

**RJ Fisher Middle School – Grades 7 & 8
ELECTIVE COURSE CATALOG 2019-2020**

Art 7/8

This year-long art course is open to 7th and 8th grade students. Students will have hands-on experience developing expressive and innovative art projects that keep students engaged. Students further develop their imaginations and explore a wide variety of media such as watercolor, acrylic paint, oil pastels, paper maché and graphite. Students work in a creative environment that will strengthen their passion for art. Take a look at our photo album on our class website for a first hand look at student work that is created in Art 7/8.

Dance for PE Credit (7th-8th) *

There are two Dance courses available to students- Advanced Dance and Dance 7/8 (Open Dance). Students choosing Dance for PE will be placed in Advanced Dance based on auditions. All other students will be placed in Dance 7/8 (Open Dance) based on lottery. **All students not placed in Dance will be placed in PE.**

Dance 7/8 (Open Dance)

Open Dance- Beginner to Intermediate students will study the elements of hip-hop, classic jazz, contemporary jazz, Broadway, and ballet dance forms. Students will advance in their dance technique, strength, flexibility, and artistry. Classes consist of a warm-up, center work, traveling progressions, and choreography. There is a large creative component to these courses in which students will learn to choreograph and improvise dances. The central focus is on the development of fitness and individual style. These students will have several opportunities to perform for friends and family.

Advanced Dance – AUDITION ONLY

Advanced students will study the elements of hip-hop, contemporary, lyrical, novelty, and jazz dance in depth. Students will advance in their dance technique, strength, flexibility, and artistry. Classes consist of a warm-up, center work, traveling progressions, and choreography. There is also a large creative component of this class in which students will learn to choreograph and improvise

dances. These students will have several opportunities to perform for friends and family. Previous dance experience is recommended, but not required. Entry and acceptance into this course is by audition.

Digital Arts

In our year-long digital arts class, students are introduced to various means of integrating art with technology. Topics covered include identity and brand development, editorial design, packaging, advertising, and electronic design, including website and multimedia design. In addition, students will be introduced to the digital environment for digital arts, learning digital vocabulary, creating decal stickers, working with tablets and a stylus, scanning, saving, and file formats using Adobe Illustrator, Adobe Photoshop and other industry norm software. Take a glimpse at our photo album on our class website for a first hand look at student work that is created in Digital Arts.

STEAM - Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics 7/8*

This project-based course will focus on the 21st-century skills required by careers of the future. Students begin the year with foundational knowledge in engineering design, critical thinking, collaboration, and communication. Students will apply these skills to both teacher directed and individual projects. Topics and projects may include LEGO robotics, coding, Arduino, construction, woodworking, crafts, sewing, electricity, and more. Student interest takes an important role in determining the direction of the course each year. Students will choose and take ownership of projects throughout the year, exploring areas they are most interested in with teacher support. The curriculum is varied from year to year and students may repeat in both 7th and 8th grade and can expect a completely different set of activities.

Teacher's Assistant (TA)

TA positions are available for students on a year-long basis and can be taken in lieu of a year-long elective course. These positions are graded pass/fail and are not counted towards GPA. Students who want to be Teacher's Assistants

must also complete the “Teacher’s Assistant Interest” form, available in the main office.

Video Production*

Seventh and eighth grade students perform in front of the camera in this active course. Students will experience all aspects of video production including writing scripts, acting in front of the camera, directing from behind the camera, and editing it all together in a professional quality studio. While a major focus of the class is creating the daily morning announcements, students will also have the opportunity to explore their own interests in shorter video projects. While students will plan and research on their Chromebooks, video production students will edit their videos with Final Cut Pro X on Apple iMacs. In addition, students will have access to recording equipment such as Canon and GoPro cameras, wireless microphones, and more. Creative students who like to act, tell stories, and work in small groups are encouraged to sign up. The independent nature of the class requires students who act with integrity and are trustworthy. All students signing up for this class must be comfortable reading scripts live to the entire school.

Yearbook & Journalism*

The Fisher Yearbook staff works as a team each year to produce the student yearbook for their peers. Students will learn skills in photography, writing, reporting, interviewing, graphic design and publication. Students will use web-based layout software to create the 180-page full-color book. Students work together not only to create, but also market, sell, and distribute the book to the community. Leadership roles are assigned each fall and student editors manage all aspects of the production of the book. Several field trips are taken each year to enhance the curriculum for students, and to provide them with real world applications of their skills. In addition, a student newspaper, website, social media, and other journalism opportunities may be explored based on the interests of the students enrolled. Enrollment requires teacher approval and acceptance into the program.

WORLD LANGUAGES*

Both Spanish and French are designed for students with limited or no experience with the language. These courses develop the skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing in a culturally appropriate context. At the end of these academic courses, students will be able to converse with others by using appropriate greetings and talking about school subjects, family and friends, foods and cultural activities, and much more!

For entry into Spanish 2 or French 2 at Los Gatos High School, a two-year commitment at Fisher, with a grade of B or better in the 8th grade year, is required. In addition, Spanish students who intend to begin Level 2 as freshmen will take a placement test in the spring. Placement may be determined by the results of these tests and teacher recommendation.

Students wanting to enroll in a world language at Fisher must meet the following requirements:

1. Minimum overall 2.5 GPA 2. Minimum grade of a B- in English for the first three quarters of 6th grade.

These are academic courses, and students who enroll will be challenged with rigorous coursework. Students should anticipate 20 to 30 minutes of homework on a daily basis. This is in addition to homework given in core classes.

If you do not meet the criteria but would like to take a world language, you may still sign up and be placed on a space available basis. Before the school year is over, you will receive a waiver form in the mail, which will need to be signed and returned to school. Space will be filled on a first-come-first serve basis.

Students must have taken Spanish 1 (level 1-7th grade) BEFORE taking Spanish 2.

***In the event that this course is overenrolled, students will be admitted through a lottery.**

MUSIC COURSES

Open Choir (6th-8th) *

This class is open to all students. The class will focus on basic performance skills, singing two-part and three-part music, vocal technique and musicianship. If you are new to Fisher or would like to improve your singing skills in a group setting, this is a great class for you. We will attend performances throughout the school year as well as perform a wide variety of music for the school and community.

Audition Choir (7th-8th)

These classes are for students who have had prior experience singing in a choral ensemble, take private voice, or are active in community/school musical theatre productions. There are two auditioned choir classes: Mixed Choir and Treble Choir. Choir auditions are held in the spring and will determine placement in the appropriate class. The choirs will perform often at an advanced level. An enthusiastic attitude and a great work ethic are a must! Membership in these choirs is contingent upon auditions, previous experience in Fisher's Open Choir, and/or teacher approval.

Open Band (6th-8th)

This course is open to 6th-8th grade students that have basic music reading skills and instrument knowledge on a band instrument. Previous playing experience is required. Students will focus on developing individual skills as well as refining their ensemble playing. This class will perform at school concerts, assemblies, community events and music festivals throughout the year. Emphasis is placed on developing skills that prepare the student for advanced level ensemble class.

Audition Bands (6th-8th)

Concert Band = Intermediate

Symphonic Band = Advanced

These classes are for students who have had prior experience playing in a band class, take private lessons, or have an intermediate to advanced proficiency on their instrument. Students should be able to play 4 major scales and a chromatic scale on their instrument. Percussionists should be proficient on mallets and snare. Advanced players should be able to play 2 extended range scales. An

enthusiastic attitude and a great work ethic are a must! These classes will perform often at an advanced level. Membership in these classes is contingent upon auditions or teacher approval. Band auditions are held in the spring.

Open Strings (6th-8th)

This course is open to 6th-8th grade students that have basic music reading skills and instrument knowledge on a string instrument (violin, viola, cello, bass). Open Strings will learn foundational string techniques. The following topics will be covered as our skills develop through the year: Characteristic tone quality of string instruments, rhythmic studies, bowing technique development, left hand finger patterns, scales, ear training, music reading, music vocabulary, shifting, music theory, music history, composer study, orchestral literature, and musical creativity. Emphasis is placed on developing skills that prepare the student for intermediate and advanced level orchestra ensemble classes.

Intermediate Strings (6th-8th)

This class is for intermediate level orchestra students who have had prior experience playing their instrument. In addition to the basic concepts covered in Open Strings, we will be developing the following concepts; vibrato, tremolo, intermediate level time and key signatures, and complex rhythms. A wide variety of music will be explored, as well as theory, music history, and ear training. This is an audition-based class. Auditions for Intermediate Orchestra will be held in March.

Audition Strings (6th-8th)

This class is for advanced level orchestra students who have had prior experience playing their instrument. We will continue to work on proper string technique, building upon the basic concepts established in Open Strings and Intermediate Orchestra to a more advanced level. A wide variety of music is explored as well as theory, music history, and ear training. This is an audition-based class. Auditions for Advanced Orchestra will be held in March.

***In the event that this course is overenrolled, students will be admitted through a lottery.**