

ACADEMY FOR ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE



MIDDLE SCHOOL CATALOG OF CLASSES

2008-2009

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Promotion to the next grade level / Repeat course procedure:

The AAE feels strongly that students should take ownership of their course work. The following will serve as the guideline for repeating courses and/or a particular middle school grade level:

A. If one core academic (English, Science, History) other than Math is failed in the second semester of the school year, the student will repeat the course the following year or show proof of an acceptable grade at a local summer school.

B. If two or more core classes (English, Science, History) other than Math are failed in the second semester, the student will repeat the school year in the grade in which the courses were failed.

C. Math courses are sequential in nature and students will repeat the course for a second semester fail regardless of whether or not they promote to the next grade level.

D. Core academic classes (English, Math, Science, and History) will have a grading scale of A, B, C and F. There are no grades of D in the grading structure.

It is the Mission of the Academy for Academic Excellence to research, develop and implement educational programs to maximize each student's potential to become honorable, courageous, generous citizens and highly effective learners.

This Catalog of Classes gives descriptions of all courses, which may be offered at the Academy for Academic Excellence. Although listed in the Catalog of Classes, some courses may not be offered if there is not sufficient demand.

LANGUAGE ARTS DEPARTMENT

PHILOSOPHY

It is important for every student to graduate from high school with communication skills which enable the student to write and speak clearly and concisely. Further, it is important for every student to have a greater appreciation of literature through improved reading skills. With these skills and appreciation, a student may realize a greater capacity for success.

GOALS

Members of the English Department strive to assist students to improve their ability to use written language correctly and to improve their academic success through better reading skills. Also, students will improve their ability to think critically and to speak clearly, and they will increase their knowledge and appreciation of literary works.

COURSE OFFERINGS

Language Arts – Grade 7
Language Arts – Grade 8
Write Right – Grades 7 & 8
Reading – Grades 7& 8

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

41150 LANGUAGE ARTS - 7	
Grade Level: 7	Course Length: Year 5 credits per semester
Prerequisites: None	
Course Description: Students will read books on historical themes as well as classic and contemporary works. Emphasis will be on improving reading and writing skills. Writing will be literature based and will include essays and literature responses.	
41250 LANGUAGE ARTS - 8	
Grade Level: 8	Course Length: Year 5 credits per semester
Prerequisites: None	
Course Description: Students will read books on historical themes as well as classic and contemporary works. Emphasis will be on improving reading skills. Writing will be literature based and will include essays and literature responses based on the State Standards for Grade 8 Language Arts.	
41930 / 41950 Write Right / Reading	
Grade Level: 7-8	Course Length: Year 5 credits per semester
Prerequisites: Identified special needs in reading and writing, low performance in literature course, teacher recommendation, and/or counselor recommendation and approval	
Course Description: Students identified or recommended for these courses need added instruction beyond their grade level literature course. One semester will focus on improving reading skills and comprehension through the use of a variety of literary texts. The other semester will focus on improving writing skills through more individualized instruction and practice.	

MATHEMATICS DEPARTMENT

PHILOSOPHY

Mathematics is an absolute necessity for those who live in today's society. It is not just a tool for solving problems related to science and daily living; mathematics is a science in its own right. It is also one of the humanities – one that has captured and stimulated the most creative minds all through the ages; it is the most precise of languages – one that is continually growing in order to accommodate new ideas and solve new problems; and it is a form of mental recreation that completely fascinates and absorbs the mind.

GOALS

1. To help the student perform and master mathematical skills and algebraic processes.
2. To encourage students to seek precise solutions and use logical thinking.
3. To help students develop problem solving strategies and critical thinking skills.

COURSE OFFERINGS

Middle Grade Math
Pre Algebra
Algebra I
Geometry
Algebra II

DEPARTMENT POLICIES

1. Students passing one level of mathematics may not enroll in courses at a lower level. (e.g. Students who have passed Algebra I or its equivalent should not take Pre-Algebra as Pre-Algebra contains material the student has already mastered in Algebra I).
2. Students in courses designated as year courses must pass both semesters in order to advance to the next level.
3. Students in college prep math courses must maintain at least a C average in order to advance to the next level. A grade of D indicates deficiencies that have been observed to cause failure in subsequent math courses.
4. A student who **passes** a math course with a grade below C may retake that course.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

42130 MIDDLE GRADES MATH	
Grade Level: 7, 8	Course Length: Year 5 credits per semester
Prerequisites: None	
Course Description: This course is designed for those students who have Completed 6 th grade mathematics, but are not quite ready for Middle Grades Math or Pre- Algebra. After completing this course, students will have a deeper understanding of numbers and basic operations.	

42150 PRE-ALGEBRA	
Grade Level: 7, 8	Course Length: Year 5 credits per semester

Prerequisites: Middle Grades Math or equivalent

Course Description: This course is for students to review the Fundamental concepts of mathematics in preparation for Algebra and higher-level mathematics. This course provides work in whole, decimal, and fractional numbers. In addition, percents, factorization, problem solving, measurement, scientific notation, fractions, exponents, order of operations, linear functions, solving equations and inequalities, area, perimeter, volume, coordinate graphs, estimation, and the number line will be addressed before introducing Algebra concepts. This course is designed to meet the California Mathematics Academic Content Standards for Pre-Algebra. Students will learn new vocabulary and skills in Algebra content areas and practice basic skills and problem solving issues. Students will complete a variety of written activities, including weekly textbook, Skill Work and Problem of the Week assignments.

42450 ALGEBRA I

Grade Level: 7, 8

Course Length: Year 5 credits per semester

Prerequisites: Pre-Algebra or equivalent

Course Description: This course will address the topics of signed number algebraic expressions, solving equations, Polynomials, factoring and graphing. Additionally, the course discusses functions, inequalities, exponents, radical expressions, polynomials and rational expressions. This course addresses the California Content Standards for Algebra I. The purpose of this class is to develop students' competence and confidence in solving problems through concrete as well as abstract methods using algebraic thinking, strategies, and skills. Students will complete a variety of written activities, including weekly textbook, Skill Work and Problem of the Week assignments.

42550 GEOMETRY

Grade Level: 7,8

Course Length: Year 5 credits per semester

Prerequisites: Algebra I *Passing Grade of C or better*

Course Description: This course in geometry is designed to develop an understanding of the basic properties of plane and space geometry, the ability to apply problem-solving demonstrating formal proofs. Topics to be covered include points, lines, angles, triangles, polygons, circles, area, volume, and similarity. Emphasis is on deductive reasoning. The *Geometer's Sketchpad* software is used in the computer lab to help reinforce geometric concepts with practical applications. The purpose of this class is to develop students' competence and confidence in solving problems through concrete as well as abstract methods using algebraic and geometric thinking, strategies, and skills. Students will complete a variety of written activities, including weekly textbook and Problem of the Week assignments.

SCIENCE DEPARTMENT

PHILOSOPHY

Science is an important part of education in the life of each of our students. We encourage parents and students to keep in mind that studying science is not merely an excellent way to prepare for a career, but also represents an opportunity to gain a better understanding and a fuller appreciation of the world in which we live. Such knowledge protects us from being misled and allows us to make informed decisions. Informed decision-making must surely be one of the most vital responsibilities of citizenship in a democratic society.

As important as science is, it is often *misunderstood and misused* in our society and *by society*. In society today there are many theories that have largely been accepted by the general public as scientific fact, when in actuality, they are attempts to explain nature, the past, present natural phenomenon, possible future events; models that help scientists explain laws, facts, and observations in order to make *useful* predictions about the natural world. *Theories can never be proven*. Scientific laws, on the other hand, describe natural phenomenon and are based on empirical support (experimentally derived evidence). Laws help us predict facts. *Neither theories nor facts become laws*. Facts are detailed descriptions of patterns or trends. *Laws do not become facts*. Theories, laws, and facts do not evolve one into the other; they are created using the scientific method through investigation, trial and error. The true scientists accept theories with the idea that there could be another explanation or model that can explain some aspect of the natural world. At the AAE we encourage students to carefully practice the art of scientific inquiry as they internalize the body of knowledge that science as provided them in the hope that it will provide useful guidance throughout their lives.

GOALS

In each course, the Science Department provides:

1. A stimulating rigorous and thought provoking curriculum
2. Investigations, laboratory experiences, outdoor activities and inquiry based projects that emphasize the development of science-based skills (procedural knowledge), working within and among the greater community of scientists (i.e. with Mojave Water Agency, California Turtle and Tortoise Club, National Fish and Wildlife, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, NASA, JPL, BLM), critical thinking, and the scientific method
3. Encouragement to consider education as a life long experience
4. A scientific knowledge base (declarative knowledge) that will lead to successful career choices
5. Reasons to respect the balance between humanity and the natural environment
6. Opportunities to use a variety of technologies related to science.

COURSE OFFERINGS

Life Science
Physical Science
Horticulture
Space Scientist

COURSE DESCRIPTION

43150 LIFE SCIENCE	
Grade Level: 7	Course Length: Year 5 credits per semester
Prerequisites: None. A “Lab Fee” will be assessed EACH semester.	
<p>Course Description: This course is designed to provide the student with basic concepts in the study of living organisms. Attention is given to the California Science Standards as they are highlighted in the course work guide. Course content will be taught through written and laboratory practice as well as demonstrations. Students will become familiar with the scientific process and be able to access compilation of facts and make a determination of the validity of results. Another focus will be on animal dissection as students discover the anatomy and physiology of various organisms. There will also be a science project due in early February.</p>	
43250 PHYSICAL SCIENCE	
Grade Level: 8	Course Length: Year 5 credits per semester
Prerequisites: Life Science. A “Lab Fee” will be assessed EACH semester.	
<p>Course Description: Based upon the California Science Content Standards for 8th grade, Course of study will have an emphasis on: motion, forces, astronomy, density and buoyancy, based upon the scientific method. Each laboratory and field activity is designed to reinforce one or more of the scientific concepts covered by the reading and written assignments. Student’s will also be completing interactive assignments and conducting research on different topics utilizing the internet. There will also be a science project due in early February.</p>	
43980 HORTICULTURE	
Grade Level: 8	Course Length: Year 5 credits per semester
Prerequisites: A strong interest in the natural world and a desire to learn about the birds of the High Desert. A “Lab Fee” will be assessed EACH semester.	
<p>Course Description: Students will participate in a variety of activities related to ornithology. Observation and identification of birds in the field at numerous locations will be a focal point of the class. Special topics will include the monitoring of the fall raptor and turkey migration, bird banding, rehabilitating an AAE pond for wildlife exposed to a more formal ornithology curriculum in the classroom covering the following topics: naming and classification of birds, the external bird, bird populations and distribution, migration, behavior of birds, and nesting. Finally, each student will be required to conduct an investigation and/or project relating to birds independent of the classroom setting.</p>	
43940 SPACE SCIENTIST	
Grade Level: 7,8	Course Length: Year 5 credits per semester
Prerequisites: Recommendation from previous math and/or science teacher. A “Lab Fee” will be assessed EACH semester.	
<p>Course Description: This is the first year of a two-year course that provides the student with an opportunity to become an astronomer through learning how to use the tools and science of astronomy. This course is dedicated to becoming familiar with both the basic science and tools astronomers around the world use. Students will become knowledgeable about the universe and solar system we live in as they study quasars, planets, etc and participate in GAVRT related projects.</p>	

SOCIAL SCIENCE DEPARTMENT

PHILOSOPHY

Helping students understand their relationship to the world, nation, and local community is the primary concern of the Social Science Department.

Courses in history and government are designed to broaden the individual's awareness of how various human social systems have developed and presently function.

GOALS

Students will develop a better understanding of:

1. Their obligation to the world, nation, and local societies to which they belong.
2. The interrelationships that exist between all peoples in the world – and the necessity that exists for cooperation between all peoples;
3. How our country has developed into a world leader and the obligations that go along with that status.

COURSE OFFERINGS

World History
U.S. History

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

44150 WORLD HISTORY: MODERN AGES	
Grade Level: 7	Course Length: Year 5 credits per semester
Prerequisites: None	
Course Description: Students will study the social, cultural, geographical, and technological changes that occurred in Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Americas in the years AD 500 – 1789. They will examine the growing economic interaction among civilizations as well as the exchange of ideas, beliefs, technologies, and commodities. Students will learn about the growth of Enlightenment philosophy and assess the rise of democratic ideas that influence the world today.	
44250 UNITED STATES HISTORY: GROWTH AND CONFLICT	
Grade Level: 8	Course Length: Year 5 credits per semester
Prerequisites: None	
Course Description: Students will study the ideas, issues, and events from the framing of the Constitution up to WWI. Students will understand the development of America's democratic institutions, particularly the shaping of the Constitution. Students will trace the development of American politics, society, culture and economy and relate them to the emergence of regional differences, and the U.S. Civil War. Students will study the rise of industry in the U.S.	

ASSOCIATED STUDENT BODY

The Student Leadership Class is required for all elected or appointed student officers as outlined in the Associated Student Body's Constitution. It affords practical experience in democratic leadership through management of student government. It provides opportunities to study the meaning and techniques of parliamentary procedures, state law, school finance (problems of income and expenditures), group processes, the objectives of the American Education system, the principles of human behavior, and the many challenges of school administration. Furthermore, it affords student leaders opportunities to develop and practice speaking and writing skills; to improve in peer relationships; to work with peers of diverse backgrounds and attitudes; to recognize the necessity of courtesy, poise, and appearance; to share responsibilities with adults; and, to develop a further appreciation for law and order. Student leadership class provides for self-evaluation and for evaluation of individual and group activities.

49310 ASSOCIATED STUDENT BODY (ASB)	
ASB Members are elected early in the fall semester to serve during that school year.	
Grade Level: 7, 8	Course Length: Year 5 credits per semester
Prerequisites: Members must be elected	
Course Description: This course will equip students to be leaders that are capable of communicating with others, making decisions, meeting deadlines and promoting ideas. Students will learn to be responsible citizens in the community through volunteer service learning projects.	

SPECIAL NEEDS DEPARTMENT

The Special Needs Department offers math and reading programs designed for students with special needs. These programs provide access to the core curriculum for students who require assistance beyond the regular classroom. Programs offered through this department include Resource Specialist Program (RSP) and Special Day Class (SDC).

The RSP program works with students from one to two periods per day in reading, written language and/or math. Parents are responsible for bringing their students each day and on time for the classes. Once a student is in the program, he or she will be tested annually to chart academic progress and an Individualized Educational Planning meeting (IEP) will be held to discuss the student's progress and plan annual goals and objectives.

Our SDC program is a full-day, five-day a week placement. These students are non-severe but require a more restrictive placement in order to make optimum progress. Annual testing and IEP meetings are also held to discuss progress and plan goals and objectives.

PHILOSOPHY

Reading, writing, and math are an important part of everyone's life. Good reading, writing and math skills increase a student's chance for success in school and later in a career.

GOALS

1. To bring students back up to grade level by using small groups, direct, intensive teaching;
2. To increase each student's academic levels as measured by standardized tests;
3. To increase each student's individual work study skills (includes homework responsibility) as measured by teacher observations and checklists of progress;
4. To increase each student's individual test taking skills as measured by teacher observation, student work samples, and informal assessments; and
5. To increase overall student's skills according to the Individualized Education Program (IEP).

MAJOR OUTCOMES

Students will:

1. Read a variety of materials and write effectively, in both individualized and class guided format.
2. Build decoding and encoding skills which will enhance reading ability;
3. Use direct instruction to develop reading, writing and mathematic skills;
4. Apply mathematical concepts in a variety of settings;
5. Demonstrate understanding of a variety of writing purposes;
6. Develop and increase oral and silent reading rate for improved fluency;
7. Demonstrate understanding of content materials in reading, writing and mathematics at the student's appropriate grade level; and
8. Demonstrate competency of California content standards depending on student's Individual Education Program (IEP).

Special Needs classes will count for 5 credits per class per semester on the student's transcript.

Coursework to be determined at IEP or through Case Manager

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

Performance and Presentation Standards

Introduction. As the visual and performing arts department has grown, we have become increasingly aware that groups and students that perform or produce artistic elements at the Academy for Academic Excellence are representing the school and need to be accountable for a high level of performance. Therefore, we are adopting the general standard of “Quality, not Quantity” for all performances and artistic creations, both on and off campus. The policy terms are as follows:

1. Not all VPA classes are deemed performance groups, such as dance, strings, keyboard, guitar, art and some components of drama. They *may* perform, but it is optional.
2. Choir and Band are performance groups.
3. Cancellations may be necessary for groups not ready to perform with excellence.
4. Performing is a privilege for hard working students. Individual instructors will provide alternate assignments for students who have not met performance standards.
5. VPA staff has the freedom to give informative feedback into each other’s programs as a check and balance for quality and appropriateness.
6. Students will NOT be allowed to perform at any visual and performing arts event without prior screening of the performance by the instructor. No exceptions!
7. Disciplinary action may be taken against any student who performs an unauthorized act or actions at any VPA event.
8. It is our goal to produce shows of quality and be mindful of program length. Again, our goal is quality, not quantity.
9. Teachers will develop high standards of performance for each of their applicable classes and make students aware of expectations.
10. The Department Chair and/or the Principal will make the final decision in regards to appropriateness.

ART PROGRAM

PHILOSOPHY

Art is a vital part of education. All of the art courses offered provide students with the opportunity to develop knowledge and skills in art. The art program is designed to promote a better understanding of civilization and cultural heritage, creativity and self-expression, effective visual communication, and the capacity for making wise choices among products of the arts.

GOALS

Art students will be assisted to develop:

1. A respect for individuality and originality.
2. An appreciation and sensitivity to their surroundings.
3. Manipulative and organizational skills or expression.
4. An appreciation of the interaction between art and other fields.
5. An appreciation and understanding of a wide variety of art media.
6. A respect for art expression and craftsmanship in one’s own work and in the work of others.
7. A lifelong interest and awareness of the arts.

All art classes are year courses. Students may enroll in more than one art course only with the approval of the counselor, parent, and teachers involved.

The art faculty feels that it may not be in students' best interest if they repeat the same course at the same level of class. Although students can repeat Drawing I and Printmaking for credit, it is felt that students will have a more well rounded experience and less repetition if they are exposed to a variety of art classes.

Some art courses may be offered as combinations. When this happens, all students will be required to work in all areas listed together.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

46310 INTRODUCTION TO ART	
Grade Level: 7	Course Length: Year 5 credits per semester
Prerequisites: None. A "Lab Fee" will be assessed EACH semester. The student must provide some art supplies.	
Course Description: This course will introduce the basic elements of art and principles of design through exploring various mediums including drawing, color, printmaking, sculpture and clay. Attention will be given to studio work, language, Art History, and culture studies. Students will gain knowledge and an appreciation for a variety of art forms.	

46350 PAINTING I	
Grade Level: 8	Course Length: Year 5 credits per semester
Prerequisites: Drawing I with a grade of "B" or better and is performing at an advanced level OR Teacher recommendation. A "Lab Fee" will be assessed EACH/ semester. The student must provide some art supplies.	
Course Description: This course is designed to introduce the discipline of painting to the student. The course will emphasize the basic elements of color as it relates to painting. The students will explore various painting techniques through the use of acrylic, oil, watercolor and water color pencil.	

46370 DRAWING I	
Grade Level: 8	Course Length: Year 5 credits per semester
Prerequisites: Introduction to Art A "Lab Fee" will be assessed EACH semester. The student must provide some art supplies.	
Course Description: This course is designed for students who want to learn to draw through simple exercises and gradual skill building assignments. The student will develop their visual perception and creative abilities and further their study in composition, elements of art and design.	

DRAMA PROGRAM

PHILOSOPHY

The goal of drama in education is not only to train professional actors, directors, producers, technicians, etc. but to allow the student to experience feelings, sensations and ideas through the eyes of another person, first hand. It aids in teaching young people to live and work together, in a complex society, with respect for one another. Drama allows a student to experience a multitude of situations that otherwise might not occur in his/her life.

The creative experience brings new depth and dimension to the student's overall personality growth in all areas of his/her life. Through drama, a student is helped to develop his own self-expression and an ability to project and communicate ideas, thoughts and emotions in a variety of ways.

Please note: Drama classes are not considered "performance groups," although in-class performance assignments are mandatory. The VPA department presents several shows each year and most of the performers are auditioned out of the drama classes. However, students that do not meet "VPA Performance Standards" may be given alternative assignments by the instructor.

GOALS

Students will be assisted to develop:

1. The ability to communicate verbally with confidence in a clear, concise manner.
2. The ability to better understands themselves in relation to drama and their life's goals.
3. The ability to evaluate critically a piece of dramatic literature.
4. The ability to interpret verbally and in writing the content, characters and form of a piece of dramatic literature.
5. The skills to participate actively in a theatrical production.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

46410 DRAMA	
Grade Level: 7,8	Course Length: Year 5 credits per semester
Prerequisites: None. A "Lab Fee" will be assessed EACH semester.	
Course Description: This course is designed to introduce the art of the actor through performance. Through various processes each student will discover what is encompassed in the history of drama and the dramatic profession. Through reading of the textbook and scripts; writing essays and scripts; design, acting, and lecture students will have a beginning understanding of the history of drama and the dramatic profession. The class will culminate with live and/or video taped performances.	

MUSIC PROGRAM

PHILOSOPHY

Music is an important facet of education. All are touched daily by music and course offerings are designed to provide students with the opportunity to better understand the history, creation, and performance thereof. Courses are designed to promote a better understanding of the place of music in history, including the various national, regional, and cultural contributions to this art form; to provide students with the physical and interpretive skills necessary for personal and group performance, and to enhance an enlightened appreciation for all musical literature.

Please note: Only choir and band are considered musical “performance groups.” Other classes, however, may give recitals and concerts on occasion. The VPA department adopted high performance standards beginning in Spring 2005. Students and/or groups that do not meet these standards will be given alternative assignments by their instructor in lieu of performing.

GOALS

Music students will be assisted to develop:

1. An enhanced respect for the creative process
2. A more sophisticated aural and emotional sensitivity in the listening and performing process.
3. A heightened ability in physical and manipulative coordination
4. An understanding of the independent and interdependent responsibilities of students involved in the various music performance organizations.
5. A lifelong appreciation and educated enjoyment of all forms, styles, and periods of music.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

46210 CONCERT CHOIR	
Grade Level: 7, 8	Course Length: Year 5 credits per semester
Prerequisites: Teacher recommendation. Students must have the ability to match given pitches with vocalization. Positive attitude directed towards learning about correct singing techniques and music education. Purchase of choir outfits will be required and are the responsibility of the student or guardian. A “Lab Fee” will be assessed EACH semester.	
Course Description: The chorus performs beginning, intermediate, and advanced level literature from various selected areas of styles. In addition to the techniques of rehearsal and performance, the student will know something about the music performed. The director schedules required performances.	
46110 CONCERT/MARCHING BAND	
Grade Level: 7, 8	Course Length: Year 5 credits per semester
Prerequisites: Prior experience playing a instrument with a minimum of one year proficiency as evidenced by the successful completion of <i>Essential Elements 2000, Book 1</i> , or the equivalent or successful completion of a beginning band class with the grade of “B: or better or audition by the instructor. A “Lab Fee” will be assessed EACH semester.	

Course Description: Concert/Marching band is an opportunity for students to perform instrumental music with their peers, while sharing the joy and rewards of working together musically. Along with developing individual self-confidence and creativity, playing in the group will give the student the understanding of how commitment and dedication leads to success. The students will learn to recognize musical terms and forms and further their music reading ability. Concert/Marching Band is a performing group. Students are required to participate in all parades, performances and festivals. Instruction is being offered for the following instruments: Flute, Clarinet, Saxophone, Trumpet, Horn, Trombone, Baritone, Tuba, Electric Bass (by audition ONLY) and Percussion. Students must supply their own instrument.

46910 GUITAR I

Grade Level: 7, 8

Course Length: Year 5 credits per semester

Prerequisites: Students should own a steel or nylon string acoustic guitar of acceptable quality. A “Lab Fee” will be assessed EACH semester.

Course Description: Students will discover the world of music through learning basic guitar skills. Participants will learn to interpret music through vocabulary, historical context, chord structure, strumming patterns, accompaniment techniques and essential music reading.

46920 GUITAR II

Grade Level: 7, 8

Course Length: Year 5 credits per semester

Prerequisites: Successful completion of Guitar I with a grade of “B” or better, or equivalent, or audition. Students should own a steel or nylon string acoustic guitar of acceptable quality. A “Lab Fee” will be assessed EACH semester.

Course Description: This is an advanced beginner/intermediate guitar class. Participants will learn to interpret music through vocabulary, historical context, chord structure, strumming patterns, finger picking, accompaniment techniques and essential music reading.

46130 LOWER STRINGS I

Grade Level: 7, 8

Course Length: Year 5 credits per semester

Prerequisites: A “Lab Fee” will be assessed EACH semester. Students must have their own instrument or rent from the school at the rate of \$50 per semester.

Course Description: The study and performance of standard string literature composed for the beginning level string player. Musical terminology, rhythmic figures and basic reading skills will be learned to further enhance this experience. Proper left hand position, bow technique, and musical performance practices will be emphasized. In addition to the techniques of rehearsal and performance, the students learn theory. Students may be required to participate in performances. Instruments being offered are cello and bass. The course may be repeated for additional credit.

46135 LOWER STRINGS II

Grade Level: 7, 8

Course Length: Year 5 credits per semester

Prerequisites: Satisfactory completion of Lower Strings I with a grade of “B” or better OR audition by Instructor A “Lab Fee” will be assessed EACH semester. Students must have their own instrument or rent from the school at the rate of \$50 per semester.

Course Description: The study and performance of standard string literature composed for the intermediate level string player. Musical terminology, rhythmic figures and intermediate reading skills will be learned to further enhance this experience. Proper left hand position, bow technique, and musical performance practices will be emphasized. In addition to the techniques of rehearsal and performance, the students learn theory. Students may be required to participate in performances. Instruments being offered are cello and bass. The course may be repeated for additional credit.

46120 UPPER STRINGS I

Grade Level: 7, 8

Course Length: Year 5 credits per semester

Prerequisites: None. A “Lab Fee” will be assessed EACH semester. Students must have their own instrument or rent from the school at the rate of \$50 per semester.

Course Description: The study and performance of standard string literature composed for the beginning level string player. Musical terminology, rhythmic figures and basic reading skills will be learned to further enhance this experience. Proper left hand position, bow technique, and musical performance practices will be emphasized. In addition to the techniques of rehearsal and performance, the students learn theory. Students may be required to participate in performances. Instruments being offered are violin and viola. The course may be repeated for additional credit.

46125 UPPER STRINGS II

Grade Level: 7, 8

Course Length: Year 5 credits per semester

Prerequisites: Satisfactory completion of Upper Strings I with a grade of “B” or better OR audition by Instructor A “Lab Fee” will be assessed EACH semester. Students must have their own instrument or rent from the school at the rate of \$50 per semester.

Course Description: The study and performance of standard string literature composed for the intermediate level string player. Musical terminology, rhythmic figures and intermediate reading skills will be learned to further enhance this experience. Proper left-hand position, bow technique, and musical performance practices will be emphasized. In addition to the techniques of rehearsal and performance, the students learn theory. Students may be required to participate in performances. Instruments being offered are violin and viola. The course may be repeated for credit.

46930 PIANO I

Grade Level: 7, 8

Course Length: Year 5 credits per semester

Prerequisites: Students must have a touch sensitive keyboard of at least five octaves or a piano to practice on at home. A “Lab Fee” will be assessed EACH semester. Students will also be required to purchase all necessary books.

Course Description: Students will discover the world of music through learning basic piano keyboard skills. Participants will learn to interpret music through vocabulary, historical context, rhythmic figures, accompaniment techniques and essential music reading. The class will culminate in a yearly recital of both ensemble and solo pieces.

46950 PIANO LAB

Grade Level: 7, 8

Course Length: Year 5 credits per semester

Prerequisites: Successful completion of Piano I with a grade of “B” or higher. Students must have a touch sensitive keyboard of at least five octaves or a piano to practice on at home. A “Lab Fee” will be assessed

EACH semester. Students will also be required to purchase all necessary books.

Course Description: This course provides piano instruction from Level II through Level IV. Participants will learn more advanced methods of interpreting music through vocabulary, historical context, rhythmic figures, accompaniment techniques and essential music reading. Music theory and composition will also be explored as well as sight-reading and cord reading. The class will culminate in a yearly recital of both ensemble and solo pieces.

VIDEO PRODUCTION PROGRAM

PHILOSOPHY

The Video Production program offers students the opportunity to gain insights into the technical and performance aspects of video production. Course work is designed to take students through the steps necessary to videotape, edit and produce a video for the Evening of the Arts program each year. Students wishing to go on in this field can use their video productions as part of their portfolio. Students prepare and submit a resume listing those abilities, skills, and insights into video performance and production gained from this course of study.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

46710 VIDEO I	
Grade Level: 8	Course Length: Year 5 credits per semester
Prerequisites: None. A "Lab Fee" will be assessed EACH semester.	
Course Description: This course is designed for the first time video student entering the artistic and awesome field of production. Students will learn a light history of television and how it all got started, from the inventor to the early days of production and exportation of a magical image sent to living rooms via the airwaves. Students will learn the operation and functions of a video camera, and how to set it up for various productions. Beginning video students will learn different Videotape formats, why they differ and where and why they are used. Students will participate in discussions about the varying quality of each format and how they have changed over the years. In this fun and exciting class students will cover lighting and placement, scripts and storyboards, blue screen effects, cords and connectors and all aspects of video production. Students will produce commercials and music videos in a group situation.	

DANCE PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

This Instructor’s philosophy for dance is based on the supposition that any student can improve in posture, grace, confidence and ability to perform. This is not to say that each one will excel in dance, but that each one can advance from the point at which they started. It is also believed that dance can give the student a sense of achievement and accomplishment that will encourage confidence in other areas. Dance is not a competition of peers, but an attainment of one’s own personal best when there is an environment of encouragement.

GOALS

The current goals for all the dance classes for the Academy for Academic Excellence are basic. Each student enrolled in dance class will be introduced to fundamental steps, stretching techniques, force (time, space, energy) and be able to perform with a group at the semester’s end. The second semester includes choreography exploration.

Please note: Dance classes are not considered “performance groups.” However, recitals and other presentations may be required. The instructor may give students that do not meet “VPA Performance Standards” alternative assignments.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

46510 JAZZ DANCE I	
Grade Level: 7, 8	Course Length: Year 5 credits per semester
Prerequisites: A desire to learn the disciplines of dance. A “Lab Fee” will be assessed EACH semester. Purchase of dance uniforms and footwear are required.	
Course Description: This one-year course is designed to introduce the student to basic jazz dance skills on which to build a foundation for understanding artistic perception, creative expression, and aesthetic valuing. Exposure to the historical and cultural context helps the student with the connections, relations, and applications of dance to other art forms, subject areas, and careers. The focus is on developing proper body alignment, technique, basic steps and isolations. Students will improve flexibility, coordination, strength, and rhythmic ability. The elements of dance and dance terminology are emphasized so students will be able to identify and demonstrate increasing ability and knowledge.	

46520 JAZZ DANCE II	
Grade Level: 7, 8	Course Length: Year 5 credits per semester
Prerequisites: Beginning Jazz Dance Level I or equivalent. A “Lab Fee” will be assessed EACH semester. Purchase of dance uniforms and footwear are required.	
Course Description: This one-year course is designed to build upon basic jazz dance skills, and advance the student’s understanding of artistic perception, creative expression and aesthetic valuing. The student’s comprehension of the historical and cultural context helps to connect, relate, and apply dance to other art forms, subject areas, and careers. The focus is on improving body alignment, technique, basic and intermediate steps, and isolations. Students will improve and maintain flexibility, coordination, strength and rhythmic ability. The elements of dance and dance terminology are explored in depth so students will apply their knowledge and demonstrate greater ability.	

46530 BEGINNING BALLET	
Grade Level: 7, 8	Course Length: Year 5 credits per semester
Prerequisites: A desire to learn the disciplines of dance. A “Lab Fee” will be assessed EACH semester. Purchase of dance uniforms and footwear are required.	
Course Description: This one-year course is designed to introduce the student to basic ballet dance skills on which to build a foundation for understanding artistic perception, to the historical and cultural context helps the student with the connections, relations, and applications of dance to other art forms, subject areas, and careers. The focus is on developing proper body alignment, technique, and basic steps. Students will improve flexibility, coordination, strength and rhythmic ability. The elements of dance and dance terminology are emphasized so students will be able to identify and demonstrate increasing ability and knowledge.	

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

PHILOSOPHY

Physical Education is a vital element in a comprehensive, well-balanced educational program. A positive learning experience in physical education can be a major contributing factor in the optimum development of an individual in all aspects of life: physical, emotional, mental and social.

Through physical education, an individual has the opportunity to understand the importance of obtaining and maintaining a high level of physical fitness, developing good sportsmanship and socially desirable behavior, working towards maximum physiological development, developing a positive self-image and participating in a wide variety of physical activities. Satisfying and successful experiences in physical education should develop in an individual the desire to choose a continued active life-style.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

47120 PHYSICAL EDUCATION	
Grade Level: 7, 8	Course Length: Year 5 credits per semester
Prerequisites: None	
Course Description: This course combines various forms of movement and fitness education, along with multiple opportunities to learn and play individual and team sports within the physical education class (i.e. movement concepts, basketball, volleyball, football, tennis, fitness training) Classroom <u>lessons</u> will also be a vital part of the course throughout the semester. National Content Standards in Physical Education will be the focus of this course.	