

ELECTIVES COURSE DESCRIPTIONS—8th Grade Options

****All electives are not guaranteed and based on class availability, special programming and if scheduling permits.****

Art–Semester

Classes are filled with projects and activities that will boost your critical thinking habits, improve your collaborative participation, grow your creativity and develop your communication skills through making, writing and talking about art and art history. Classes are designed as an introduction to all forms of visual communication including drawing, painting, ceramics, printmaking, 3D sculpture, and digital art/technology.

Intermediate Band- Yearlong

This course is available to all 7th and 8th grade students that have previously been involved in band. This class will perform several concerts, learn music theory, work on musicianship, and attend District Band Festival in the Spring. This is a development class for either Advanced Band or the High School band program. Students & parents must sign a contract about no-drop policy.

Advanced Band – Yearlong

This course is available by audition only. This class will perform several concerts, attend District Band Festival in the Spring, march in parades, learn more advanced music theory, and work on higher musicianship skills. Auditions will be held in May for the following school year. Students & parents must sign a contract about no-drop policy.

Broadcast Journalism –Semester

This course will introduce students to the basics of Broadcast Journalism. Content includes writing, reporting, producing, and anchoring news stories. Students will also write and produce their own Public Service Announcements. Throughout the course, an emphasis will be placed on hands on production of student created newscasts. In addition, through Extension Projects, students will learn how to be a consumer of news as they evaluate stories, news mediums and learn about the history of journalism. *Steam certificate eligible.

Tiger Cub News –Yearlong

As a team, students will write, produce, edit, and broadcast weekly shows that feature newsworthy stories about SPMS. Shows will be available on a secure YouTube channel for teachers to show during Homeroom. *Steam certificate eligible.

Prerequisite: Passing grade in either 6th or 7th Grade Broadcast Journalism and approval by teacher.

Chorus –Semester

Chorus is a performance-based class in which music from a wide variety of styles, cultures, and time periods will be studied and performed. Students will learn proper vocal production and technique, music reading skills, sight-singing skills, and performance skills. This course will also provide opportunities for growth in the understanding of musical elements (i.e. rhythm, melody, form, harmony, expressive elements, and style) as applied to the music performed. Students will perform in several concert performances during the year and also have the opportunity to sing solos and participate in small ensembles.

Advanced Chorus –Yearlong

Students must audition for this class.

Culinary Science (Advanced) –Semester

Students take their culinary knowledge to the next level in this class. Students help create the focus of the class, whether it be cooking for your family, the science of baking, or setting up their own culinary business. Students discuss and help create the curriculum.

Recommended Prerequisite: Has taken culinary science class in a previous year.

Theatre Arts/Advanced Drama – Yearlong

This class is designed to provide advanced theory and practical application of stage and film acting techniques, advanced theatre history, character development, improvisation, sense memory, movement, monologue preparation and performance and scene study with an emphasis on stage presence. Students will use their skills in analyzing, visualization, playwriting, scene study and performance preparation while increasing their knowledge of theatre and theatre terminology. Acting genres and styles will be explored, as well as the theatrical process and the various jobs in theatre.

This course will also provide students with the opportunity to participate in the Drama Teacher's Association of Southern California (DTASC) Fall or Spring Theatre Festival Competition.

Prerequisite: 7th Grade drama and/or application/audition process with approval by teacher.

Orchestra –Yearlong (0 Period)

Ensemble class welcoming students of all levels and grades who want to play the following string instruments: violin, viola, cello, upright bass. The class meets every other day during 0 period from 7:00am-7:50am.

While prior experience is encouraged it is not mandatory; teacher to place student in level based on experience.

Intermediate

Intermediate orchestra is for all students who wish to learn or improve their performance skills on their instrument. The students will be learning music theory, playing as an ensemble, and instrument technique.

Advanced

This group is for more experienced players. The students learn focus on more advanced music literature, instrument technique, and becoming more professional musicians. Students in this group will have a chance to perform in our class string ensemble, a symphony ensemble, and chamber groups. Admittance into this group is by audition or approval only.

Spanish 1/2 –Yearlong

The 8th grade Spanish course is a full-year and is more intensive than the 7th grade introductory course. This course mirrors the Spanish 1-2 course offered at the high school and students who are successful in this class may have the option of advancing to the Spanish 3-4 course when they reach 9th grade. Spanish 1/2 students shall study and practice the five major skill areas of reading, writing, speaking, listening, and culture. Students shall engage in conversations, provide and obtain information, express feelings and emotions, and exchange opinions. Students shall understand and interpret written and spoken language on a variety of topics. *This course accelerates their level at the high school but students will still need to take the recommended 3 years of LOTE in order to fulfill the E category in the A-G requirements. (Based on a passing grade of a C or better).*

STEAM 8: Engineering Careers -- Yearlong

Engineering careers is an exploration of four cutting edge STEM careers through the practice of creative problem-solving projects. In the Magic of Electrons unit, we will explore electricity, the behavior and parts of atoms, and sensing devices. We will learn knowledge and skills in basic circuitry design, and examine the impact of electrical engineering on the world around us. In the Medical Detectives unit students, we will play the role of real-life medical detectives as we analyze genetic testing results to diagnose disease and study DNA evidence found at a “crime scene.” We solve medical mysteries through hands-on projects and labs, investigate how to measure and interpret vital signs, and learn how the systems of the human body work together to maintain health. In the Energy and Environment unit we will be challenged to think big and toward the future as we explore sustainable solutions to the world’s energy needs, and investigate the impact of energy on our lives and the world. In the Green Architecture unit, we will learn how to apply our knowledge of green energy to the fields of architecture and construction by exploring dimensioning, measuring, and architectural sustainability as we design affordable housing using Autodesk’s® 3D architectural design software. *Steam certificate eligible.

Aides –Semester – (priority is given to 8th graders)

Teacher Aide: Students work for a specific teacher during the teacher’s teaching period. The student performs a number of clerical tasks such as grading papers and record keeping. A student may not be a TA during a teacher’s conference period. Students must have a B or better in all classes

Library Aide: Students assist in the library with a variety tasks. Work includes check in and check out of library materials, shelving books, setting up boards and displays, making deliveries to classrooms, and helping other students to access information. Students must have a B or better in all classes. *Approval by our librarian, Ms. Kahn.*

Office Aide: Students work in the school office and perform a variety of office tasks such as answering phones, assisting with attendance procedures, delivering call slips and filing. Students must have a B or better in all classes. *Approval by administration.*

Yearbook –Yearlong

In this course students will gain skills in one or more of the following areas: page design, advanced publishing techniques, copy writing, editing and photography while producing a creative, innovative yearbook which records school memories and events. There is an emphasis on journalism skills in this class! Participants gain useful, real world skills in time management, marketing, teamwork, and design principles.

Students will be given challenging real-world projects and assignments typical of the graphic design and publishing industries. High quality work is expected and students will be given opportunities to redo work until it meets standards specified during instruction. Classroom activities will include reading, research, projects, and problem solving. Students will often work in teams, but will be expected to complete individual assignments in relation to the team’s work. Assessment methods will include written exams, tests, and quizzes; oral and written research reports; reading assignments; and projects.

Application process with approval by teacher.

0 Period PE –Yearlong

Physical Education before school Monday-Friday from 7:00-7:50 am in order to give students the opportunity for an additional elective during the school day. This elective is in place for students in specific programs, such as SPED, ELD, and/or other intervention programs that doesn’t give them the chance to choose their own electives. Students & parents must sign a contract stating attendance/behavior policy.

Dance P.E. –Yearlong

This course is designed for 7th and 8th grade students who are interested in dance, movement, expression, nonverbal communication, choreography, and dance history. In this course, students become aware of the expressive capabilities of the physical body. Elements of dance and expression are explored through a variety of dance genres (i.e. ballet, jazz, modern). Students are expected to recognize and perform different genres of dance, understand the evolution of dance throughout the decades, and successfully articulate concepts and stories through group choreography. This class replaces general PE and fulfills the class requirement, including the Physical Fitness Test.