

MILL VALLEY MIDDLE SCHOOL
2020-2021 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 Studies elective. Please select a primary request and alternate request for each section on the Course Requests entry form. Space is limited in many electives, and some require prerequisites 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, 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.

***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 GarageBand 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 Studies - 7th & 8th Grade: Interested in current issues and global events? Want to be part of a better world? If so, then this elective is for you! Explore what it means to be a global citizen and find out about events, human rights, and social justice topics that shape our world today. Different forms of conversation, including class meetings and discussion seminars are central to this dynamic class. Because this course values student voice and input, most assignments will be completed during class. Open to the first 28 students who sign up!

Spanish or French 1: The first year of middle school language 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.

Spanish or French 2: 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 consists of two sections: Tech 2 Lab and Tech 2 Engineering. Students spend an equal amount of time in both sections developing independence and problem-solving skills.

- **Tech 2 Lab** builds on the sixth grade Tech Wheel class. Tech 2 Lab students work on a range of digital projects such as mazes, surveys, podcasts, spreadsheets and movies. There is a big focus on creating products with the reader/viewer/listener in mind, attention to detail, and design refinement. Examples of applications students explore include: GarageBand, SketchUp, TinkerCad, Google Sheets and Forms, and Adobe Premiere Pro.
- **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: This class is open to ALL 8th graders, even if they did not take Tech 2. Tech 3 consists of two sections: Tech 3 Lab and Tech 3 Engineering. Students will rotate between the two sections.

- **Tech 3 Lab** students will work on video production and storytelling, digital art, and visual communication projects. Students will develop and use their storytelling skills in off-site projects with the Redwoods Retirement Community and other Mill Valley community groups. Examples of applications students will use include, but are not limited to: Adobe Premiere, Photoshop, Illustrator.
- **Tech 3 Engineering** students will be making, tinkering and engineering. Students 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.

PLEASE NOTE:

- **Students who have an IEP may be 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 Alternate Request option. If no Alternate Request is chosen or the Primary Request is chosen twice, 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 make an appointment to meet with their counselor.**