

Blankner Middle School Electives

2023-2024

Performing and Fine Arts:

*Each of the classes identified with an asterisk is co-curricular and may require rehearsals and performances outside the school day.

Art I: Studio Art Basics - Introductory art class! Building fundamental art skills, exploring new materials and various art movements, build on understanding of the elements of art and introduction to the principles of design.

Art II: Exploring Art in the Studio - Deepening art knowledge! Continuing to build fundamental art skills, explore new materials and various art movements, and understand the elements of art. Dig deeper into the principles of design.

Art III: Advanced Studio - Deepening art knowledge, and building personal artistic style! Continuing to build fundamental art skills, explore new techniques with materials and various art movements, and apply elements of art and principles of design to artworks based on personal choice and artistic style.

***Beginning Band** - The Beginning Band is open to all 6th-8th graders with little or no instrumental experience. Students will develop foundational instrumental technique, foundational music literacy, and aesthetic musical awareness through rehearsal, performance, and study of high-quality band literature. Instrumentalists work on the fundamentals of music notation, sound production, instrument care and maintenance, and personal and group rehearsal strategies. The Beginning Band will perform in at least two concerts during the school year. This course requires students to obtain a musical instrument (e.g., borrow, rent, purchase) from an outside source (or school).

***Advanced Band** - The Advanced Band is made up of students who have successfully completed Beginning Band. Students will build on instrument technique and music literacy while enhancing aesthetic response through rehearsal, performance, and study of high-quality band literature. Public performances will serve as a culmination of specific instructional goals. The Advanced Band will perform in several concerts throughout the year. This course requires students to obtain a musical instrument (e.g., borrow, rent, purchase) from an outside source (or school).

Bulldog TV (AV Technology and Communication/ Fundamentals of Visual and Performing Arts -

Students will learn about the operations and processes in a TV studio. Skills learned will include production and editing of video, audio and graphics, script writing, and the operation of equipment such as video cameras, computers, teleprompters, and sound mixing and video mixing hardware and software. Students should be comfortable reading and writing in front of others and presenting their work on camera.

Students must submit a completed application to be eligible for this course.

***Chorus** - Open to all 6th-8th graders, no experience necessary. Beginning students learn to read music, sing with good support and sound, and harmonize in a group. Includes Winter & Spring concert performances.

2nd and 3rd year returning students will deepen vocal technique, harmonic knowledge, and solo skills while focusing on more challenging music.

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Creative Writing - The purpose of this course is to enable students to learn and use writing and language skills for creative expression in a variety of literary forms.

Critical Thinking - Students will learn how to effectively use basic technology tools to assist in computing and turning in assignments. Students will learn the importance of using a planner, taking notes, understanding how to study for a test, and effective time management skills. Students will have time to work independently studying, reading, and completing homework to ensure academic success.

Finance - 7th and 8th Grade only. The purpose of the Foundations in Personal Finance is to empower students with knowledge and application of basic financial principles so that they can make sound financial decisions for life.

***Orchestra 1 (Beginning Orchestra)** - This course is for students who have little or no experience on violin, viola, cello, or bass. Students will learn the fundamental skills needed to perform string orchestra music as part of an orchestral ensemble. There will be evening performances during the school year that are required as part of the course.

***Orchestra 2 (Intermediate Orchestra)** - This course is for students with previous orchestra experience. Students will work to continue to develop their skills in this class to prepare them for Advanced Orchestra. Rising 6th graders may audition for this course with a placement test. There will be evening performances during the school year that are required as part of the course.

***Orchestra 3 (Advanced Orchestra)** - This course is for advanced orchestra students with previous performance experience. Enrollment in this course is determined by a placement test. There will be evening performances during the school year that are required as part of the course. There are a limited number of school instruments available.

Physical Education (PE) - This course is composed of four classes throughout the year: 6th grade Fitness, 6th/7th grade Comprehensive PE, 7th/8th grade Comprehensive PE, and 8th grade Individual/Dual Sports. Students dress out and dress back in for class.

The purpose of these courses is to build on previously acquired knowledge, skills, and values necessary for the implementation of a physically active lifestyle and learn and practice different individual and dual sports.

Peer Counseling - 8th Grade only. Students must submit a completed application to be eligible for this course.

The purpose of this course is to enable students to develop awareness of self and others. Emphasis will be on acquisition of basic skills for thoughtful planning, peer facilitation, effective communication, and making healthy choices. Students will meet weekly for instruction and will practice what they have learned in their classrooms with their Peer Counselor host.

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Project Lead the Way:

1st Semester:

Medical Detectives: Students play the role of real-life medical detectives as they collect and analyze medical data to diagnose disease. They solve medical mysteries through hands-on projects and labs, measure and interpret vital signs, examine nervous system structure and function, and investigate disease outbreaks.

2nd Semester:

Science of Technology - Students apply the concepts of physics, chemistry, and nanotechnology to STEM activities and projects, including making ice cream, cleaning up an oil spill, and discovering the properties of nano-materials.

Project Lead the Way: 8th Grade only.

1st Semester:

Magic of Electrons: Through hands-on projects, students explore electricity, the behavior and parts of atoms, and sensing devices. They learn knowledge and skills in basic circuitry design, and examine the impact of electricity on the world around them.

2nd Semester:

Automation & Robotics - Students trace the history, development, and influence of automation and robotics as they learn about mechanical systems, energy transfer, machine automation, and computer control systems. Students use the VEX Robotics® platform to design, build, and program real-world objects such as traffic lights, toll booths, and robotic arms.

Beginning Spanish - This course introduces students to the target language and its culture. Students learn beginning skills in listening and speaking and an introduction to basic skills in reading and writing. Also, culture, connections, comparisons, and communities are included in this one-year course.

Spanish 1 - Students apply their knowledge of language and culture. They engage in interpersonal and intrapersonal communication based on familiar topics.

Spanish 2 - Reinforces the fundamental skills acquired in Spanish 1. The course develops increased listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills as well as cultural awareness. Specific content is a continuation of listening and oral skills acquired in Spanish 1. Reading, writing and speaking receive more emphasis. The cultural survey of the target language-speaking people is continued. Successful completion of this course fulfills the high school foreign language requirement.

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***Steel Drums** - Open to all new and returning students - no experience necessary. Learn the musical language as you play fun songs in a low-stress, encouraging environment. Beginning students learn to read music, play melodic and harmonic percussion parts on various sized steel pans. Includes Winter and Spring concert performances.

Theatre 1: Introduction to Theatre - Students learn the basics of building a character through such activities as pantomime, improvisation, and the importance of technical theatre and explore the use of such elements as costumes, props and scenery. Students practice writing for the theatre and explore various theatre roles and functions. Effective speaking is learned using articulation, projection, and breathing.

Theatre 2 - Students continue to deepen and build on their prior knowledge of theatre with the study of acting, design, theatre history, playwrights, and by examining the cultural and historical contributions to theatre.

Theatre 3 - Students continue to deepen and build upon their prior knowledge of theatre using the basic elements of theatre design through practical application and projects.

Yearbook - 7th and 8th Grade Only. This course requires an application and teacher recommendation.

The purpose of this course is to enable students to develop skills in the production of journalism across print, multimedia, web, and broadcast/radio platforms and to become aware of journalism history, careers, ethics use, and management techniques related to the production of journalistic media.