



Course Descriptions - Eighth Grade 2023-2024

Core Classes: *These classes meet daily throughout the year, students will receive a letter grade on their progress reports at the end of each semester (December and May).*

Foundations for Algebra

Foundations for Algebra will prepare students for Algebra I in high school and is designed for those students performing on grade level in math. The curriculum is designed using Mindset Mathematics, Illustrative Mathematics, and Building Thinking Classrooms.

Algebra I

This is the study of how the structure of the real number system leads to the rules of algebraic manipulation, how to use functions as a tool for modeling the world, and what information the solution(s) to a mathematical model can and cannot tell you. It uses open, creative, and visual math tasks, problem-based inquiry, and real-life scenarios to ask students to think deeply and conceptually about mathematics. Specific topics include one-variable statistics, linear equations, inequalities, and systems, two-variable statistics functions, exponential functions, quadratic functions, and quadratic equations. The curriculum is designed using Mindset Mathematics, Illustrative Mathematics, and Building Thinking Classrooms. *Eighth grade students will earn 1 high school Math credit after completing this course.*

Spanish

Students will build on previous skills and knowledge along with deepening their understanding of the Spanish language and culture through themed units. Additionally, they will develop a broader understanding of verb usage and grammar through the exploration of four major components: listening comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing. Students will be assessed in a variety of ways including projects, oral presentations and dialogues, quizzes, and written assignments.

World History I

In this course, students will explore the development of humanity from hunters and gatherers to the rise of civilization. This course will examine the formation and development of the world's major societies and will systematically explore cross-cultural interactions and exchanges that have been some of the most effective agents of change in all of world history from prehistory to 1400 C.E. Students will utilize primary sources and practice the discipline of history to examine people, places, and patterns of life from the earliest human sources to 1400 through the lenses of geography, economies, cultures, and governing structures.

Ecology

This course is an exploration of how energy moves through systems, an in-depth look at how living organisms interact with each other, and with the non-living things in their environment. Beyond this, students will look into



how humans interact with these systems and how our knowledge of these interactions has changed over time. This course is primarily project-based, and students have the opportunity to choose topics that match their interests.

Language Arts

Building on the 7th grade curriculum, this course will target students' continued growth in the areas of reading, composition, listening, speaking, discussion, and reflection. The expansion of reading strategies, critical thinking skills, and vocabulary building will comprise the main elements of reading instruction, and concepts relating to author's purpose, intended audience, bias, and literary criticism will be introduced. Students will engage with a variety of both fiction and non-fiction sources to put the theories presented into practice. The focus of writing will be on informational and argumentative writing with a focus on thesis construction, types of appeal, MLA formatting and other skills necessary to prepare the students for the demands of High School.

Middle School Electives & Specials Classes These classes meet periodically (once or twice a week) for a semester and/or for the year. Students will receive a Pass/Fail on their progress reports at the end of each semester (December and May).

Culture & Geography (full year)

Students in this course will study world geography using the following themes: location, place, human-environment interaction, movement, and region. Over the course of two years, each continent will be studied, specifically focusing on locations of different countries/states/provinces, landmarks and important sites, culture and history, and current issues.

Art (full year)

The art program at The Summit utilizes an integrated art approach that connects art education to other subjects. Students will be introduced to a variety of art techniques and media through a global study of historical and cultural art experiences. All grade levels will study the elements of design (line, value, color, texture, space, shape and form) and the principles of design (balance, contrast, unity, pattern, emphasis, movement and rhythm) as they apply to various media in the artistic process. Problem solving and critical thinking skills will be required to complete assignments. Concepts taught will increase in complexity as students progress from one grade level to the next. Students will have the opportunity to build on prior knowledge and skills while gaining confidence in their creativity and artistic abilities. This process will enable students to develop an appreciation for a variety of art forms in various cultures and time periods.

Music (full year): Students will engage with music literacy, theory, ear training, and notation with an emphasis on skills that enrich popular music making. Practical performance skills are individually determined with a musical performance as our overarching group project.



Power Hour (full year):

Students will meet for Power Hour once a week for a choice of assistance with class objectives, absent work make-up, work time for class assignments, competition preparation, class meetings, and enrichment activities. Choice of competition preparation will include Lego robotics, math competition, history bowl, LAD fair, law day, spelling bee, and Science olympiad. *Multiple teachers will be leading these activities and available for assistance as necessary. Students will not receive a grade for this class.*

STEM (Fall):

Students will use their computers to create, texture, rig, and animate a walking robotic creature that can be used as a 3-dimensional asset in video games and video effects. This class will use guided instruction to ensure everyone completes the project together. *Computers used in this elective must be Windows computers or MacBooks.* No experience is necessary for this elective.

Sports History (Fall)

Students will learn about the history of different sports. They will gain historical knowledge about the origins and development of various sports in America as well as worldwide. Topics include the Olympic Games, baseball, football, basketball, and important sports figures throughout history, as well as other topics as time allows. Coursework will consist of readings, primary sources, audio, and visual materials as well as class discussions.

MS/HSPlein Air Painting Renfroe

In this course, students will work *en plein air*, a French Expression that literally means “in open air.” Using this process, students will explore art making as it ties to nature. Students will paint in natural light and use the value to enhance their works. It is important to note, *the majority of class will be held outside* as nature is the subject matter. We will use more than painting mediums for this class including but not limited to oil pastel, graphite, charcoal, pen, etc. Students will get to experience three to four off-campus drawing experiences to expand our plein air experience.

8/HS Creative Writing (Fall)

This course in creative writing provides instruction and practice in short fiction, creative nonfiction, and poetry. Students will learn how to craft 3 dimensional characters and learn to utilize literary devices, tropes, and the various milieu. This course will improve the writing of any students whose interests lie in the realm of fiction. *HS students wishing to earn a ½ English credit will be responsible for stricter guidelines on assignments throughout the course. Additional work or extended work may be required.*

Yoga (Fall and/or Spring)

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Students will participate in yoga classes designed to build strength, flexibility, balance, and most importantly, mindfulness. Students will experience intentional movement complemented by breath practice and meditation. A yoga mat, water bottle, and athletic clothing are required for this class. Classes will be led by a certified yoga instructor. This class is an alternative to Mrs. Teed's regular PE class.

Physical Education (Fall and/or Spring)

PE provides students with the opportunity to participate in a comprehensive program consisting of skill and movement development, team sports, and physical fitness activities. Students will receive instruction in rules, skills, and strategies associated with every activity. One of the primary objectives is to increase student knowledge and involvement in life-long physical activities. The program promotes a positive spirit of cooperation, leadership, fair play, and enthusiasm for physical activity. An emphasis is placed on active participation and positive social interaction during PE activities.

Archery (Fall or Spring)

Students will follow the NASP (National Archery in the Schools Program) guidelines to practice the sport of archery. Students will meet twice a week to learn the correct technique and etiquette needed to be a successful archer and to develop an appreciation and understanding for the sport. Students will learn the correct terminology and fundamentals to shoot a Genesis Original Bow using Eastern Arrows. All equipment will be provided by the school. Due to safety and available space and equipment, this class is limited to 12 students.