

Middle School Elective Descriptions - Skyway & Riverbend - Updated for 2024-2025

Physical Education

Physical Education: The physical education department offers students a variety of experiences that will enhance sports/skills, cardiovascular endurance, and overall fitness.

Fine Arts

Digital Art & Design: In this class, the students will explore concepts related to art and design created via digital mediums.

Interior Design: Students will gain knowledge and skills related to interior design from floor plans to home decorating through individual activities by applying creative thinking to real life hands-on projects.

Exploring 2D Art: In this class, the students learn about a wide range of 2D art concepts and mediums, all while developing their understanding of the seven elements of art and art history

Exploring 3D Art: The 3D class explores the seven elements of art via 3-dimensional mediums.

General Art: Explore and engage in many different types of art. Students will engage a wide range of concepts to help students have a better understanding of the different art modalities

Mixed Media Art:(Riverbend Only) Embark on a vibrant artistic journey where creativity knows no bounds! The Creative Fusion elective invites middle school students to delve into the captivating world of mixed media art, where traditional and unconventional materials unite to create dynamic and expressive works of art. Through hands-on exploration, experimentation, and collaboration, students will discover the endless possibilities of combining various mediums, techniques, and concepts to bring their artistic visions to life.

Graphic Design (Hand stitched books and Visual storytelling):(Riverbend Only) Dive into the intersection of graphic design and traditional craftsmanship! The Graphic Design elective introduces middle school students to the captivating art of hand-stitched book creation, where graphic design principles merge with tactile craftsmanship to produce unique and personalized works of art. Through a blend of theory, technique, and hands-on exploration, students will explore the fundamentals of graphic design while mastering the art of bookbinding, storytelling, and visual communication.

Ceramics: Dive into the fascinating world of ceramics! This elective course offers middle school students an immersive experience in working with clay, exploring its versatility, and understanding the foundational techniques of pottery and sculpture. Through hands-on projects and guided instruction, students will develop their artistic skills, creativity, and appreciation for the ancient art of ceramics.

Creative Writing: Everyone tells stories, but not everyone tells great stories. Learn how to use your own memories and observations to create better characters, better settings, and better details. This is the perfect class for Galileo's current and future writers.

Photography:

Students explore the aesthetic foundations of art using beginning photography techniques. This course may include, but is not limited to, color and/or black and white photography via digital media and/or traditional photography. Processes and techniques for image capture and printing may include, but are not limited to, handcrafted pinhole cameras, hand tinting photographs, mixed media, photo collage, cross-processing, emerging technologies and new media. Content covers the

basic mechanics of a camera, including lens and shutter operation, compositional foundations, printing an image for display, and evaluating a successful print. Craftsmanship and quality are reflected in the surface of the print, care of the materials, attention to compositional conventions, and expression of personal ideas and feelings. Student photographers use an art criticism process to evaluate, explain, and measure artistic growth in personal or group works. This course incorporates hands-on activities and consumption of art materials.

Performing Arts

Chorus: Students will learn a variety of songs and be provided with opportunities to showcase their singing capabilities during school events and assemblies.

Band 1, 2 & 3: *Band 2/3 students must take Band 1/2 first

Students will learn foundational instrumental skills, critical & creative thinking skills, and an appreciation of music. Students will have a chance to perform for classmates, school, and parents throughout the year.

Musical Theater: This course focuses on basic acting, vocal performance, basic movement and staging, as related to musical theater. Students will sing and dance in this elective. Students will study musical theater history and trends on and off Broadway.

Guitar: Students will learn the different cords and the related notes to provide an introductory experience to the world of guitar. Students will learn guitar basics and integrate music into the learning process.

Dance: This course introduces students to the discipline of dance. Skills and techniques in one or more styles (lyrical, hip-hop, jazz, modern, social) will be presented. Basic choreography, cultural and historical dance connections, aesthetic and critical analysis of artistic performances and dance applications to life will be explored. Female students are required to wear a short sleeve black leotard and black tights. After-school rehearsals and performances are required for one dance show.

Acting: Students will be introduced to the fundamentals of theater production which include audience and performance etiquette, theater terminology, acting and characterization, pantomime and improvisation, Shakespeare and his works among others. In addition, students will learn about and reflect on various aspects of theater through history and in different cultures. This course develops creativity and spontaneity in students wanting to explore theater, as well as those who wish to commit to this art form in the future.

STEM

Medical Detectives (Forensics): Medical Detectives is a course about Forensic Science and how mysteries and crimes are solved using evidence. There is a growing interest in jobs within criminal justice, the medical field, and law, and these fields all overlap within the study of forensic science. Methods specifically relevant to crime detection and analysis will be presented such as observation skills, data analysis, and critical thinking to solve a problem. This course will study several controversial topics, which may include fingerprint analysis, hair and fiber analysis, blood typing, bullet analysis, toxicology and more. Because a lot of the evidence is from humans, we become "medical detectives" during the course. The course takes a collaborative approach to learning in an engaging, project based learning environment. Case studies, laboratory exercises, text work and lecture will be used to introduce the basics throughout the course. We will also discuss case studies on infamous crimes and clues that led to criminal convictions and because of the nature of crime stories, parental consent will be required. Who should take this class: Students who have a desire to learn more about the fields of forensic science, criminal justice, and psychology.

Biomedical Mysteries: (Riverbend only) Embark on a fascinating journey into the world of biomedical science, where innovation meets inquiry to address real-world challenges and mysteries! The Biomedical Explorations elective invites middle school students to explore the intricate workings of the human body, investigate diseases, and develop innovative solutions using principles of biology, chemistry, physics, and medical technology. Through hands-on experiments, research projects, case studies, and interactive simulations, students will discover the exciting intersections of STEM disciplines in the field of healthcare, medicine, and biomedical research.

Video Game Design: Video Game Design provides students with the opportunity to design, program, and create fully functional video games. The course will introduce basic programming and design skills that are essential to developing a video game. Topics covered are math, physics, level design, and computer programming.

Engineering: Through problems that engage and challenge, students explore a broad range of engineering topics, including mechanisms, the strength of structures and materials, and automation.

Robotics: Robotics is a hands-on activity-based class that centers around programming robots to perform specific tasks.

Computer Programming: The course will introduce basic programming and design skills that are essential to developing computer networks, video games, algorithms, database systems and web design .

Google Suite and Microsoft 365: This course is designed to provide students with instruction in typing, email communication, google docs, sheets, slides and drive. Also you will take a look into Microsoft 365 with word, excel, and powerpoint.

Foreign Language

Spanish 1: * high school credit- Spanish 1 is a communicative beginning-level Spanish course. Students will begin to develop their Spanish proficiency through extensive interaction and practice using the target language. *May be offered through FLVS

Future/Career Building

Future Educator: Are you interested in becoming a teacher? This class will assign you to an elementary classroom and you will learn all of the ins and outs of becoming a teacher. (Application Required)

Agriculture-Animal & Plant Science: Students will learn a basic understanding of agriculture with focuses on plants, animals, animal behavior, and natural resources. Students will also learn about our food system and the safety procedures in agriculture systems. There is a sequence of courses designed to guide students through agriculture, animal and plant science. *Additional information-8th grade only can test for CTE (career and technical education).

Gardening/Sustainable Living/Ecology: Step into the vibrant world of gardening and sustainable living with the Growing Green Thumbs elective! This course invites middle school students to cultivate their passion for plants, nature, and environmental stewardship through hands-on gardening activities, exploration of ecological principles, and experiential learning. Students will immerse themselves in the joys of gardening, from planting seeds and nurturing plants to harvesting produce and designing sustainable landscapes, while gaining valuable knowledge and skills in botany, ecology, nutrition, and environmental science.

Junior ROTC: This JROTC course is a survey of the history of the branches of the United States military. This course is designed to help students gain an understanding of the standards, practices, and opportunities of and within each military branch and to help prepare them for the next stage of JROTC at the high school level.

Leadership: Students will have the opportunity to develop and evaluate their own leadership qualities through the creation of skills in communication, character development, school-wide improvement initiatives, goal setting, decision-making, citizenship and diversity. (Application required)

Speech: Unleash the power of communication and become a change-maker in the world of ideas! In this dynamic elective course, middle school students will immerse themselves in the captivating realm of TED Talks—pioneering presentations that blend Technology, Entertainment, and Design to inspire and educate audiences globally. Through exploration, analysis, and hands-on creation, students will discover the art and science of effective communication, empowering them to share their ideas with passion, clarity, and impact.

Yearbook: Yearbook is an elective course wherein students learn to work to publish the middle school yearbook by taking photographs of clubs, events, and school life as well as writing copies for the book itself.

Home Economics: Students will learn the basic information regarding family finance, textiles, wellness, food science and nutrition through sewing, cooking, and creative projects.

TV Production (TV News Crew): Students will work together in order to create the daily announcements for middle school and elementary school. Students will write scripts, record, and edit materials for the announcements.

Multimedia Communications: (Galileo digital newspaper, Galileo radio, Galileo Podcasts): (Riverbend Only) Explore the world of multimedia communications where you and your classmates will produce the Galileo digital newspaper, create bits to be broadcast on Galileo radio, and develop one's own podcasts.

Service Learning: Explore and study ways to give back to your community. Partner with a non-profit, engage in the community to lend support, and make a difference helping others.

Child Development (Skyway only- partner with VPK): Provides the basic skills, methods and theory in music and motor activities relating to the young child, including developing a portfolio of materials, lesson plans and classroom demonstrations.

*Please keep in mind that not all electives will be offered each year at each campus, electives are determined based on student interest.