

# 2024 2025 MIDDLE SCHOOL Curriculum Guide



**THE DERRYFIELD SCHOOL**





# The Derryfield School

## **MIDDLE SCHOOL CURRICULUM GUIDE 2024-2025**

### **STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY**

The Derryfield School's purpose is twofold: to guide a student's academic growth through the acquisition of sound study habits and the development of analytical, independent thinking skills; and to foster each child's social, emotional, and ethical growth.

We value our distinctive role as a day school, providing a robust, challenging program in academics, athletics, and the arts to children whose families want them to live at home during their middle and high school years. Dedicated to providing individual attention to every student, we strive to create an informal, yet structured environment offering challenge and support where students can develop their unique qualities of mind, body, and spirit.

We respect diverse ideas, beliefs, and cultures, and are committed to personal integrity and fairness. We value tradition as well as the willingness to institute thoughtful change. Recognizing that academic achievement without compassion and concern for others is meaningless, we are committed to purposeful involvement in the world outside our School in both the local and the global community.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Click the section titles below to be taken directly to the relevant section of the Curriculum Guide.

<a href="#"><u>Portrait of a Derryfield Graduate</u></a>	3
<a href="#"><u>Middle School Program Overview</u></a>	3
<a href="#"><u>Middle School Academic Course Offerings</u></a>	4
<a href="#"><u>Leadership, Ethics, and Development (LEAD)</u></a>	4
<a href="#"><u>Academic Support</u></a>	6
<a href="#"><u>Arts</u></a>	7
<a href="#"><u>English</u></a>	8
<a href="#"><u>History</u></a>	10
<a href="#"><u>Mathematics</u></a>	12
<a href="#"><u>Science</u></a>	13
<a href="#"><u>STEAM X</u></a>	14
<a href="#"><u>World Language</u></a>	15

## PORTRAIT OF A DERRYFIELD GRADUATE

The complete Middle School academic program is organized around the Portrait of the Derryfield Graduate shown below. These ten standards represent the outcomes of the Derryfield academic experience from sixth through twelfth grade.

<b>Belonging</b>  I take action to help both myself and others belong in any community.	<b>Civil Discourse</b>  I engage in respectful discussion and appreciate diverse perspectives with a desire to learn.	<b>Collaboration</b>  I work with others: listening, compromising, and contributing toward shared goals.	<b>Communication</b>  I use the most effective tools to share my ideas with clear purpose.	<b>Creativity</b>  I use a number of different strategies to generate new, original ideas.
<b>Critical Thinking</b>  I interpret, evaluate, and synthesize information in order to challenge my own and others' assumptions before drawing conclusions.	<b>Cultural Awareness</b>  I appreciate my unique identity and perspective as well as those of others in my local and global communities.	<b>Problem Solving</b>  I know how to break down complex, real world problems and design creative, compassionate solutions.	<b>Research</b>  I ask meaningful questions and form conclusions using credible resources.	<b>Self-Advocacy</b>  I know what helps me learn, when to ask for help, and how to find support and resources.

## MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAM OVERVIEW

### Middle School Course Requirements

The curriculum for the Middle School is designed to provide a firm background in basic discipline areas and learning skills in preparation for Upper School courses. All sixth, seventh, and eighth graders take English, mathematics, science, history, and a physical activity; all seventh and eighth graders take a World Language. In addition, all middle school students will take electives in drama, music, wellness, STEAM X, computer science and art.

#### Grade 6 – All courses required

- English 6
- Geography
- Introduction to Algebra and Geometry
- General Science: Science as Inquiry
- STEAM X: Design Thinking
- Computer Science: Coder X I
- Explorations in Art I

- Introduction to Performing Arts
- Academic Skills
- Leadership, Ethics, and Development (LEAD)

### **Grade 7 – All courses required**

- English 7
- Civics
- Algebra and Statistics
- Understanding Connections in Earth, Life and Physical Science
- Spanish Language and Cultural Studies
- Classical World: Latin and Classical Studies
- Computer Science: Coder X II
- Explorations in Art II
- Music & Our Daily Lives
- Leadership, Ethics, and Development (LEAD)

### **Grade 8 – All courses required**

- English 8
- World Justice
- Geometry
- Environmental Science: The Web of Change
- Spanish I, Latin I
- Drama
- STEAM: Finance Literacy and Entrepreneurship
- Leadership, Ethics, and Development (LEAD)

### **Middle School Exploration Block**

Middle School Exploration Block is a time dedicated each day for students to pursue their interests and passions. Each Exploration offering will occupy three days in our eight-day cycle, leaving students the possibility of study hall when their Exploration course is not taking place (in addition to their daily extra help period). Each course will be offered on a pass/fail basis, and every student must sign up for at least one offering per term but not more than two. Middle School Chorus, Instrumental Ensemble, and Advanced Instrumental Ensemble are offered each term (descriptions below in the Arts Section) while other Exploration courses will be offered on a rotating basis. Some of the additional offerings may include mini-courses on film study/making, life fitness, digital photography, songwriting, ecology, inventors' workshop, and philanthropy.

## **MIDDLE SCHOOL ACADEMIC COURSE OFFERINGS**

### **LEADERSHIP, ETHICS, AND DEVELOPMENT (LEAD)**

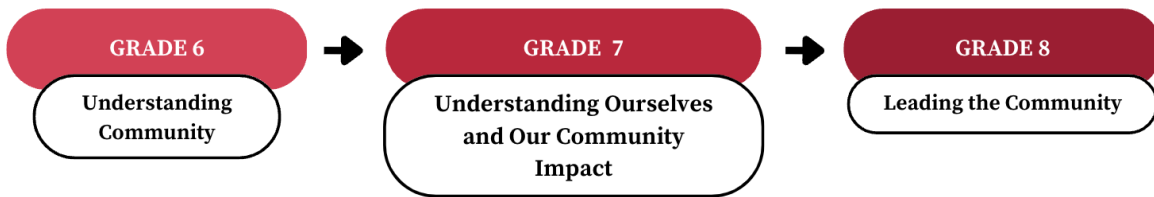
#### ***THE PHILOSOPHY***

The Leadership, Ethics, and Development program (LEAD) is designed to foster each student's social, emotional, physical, and ethical growth. Through intentional and age appropriate curricula, students develop skills to confidently navigate adolescence and prepare them to be purposeful citizens in any community.

Active experiences and intellectual opportunities will empower students to engage in character development, personal and peer leadership, and support a healthy school and community culture. In LEAD classes at each grade level, 6-8, subtopics are explored in age appropriate ways each year, including self-awareness, relationships, effective communication, feedback, decision making, coping strategies, ethical engagement, team building, and self-care. In the Middle School, LEAD curricula is delivered through trimester long LEAD classes, advisory, and community meeting times. LEAD is graded as a Pass/Fail course. Students successfully pass LEAD by understanding and engaging in class discussions and activities.

## THE PROGRAM

The following chart depicts the overall program of study in the LEAD Program. Please refer to the substantive course descriptions that follow for full titles and details.



### Understanding Community

Open to: Grade 6

In this trimester class, students explore the theme of understanding community. As students transition to Derryfield, they will learn the personal, social and behavioral expectations of our school community while engaging in physical activities and classroom discussions. At the beginning of the year, the focus will be on understanding the norms and expectations of Derryfield, and developing positive relationships with peers and adults in the community. Ongoing skill development will include, but is not limited to, tackling interpersonal relationships, self-regulation and understanding emotions, coping and building resilience, appropriate use of technology, making and keeping friends, and a growth mindset.

### Understanding Ourselves and Our Community Impact

Open to: Grade 7

In the seventh grade, students explore the themes of self-awareness and community dynamics. Students analyze their character traits, find their strengths as community members, and identify

ways in which they can support others and be supported. In an introduction to the outdoor low ropes course, students are able to practically apply their teamwork skills and push themselves outside their comfort zones. The students then explore the brain body connection in an integrated unit on healthy lifestyle choices and body systems, and are introduced to the state-of-the-art cardio and weight rooms in our Athletic and Wellness Center. Students take away different coping strategies for managing stress, explore a growth mindset, and learn to set SMART goals for themselves. Students leave seventh grade LEAD well equipped to become middle school leaders as 8th graders.

### Leading the Community

Open to: Grade 8

In this trimester class, students explore the theme of leading the community. Students expand their influence in our community while also looking ahead to the transition to high school. Ongoing skill development will include communication, decision-making, appropriate use of technology, and leadership within the middle school. The goals of the eighth grade program are to help students develop self confidence by an in-depth exploration

of self; to provide students with accurate information on the physical and psychological effects of health-related decisions; to enhance the development of the student's sense of personal and social responsibility; to help students see the relationship between choices and well-being; and to teach interpersonal and physical skills which

will encourage and assist students in making health-enhancing decisions throughout their lives. Topics include, but are not limited to: self-identity, bias, race, gender, healthy relationships and sexual health. Students also venture on the indoor and outdoor ropes courses.

## **ACADEMIC SUPPORT**

### ***THE PHILOSOPHY***

In the Academic Support department, we strive to meet students where they are as learners and help them grow and develop. We pride ourselves in cultivating a warm and friendly environment. All students, no matter who they are as learners, are welcome to enroll in a class.

### ***THE OBJECTIVES***

In this department we seek to support students as they develop:

- close reading and writing skills across the curriculum.
- effective study skills for expanding their knowledge of content.
- time management and other executive functions.
- an understanding of their strengths and challenges as learners.
- confidence in their ability to work through complex problem solving.
- advocacy skills that reflect their unique needs.

### ***THE PROGRAM***

#### **Academic Skills**

Open to: Grade 6

This course is designed for our students newest to Derryfield and aims to sharpen the basic organizational and study skills necessary for success in the Middle School curriculum. Students learn and practice techniques based on the latest brain science that require them to take an active role in their learning. Topics include understanding individual learning styles and memory, organizing materials, planning and using time efficiently, note taking, listening, active reading, test taking, public speaking and self-advocacy. Writing process and self-editing skills are also addressed. The student planner, course texts, and class projects serve as important materials for applying various learning strategies and developing sound study habits.

#### **Academic Power and Other Support Services**

Open to: Grade 6-8

Those students who find that they need more support may wish to enroll in Academic Power with Jodie Leen. These one-on-one sessions are 30 minutes and focus on a student's individual challenges in organization and time management as well as developing subject specific strategies for success. A student who wishes for more content-driven instruction may work with one of the school's tutors. Both Academic Power and tutoring are fee -based, and can be arranged by contacting our Director of Academic Support, Jenny Boesch. ***Any questions about academic testing or learning differences should also be directed to Jenny Boesch [jboesch@derryfield.org](mailto:jboesch@derryfield.org).*** ***Parents or guardians who wish to sign their child up for Academic Support must fill out a request for each applicable trimester. This [form](#) can be found***

on the Parent Resources tab in MSA. Students are not able to attend class until this form is complete.

## **ARTS**

### **THE PHILOSOPHY**

The Arts Department faculty is committed to promoting artistic excellence through self-discovery, creative expression, and collaboration. Through creative risk-taking and the application of technical skills, our program builds confidence and discipline in students. The Arts program promotes empathy and an appreciation for the artistic contributions of others.

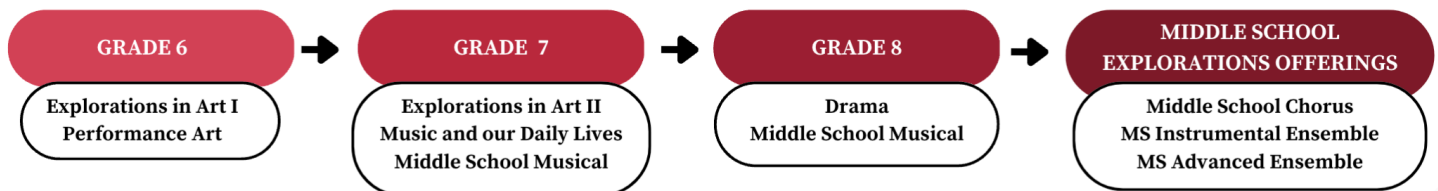
### **THE OBJECTIVES**

The department will provide opportunities for students to:

- conceive and develop new artistic ideas and work including conceptualizing and composing as well as refining work.
- interpret and share artistic work while demonstrating understanding of artistic techniques and communicating ideas and meaning through the presentation of artistic work.
- understand and evaluate how the arts convey meaning through perceiving, analyzing, and interpreting an artistic work and being able to apply criteria to evaluate that work.
- relate artistic ideas and work with personal meaning and external context.
- build empathy through artistic works in an individual, societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.

### **THE PROGRAM**

The following chart depicts the overall program of study in the Arts Department. Please refer to the substantive course descriptions that follow for full titles and details.



#### **Explorations in Art I**

Open to: Grade 6

Sixth grade visual art is an exciting opportunity for students to be introduced to a variety of different media and techniques, while making connections to art history and cultures from around the world. Active discussions, collaborations, research, and hands-on experiences help students develop creative problem-solving skills while encouraging them to take risks.

#### **Explorations in Art II**

Open to: Grade 7

The seventh grade visual art curriculum builds upon the sixth grade experience and promotes student self-expression through independent explorations. A choice-based art class, students decide how to respond to creative prompts, integrating their own ideas and interests through art making. Art history and cultural references are integrated into class discussions and collaborative art making opportunities.



## **Introduction to Performance Art**

Open to: Grade 6

Sixth grade performance art focuses on introducing the students to the many aspects of theater and performance including improvisation, playwriting, theater games, music, costumes, and character development, as well as all the elements that go into creating a theatrical production. At the end of the term, the class will present a public performance of a staged musical.

## **Music and our Daily Lives**

Open to: Grade 7

The focus of the seventh grade music class is to explore the ways music presents itself in our daily life. We do this through a series of units, each with its own comprehensive project. Students will work individually and in groups to make original commercial jingles, create podcasts about historical rock & roll and jazz musicians, film and score their own movies, and much more in an effort to discover just how big a role music plays in their everyday lives.

## **Drama**

Open to: Grade 8

Eighth grade Drama introduces students to various theater games and techniques in acting. Students will discover aspects of theater such as concentration and focus, ensemble work, pantomime, playwriting, directing, improvisation, stage movement, emotion, memorization, character and script interpretation.

## **Middle School Chorus**

Open to: Grades 6-8

All middle school students are welcomed and encouraged to join chorus, regardless of how much

singing experience they might have. Music specifically composed for middle school voices, interests, and talents will be presented publicly at winter and spring concerts. Our goal is to nurture a lifelong love of music while teaching healthy vocal techniques. *Offered as an Exploration option.*

## **Middle School Musical**

Open to: Grades 7-8

Seventh and eighth graders may also choose to participate in the middle school musical in the spring. All who are interested in participating will get to join in on the fun! The rehearsals typically take place after school from 3:30 - 5:15 p.m. and during Exploration Block. Students who participate in the musical can also participate in sports.

*Offered as an Exploration option.*

## **Middle School Instrumental Ensemble**

Open to: Grades 6-8

All middle school students with interest and/or experience on wind, brass or percussion instruments are encouraged to join the Middle School Instrumental Ensemble. Our goal is to nurture a love of ensemble playing and musicianship. *Offered as an Exploration option.*

## **Middle School Advanced Ensemble**

Open to: Grades 6-8

More advanced players (with 2 or more years of experience on their instruments) are encouraged to continue their musical development by playing with their peers. Students will meet to play music. Often this group is split into smaller ensembles based on their musical interests (i.e. jazz vs classical, etc.). *Offered as an Exploration option.*

# **ENGLISH**

## **THE PHILOSOPHY**

The study of English in the Middle School concerns itself as much with process as with products; teachers help students develop and deepen their skills in language arts. Building on students' earlier experiences in elementary school, middle school English teachers provide opportunities for students to explore the call of

stories, discover ideas, appreciate language, and find their voices. Through collaboration, individual pursuits, and class discussion, students are guided and taught fundamental strategies intended to develop their reading and writing skills.

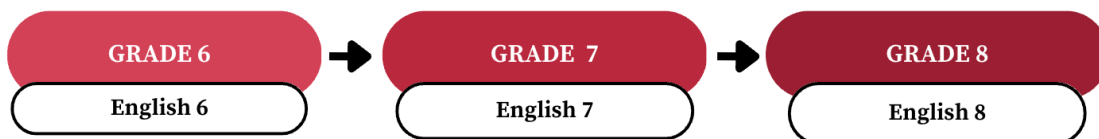
## THE OBJECTIVES

The department will provide opportunities for students to:

- develop study skills, including strategies for reading, note-taking, and annotation of digital and print materials.
- practice close reading in a variety of literary genres and written and visual digital and print media.
- sharpen critical and analytical skills with sophisticated literature.
- enhance skills of oral and visual expression through presentations and online and classroom discussion.
- experiment with crafting fiction, poetry, creative nonfiction and multimedia.
- write literary essays and formulate a thesis from evidence in a text.
- acquire composing skills from sentence to paragraph to essay.
- write and rewrite extensively to develop a mature writing style and to build confidence in their own writing process.
- master the fundamentals and terminology of English grammar through class lessons and IXL software.
- enrich vocabulary.

## THE PROGRAM

The following chart depicts the overall program of study in the English Department. Please refer to the substantive course descriptions that follow for full titles and details.



### English 6

Open to: Grade 6

Sixth grade English students become active explorers of spoken and written language. Students investigate and analyze the basic components of a story—plot, character, conflict, setting, and theme—through works across genres via responses, reflections, and active reading strategies. Students read *The Night Diary*, *Navigating Early*, and *The Giver* and explore concepts of theme, family, and identity through creative writing assignments, short answer responses and are introduced to the structure of analytical paragraphs. Students explore these ideas further through an independent reading program in which they create and present reading projects. One aspect of the

sixth grade writing curriculum is the effective composition of essays and the literary skills necessary to provide textual evidence. In addition, students engage in creative writing activities, which include skits, poetry, and stories. Throughout the year, a variety of activities and lessons reinforce grammar and mechanics skills, vocabulary, and precision in language.

### English 7

Open to: Grade 7

Seventh grade students learn how to communicate effectively, think creatively, and express themselves with clarity. Through a wide variety of literature that includes, but is not limited to, *The Outsiders*, *Look Both Ways*, and *One Crazy Summer*, students

use active reading strategies to investigate each author's style of writing, as well as the significance of stories in their lives and how those stories reflect the world in which they were written. Students continue to discover new authors and genres through the independent reading program as well as in the creation and presentation of reading projects. The seventh grade writing curriculum focuses on both analytical and creative writing. Students hone their essay-writing skills while also finding their voices through the writing of reflections, short answer essays/responses, short stories, and poems. The study of language is incorporated into all aspects of seventh-grade English, including instruction on the fundamentals of grammar, vocabulary, and literary devices.

### **English 8**

Open to: Grade 8

The thematic focus in eighth grade English centers on the concepts of individual and collective identity. Students look closely at what factors help to shape a person's identity and hence perspective. Throughout the year, students explore this theme and continue to build upon the skills they learned

in sixth and seventh grades through a variety of reading experiences, writing assignments, and short and long term projects. As readers, students review and practice using close reading strategies learned during the past two years and focus on more complex ways to analyze and reflect on books and visual media through the reading of texts that include, but are not limited to, *American Born Chinese*, *brown girl dreaming*, *The 57 Bus*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Students also explore a variety of genres through class texts and work to increase their reading fluency through independent book choices. As writers, students write personal reflections, poetry, analysis, fiction, short answers, and personal responses, incorporating traditional text and multimodal writing styles. While grammar is taught through direct instruction, it is practiced and reinforced through written work and supplemented by an online IXL program, with particular attention given to comma rules affecting complex sentence structure. Additionally, students continue to build their vocabulary bank through the study of vocabulary words drawn from *Wordly Wise*.

## **HISTORY**

### ***THE PHILOSOPHY***

The Middle School history curriculum seeks to begin a journey that will enable young people to be informed and responsible citizens. Beginning with an exploration of the physical world in the sixth grade, the program then moves to the American political system, and then to a global examination of justice. The progression acknowledges a sixth grader's more concrete view of the world (Geography), a seventh grader's emerging understanding of the abstract concepts of government (Civics), and an eighth grader's increasingly sophisticated view of justice (World Justice). The sequence gives students not only an appreciation of the world around them, but also an awareness of civic responsibility, and the moral responsibilities associated with justice in a free society. These courses challenge students to think creatively, become fully involved in their own learning, and explore the world around them.

### ***THE OBJECTIVES***

The department will provide opportunities for students to:

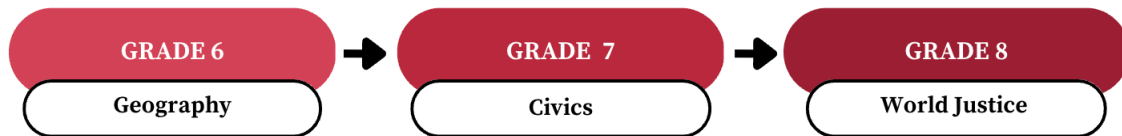
- explore primary and secondary sources.
- evaluate sources' different points of view based on argument, evidence, etc.



- develop understanding of ideological, historical and/or ethical frameworks and their impact on their own and others' points of view.
- use evidence related to physical and human geography to support arguments.
- develop skills of comparison to consider examples across time and space.
- articulate historical claims and articulate evidence to support those claims.

## THE PROGRAM

The following chart depicts the overall program of study in the History Department. Please refer to the substantive course descriptions that follow for full titles and details.



### Geography

Open to: Grade 6

As their first experience in the Derryfield History Department, students in Geography gain an understanding of and an appreciation for the significance of an individual's relationship to his or her physical and cultural world while also developing the basic skills of organization, reading, writing, and research. Students will begin with map reading and investigating National Geographic's Five Themes of Geography. After mastering these concepts, students will then apply them to various locations around the world, developing inquiry skills and interpersonal empathy through their studies. This is a key course that lays the foundation in both skills and content for further historical studies.

### Civics

Open to: Grade 7

In Civics, seventh graders examine how the three branches of the U.S. government work, as well as how citizens can play an active role in our communities. Particular emphasis is placed on discussion and research about how the government tackles a range of current issues from

contemporary legislation to landmark Supreme Court cases. Students continue to build skills in effective reading, note-taking from reading, research, test-taking, structured and clear writing, and civil discourse. Class activities include general and structured discussions, research projects, and presentations. During the year, students are encouraged to remember that although they cannot yet vote, they can still be active citizens in their various communities.

### World Justice

Open to: Grade 8

In World Justice, eighth graders explore the complexities of justice and how the concept has been applied in the last century across different cultures. Units include Human Rights, a world diplomacy simulation, U.S. Civil Rights History, Human Rights in Modern China, and the Holocaust. Students continue to work on the skills from earlier years but with more challenging texts and more demanding writing standards. These skills include analyzing documents, determining the bias of different sources, writing analytical paragraphs and essays, discussing "hot topics" using civil discourse, and developing the ability to see multiple perspectives.

# **MATHEMATICS**

## **THE PHILOSOPHY**

The Middle School Mathematics program is designed to help students grow to be skilled, confident and curious problem solvers. We incorporate a balance of skill building and creative exploration while ultimately focusing on the learning process. In addition to focused individual study, students will take part in cooperative learning tasks, problem-solving activities, and design-thinking projects.

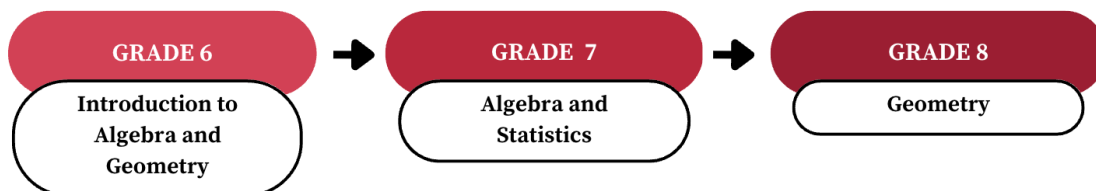
## **THE OBJECTIVES**

The department will provide opportunities for students to:

- understand mathematics as a logical system.
- have a knowledge of, and be competent with, basic mathematical processes and concepts.
- develop efficiency and accuracy in computation.
- acquire the ability to solve problems.
- use logical thinking to discover both generalizations and applications.
- develop the skills and vocabulary essential to future mathematical study.
- develop creativity and curiosity.
- understand and appreciate the role of mathematics in society.

## **THE PROGRAM**

The following chart depicts the overall program of study in the Mathematics Department. Please refer to the substantive course descriptions that follow for full titles and details.



### **Introduction to Algebra and Geometry**

Open to: Grade 6

The sixth grade curriculum is designed to build students' number sense and facility with problem solving while encouraging curiosity and exploration of new ideas. Students will study topics in algebra including writing, interpreting, solving and using variable expressions and equations to model scenarios. The building blocks of geometry are studied as a way to describe and understand the physical world. In addition, students will deepen and expand their conceptual understanding of integers, fractions and decimals while exploring exponents, ratio, rate, proportion and percent.

### **Algebra and Statistics**

Open to: Grade 7

The seventh grade curriculum develops and extends the study of algebra and geometry and introduces topics in statistics and probability. Students apply proportional reasoning to a variety of topics including probability, percent, scale, and linear functions. Fluency with integers, exponents, decimals and fractions is expected as students simplify and solve multi-step algebraic equations, write and graph equations and inequalities for linear models, and gain information and draw inferences from statistical data. Interwoven throughout all topics is an examination of patterns and the challenge of problem-solving.

## Geometry

Open to: Grade 8

The Geometry course is designed to support the students' transition from concrete to abstract reasoning. Students review the building blocks of geometry and apply geometric and algebraic properties through hands-on, inquiry-based, and proof-based activities. Students master properties of two and three-dimensional figures through study of advanced measurement, construction, and comparison. Students practice their reasoning skills as they solve problems involving spatial relationships, area, volume, and coordinate geometry. They extend their study of similarity and proportion as they deepen their understanding of

the Pythagorean Theorem, the special triangles, and right triangle trigonometry.

## Math Enrichment

Open to: Grades 6-8

Throughout the year, students in each class who demonstrate a high level of mastery and understanding of the course material will have the opportunity, within the course, to explore advanced material that will push their understanding beyond the standard curriculum. They may go deeper into course concepts or study extensions in number theory; complex numbers; limits, sequences and series; trigonometry; statistics; and engineering.

## SCIENCE

### THE PHILOSOPHY

The Middle School science program focuses on science process skills while introducing students to scientific concepts. The curriculum is presented through a project and inquiry-based approach and is appropriate to the developmental level of a middle school student. The goal of the curriculum is to encourage and develop an appreciation of science and an enjoyment for learning. The skills and knowledge gained throughout the Middle School years will allow students to be successful in their future scientific endeavors.

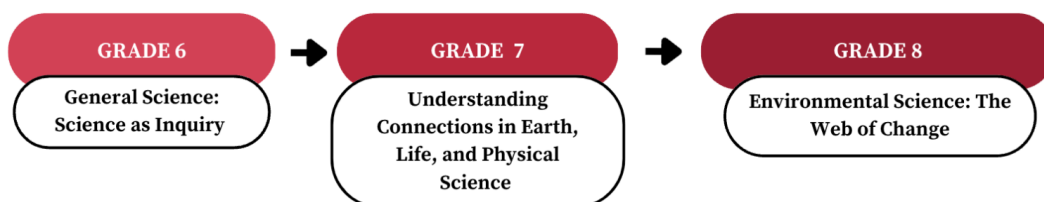
### THE OBJECTIVES

The department will provide opportunities for students to:

- gain an understanding of major scientific ideas that will lead to scientific literacy.
- allow students to develop and practice study skills such as organization, writing, critical thinking, and time management.
- develop scientific process skills as they work both independently and cooperatively with others to solve problems.
- cultivate ethical and moral thinking by understanding the connections between science and human activity.

### THE PROGRAM

The following chart depicts the overall program of study in the Science Department. Please refer to the substantive course descriptions that follow for full titles and details.





### **General Science: Science as Inquiry**

Open to: Grade 6

Scientific inquiry approaches learning science as an active process. In this course, students explore a variety of topics in an inquiry-based study of science. Some of the topics students investigate are scientific process, genetics, fluid dynamics, force and motion, and water. Students learn safe laboratory procedures and utilize the steps of the scientific process to solve problems as they actively engage in scientific investigations.

### **Understanding Connections in Earth, Life and Physical Science**

Open to: Grade 7

Students are asked to think insightfully as they make connections between topics involving the three main branches of science: Earth, Life, and

Physical Science. We investigate topics such as geologic time, classification, biodiversity, evolution, ecology, chemistry, and physics. Students conduct and design experiments to develop an understanding of scientific ideas.

### **Environmental Science: The Web of Change**

Open to: Grade 8

Students are immersed into the study of the Earth by studying the dynamic relationship of cause and effect. Using an inquiry-based approach, students learn about the environment around them, investigating the natural habitat around the Derryfield campus. Students investigate topics in the fields of ecology and environmental science. Students continue to hone their skills in the scientific process, which will prepare them to transition for higher level science courses.

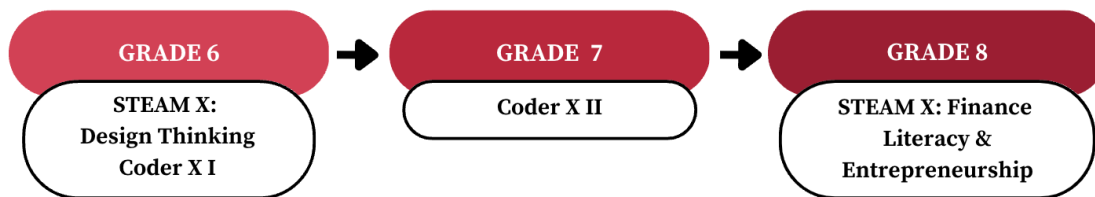
## **STEAM X**

### ***THE PHILOSOPHY***

The STEAM X program introduces students to Design Thinking models that leverage Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics (“STEAM”) to solve authentic problems. In a STEAM X course, students engage in hands-on design work as they tackle challenges and tasks. Whether it’s designing software, a personal budget, building a robot, or experimenting with bridge design, by challenging students to explore the unknown, we aim to ignite student creativity and empower them to answer important world questions.

### ***THE PROGRAM***

The following chart depicts the overall program of study in the STEAM X Department. Please refer to the substantive course descriptions that follow for full titles and details.



### **STEAM X: Design Thinking**

Open to: Grade 6

In this trimester course, students engage in a dynamic, student-centered learning experience focused on tackling daily and weekly design challenges. These activities, framed within the design thinking process, offer a hands-on "DIY"

approach that caters to students at all levels. From designing fidget toys and constructing marshmallow structures to presenting marketing pitches for future school supplies, the course provides a mix of fun and performance-oriented challenges.

The curriculum also includes architecture and engineering challenges, requiring students to design bridges with a focus on both structural integrity and aesthetic considerations. Building design tasks further emphasize the synergy between creativity and engineering principles. This diverse range of challenges not only enhances problem-solving skills but also ensures students develop a comprehensive skill set, preparing them for real-world innovation and application beyond the theoretical framework.

### **Computer Science: Coder X I**

Open to: Grade 6

In this trimester course, students learn about computer technology and the fundamentals of computer programming. Students learn what modern computers are and why they are useful. Students also learn the fundamentals of programming using MIT's Scratch programming language. Students create animated movies, build arcade-style video games, and develop challenging brain games while learning how to write event-driven programs using Scratch. This course is designed to be a fun and engaging introduction to the world of computer technology.

### **Computer Science: Coder X II**

Open to: Grade 7

## **WORLD LANGUAGE**

### ***THE PHILOSOPHY***

The purpose of the World Language Department is to guide students as they develop the skills necessary to communicate and to interact effectively and empathetically in an increasingly interconnected world. The study of language develops the student's ability to compare and connect his or her own way of life to the global community. We encourage our language students to use their linguistic skills and cultural knowledge beyond the classroom. The World Language Department believes that the study of other languages and cultures is a vital part of a student's secondary-school education. Guided by the philosophy and guidelines for language learning in the 21st Century of the American Council of Teachers of Foreign Language [ACTFL], we focus on student engagement and construction of understanding through critical-thinking, creative collaboration, and communication in the target language.

### ***THE OBJECTIVES***

The department will provide opportunities for students to:

This trimester course will introduce students to programming using two applications: the Swift Playground App and the micro:bit App. Students begin using the Swift Playground lessons which highlight key coding concepts while demonstrating how coding is a way of thinking that can be applied to other subjects and everyday life. Along with developing programming skills, students will engage in project-based coding using the micro:bit App. This part of the course uses a project-based curriculum, with a maker philosophy, that provides a context for learning coding and computer science concepts through the act of making a project.

### **STEAM X: Finance Literacy & Entrepreneurship**

Open to: Grade 8

In this trimester course, students apply math practically, building their financial literacy. Widely regarded as one of the most important sets of life skills, basic understanding of the fundamentals of budgeting, saving, debt and investing will impact every part of a student's life during and beyond school. Example topics include consumer skills, budgeting, credit, saving, investing, and financing life after high school. Through engaging resources and activities, students will practice the skills to get started on the right track to effectively manage their personal finance.

- acquire language using multiple modes (interpersonal, presentational, interpretive) to communicate effectively and creatively in more than one language in a variety of situations and for multiple purposes [Communication].
- develop insight into the nature of language and culture in order to foster meaningful connections and to interact respectfully with other people [Cultural Awareness].
- communicate and interact with citizens of the world with cultural competence in order to participate in multilingual communities globally [Communities and Global Citizenship].
- connect with other disciplines and cultural experiences while honoring diverse perspectives and using the language to contribute in academic and career-related situations [Connections].
- investigate, explain, and reflect on the linguistic structure of language through comparisons of the native and the studied language(s) [Linguistic Comparison].

## THE PROGRAM

The following chart depicts the overall program of study in the World Language Department. Please refer to the substantive course descriptions that follow for full titles and details.



### Classical World: Latin and Classical Studies

Open to: Grade 7

In this trimester course students engage with the Latin language, Roman mythology, history, culture and traditions. Students explore all facets of ancient Roman society, from gladiators to gods; battles to baths; dinner parties to dialogue; politics to pestilence; chariot racing to couture, and beyond. All the while, students draw parallels between modern society and the distant past. Students also gain experience with Latin, acquiring a robust vocabulary to engage in conversation and describe their surroundings.

### Latin I

Open to: Grade 8

This year long course introduces students to the world of the ancient Romans and their language. The course covers the fundamentals of the Latin language by studying its grammar, morphology, and pronunciation with the goal of translating appropriately leveled Latin readings through the Suburani textbook series. In their translations and

supplementary readings, students study aspects of Roman daily life with a focus on the town of Pompeii and its well-preserved ruins. Class activities include practice through Latin readings, reading and pronouncing Latin words, and occasionally Latin composition. Ongoing discussions and creative projects, such as the "Bringing Latin to Life" project, engage students with various aspects of Roman daily life. As English and other western languages are in large part derived from Latin, students will use their study of Latin to learn how modern languages function.

### Spanish Language and Cultural Studies

Open to: Grade 7

In this trimester course, we engage students in the remarkable diversity of Spanish-speaking cultures around the world. Students begin to build a linguistic foundation in the target language while also exploring Spanish and Latin American cultures in English. We explore media such as short stories, film, music, and websites. Speaking is



highlighted within such formats as pair dialogues, group conversations, skits, and student videos.

### **Spanish I**

Open to: Grade 8

Learning Spanish not only benefits the brain of the student, it can broaden the worldview of the learners. In this year long course, students gain basic vocabulary and grammar scaffolded in six thematic units and varied interactive activities to be able to read, write, listen, and speak in the target language. Through adapted cultural readings, short videos, music, and audios, students discover traditions, customs and history of some of the Hispanic cultures and communities in the U.S. and abroad. Students compose oral presentations, simulate numerous interpersonal situations, and solve many interpretive challenges. Activities include students creating videos in Spanish to introduce themselves and their classes and writing original comic strips using the verb *estar*.