

MILL VALLEY MIDDLE SCHOOL
2019-2020 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 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, 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, so 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, painting, drawing, and sculpture.

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 Music Ensemble - This elective is open to 7th & 8th grade 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 at the Intermediate/Advanced level, students may also have opportunities to 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.

***Advanced 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 1 - Music Technology 1 is a music appreciation class that teaches audio recording and composition. Students will explore Garage Band Live Loops, learn how to compose music for film, and write a pop/rock song. 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 - Music Technology 2 is a continuation of Music Technology 1 with an emphasis on recording and live sound. This class will take you through the entire creative process of writing a song (composition, multitrack recording, mixing, and live performance). Prerequisite: Music Tech 1 (max 20 students).

***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.

***Advanced Guitar** - Advanced 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.

***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:

Drama - 7th & 8th Grade: This year long elective course will exercise your body (through pantomime), voice (through voice exercises, reader's theater, and speech), and mind (through improvisation). Each trimester has a focus all its own that together will make you a more courageous and skilled performer and presenter. 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 improvisational of unlikely superheroes, or participating in multiple mini-performances throughout the year. This will be a safe and enriching learning experience. Open to the first 50 students who sign up.

Global Citizenship - 7th & 8th Grade: Interested in world issues and global events? What to make a positive change in the world? If so, then this elective is for you! Follow current events and dive into issues that impact our world today, all while exploring the rights, privileges, and responsibilities of global citizenship. Different forms of conversation, including class meetings and discussion seminars are central to this dynamic course, and students will have the opportunity to develop ideas for making positive change in our community and world. Because this course values student voice and input, please note that most assignments will be completed in class. Open to the first 28 students who sign up.

Spanish or French 1 or 2: 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. Students will also develop a sense of the cultural aspects of the target 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 2/French 2 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. However, this is not a required course to begin a World Language in high school, nor does it count for credit for college admission. Students who take a language class must have at least a 2.5 GPA overall. A student must also have earned a C or better to continue with the year 2 of Spanish or French. Eighth grade students who wish to start Spanish 1 or French 1 in eighth grade, may do so but will begin Spanish or French language program at the high school at the 1/2 level.

Tech 2 - 7th 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 - 8th 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. This class is open to all eighth graders who have completed Tech Wheel in sixth grade.

- Tech 3 Lab** students work on digital art, digital storytelling and visual communication projects. Students will have opportunities to extend their existing skills and personal interests with self-designed projects using technology. Projects in Tech 3 Lab often use more than one application and often include internet research, note-taking, discussion, and writing. Examples of applications students will use include: Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign, iMovie, and Scratch. Over the course of the year, students will build a portfolio of work they can show to future teachers/employers to demonstrate skill level and competencies.
- Tech 3 Engineering** students will continue working together in teams to design, build, and test various projects. Much of the class will be focused on open-ended design challenges designed to foster an ability to not only solve problems, but also define them. Actively working on developing effective problem solving strategies is a part of this class. Laptops and iPads are available for teams to use on projects when using them will enhance the design challenge.

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 will be selected in a first come first served basis. Once a section closes, students will receive their 2nd or 3rd choice option. If no 2nd or 3rd choice option is included (e.g. student chooses the same elective for all three options), we will select an elective for the student based on what is still available.**
- **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 elective should mark the box on the registration form and also make an appointment to meet with their counselor.**