights, privileges, and responsibilities of global citizenship. Students will research topics that impact people on a local as well as a global level, exposing various viewpoints. Different forms of discussion, including seminars, debates, and forums will be a fundamental part of this elective. Students will also study about and develop projects to make a positive impact on our world community.

**Drama 7th & 8th Grade:** **7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade CLASSES FULL as of 4/10/17** For the 2017–18 school year, we will be offering Drama as a combination 7th and 8th grade class open to new students and students who took drama in 7th grade. Through drama exercises and activities, the first trimester will focus on creating a strong, supportive team of performers. With this new cohesive ensemble, you will delve into theater work and technique, including stage picture, stage directions, and stage presence. You will learn how to convey status, use your voice and body to create strong characters, and to push your imagination to think and react on your feet. In this course, you will work closely with your peers to establish goals, choose from a variety of scripts to perform, and design and direct your own skits. Some popular units are pantomiming presentations, character analysis, lip sync battles, improvisation exercises, and mini-productions for all grade levels and your families.

**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 may have a limited space available in them as many are offered as a single section. Please select three choices to ensure you are placed in one of your choices.**
- **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 make an appointment to meet with their counselor to determine this elective choice.**