



MIDDLE SCHOOL ELECTIVES

COURSE CATALOG

2019-2020

Dear Middle School Parents and Students,

We are excited to offer the following elective choices for Middle School. We encourage you to have a conversation with your child about his or her choices and goals for the upcoming year. The choices should be made by students with parental input. Every student will take P.E. each trimester. Once students have made their decisions, please submit your choices to Mr. Schmidt through the link provided:

<https://mirowitz.org/learning/middle-school/> or click [here](#).

Be sure to choose a 1st and 2nd alternate. Eighth graders' choices will be considered first. If your child is disappointed with being placed in a second choice class, please remind her/him that by eighth grade, s/he will have many first choice placements. We look forward to an exciting year!

Rick Schmidt

Middle School Coordinator

Band - Mark Connor

FIRST, SECOND, THIRD TRIMESTER

The Middle School Band class offers instruction on woodwind, brass, and percussion instruments with a focus on the skills necessary for long-term student success.

Students will improve basic musicianship skills through the practice and performance of concert works & exercises in a large ensemble setting.

Fundamentals stressed include proper posture and playing position, development of characteristic tone quality and training in music literacy. Students will take Band all together on Wednesdays plus one additional day, depending on the instrument the student plays. The other days, the student will take PE.

Judaic and Hebrew Course Descriptions

THIRD TRIMESTER

The Modern State of Israel, from Vision to Establishment - 8th Grade Required Course

How did Herzl come to the understanding that the Jewish people should have their own state? Who was living in the land before the establishment of the state? Who declared independence, and what happened next? How did so many Jews arrive in the time periods before and after the creation of the state? In this class we will examine what our legacy and responsibility is in understanding this epic event in Jewish history.

SECOND TRIMESTER

Israel On The Map - 7th Grade Required Course - Reb Scott

What are some of the reasons there are many maps of Israel? How do different maps of Israel tell different stories? Maps are creative, visual representations of information and stories, representing particular points of view and perspectives. They are visual documents that can be read and interpreted like text. In this class we explore many ways of correctly mapping Israel, and create our own maps, to convey a variety of information.

THIRD TRIMESTER

***Sofrut*, So Fun!! - Reb Scott**

Join this class to learn and practice Hebrew calligraphy--the kind needed to write a *mezuzah*, or a *Sefer Torah*. Class time will include practicing the art of calligraphy as well as studying of Jewish legal, midrashic, and mystical texts on the appropriate forms and meanings of Hebrew letters. Students will design and create an art installation that integrates all aspects of their study.

SCIENCE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

FIRST TRIMESTER

ROBOTICS (Limit of 20 students) - Mr. Schmidt

Introduces students to real-world engineering challenges by building LEGO-based robots to complete tasks on a thematic playing surface. FLL teams, guided by their imaginations and adult coaches, discover exciting career possibilities and, through the process, learn to make positive contributions to society.

The Middle-School students get to:

- Design, build, test and program robots using LEGO MINDSTORMS® technology
- Apply real-world math and science concepts
- Research challenges facing today's scientists
- Learn critical thinking, team-building and presentation skills
- Participate in tournaments and celebrations

This will be a first trimester class. Additional time outside of the regular class will be required in preparation for and during competitions. Competitions will take place on a Sunday to be determined and full-day team member participation is required.

THIRD TRIMESTER

Code Blue - Mr. Schmidt

Students study a specialty—the circulatory, respiratory, nervous, digestive, muscular/skeletal, and immune systems—and teach their teammates about the inner workings of the human body. Research and critical-thinking skills are put into action as students use Code Cards to "see" their first patient and learn about public health issues. The culminating activity has students showcase their knowledge at Grand Round.

Math Course Descriptions

FIRST TRIMESTER

Math in Art - Mrs. James

Students will use the concept of ratio, proportion, and scale to create both 2D and 3D art. Students will create scale drawings and make fractal art in this elective. Students will observe and measure how area, perimeter, and volume are affected when dimensions are changed by a scale factor.

Introduction to Sewing - Mrs. James

Students in this course will learn how to sew using a sewing machine. Students will learn how to operate & troubleshoot a sewing machine, as well as create several projects using the sewing machine. Material for the first project will be provided. Students will be asked to purchase a zipper and material for the remaining projects. Students will create a challah cover, a simple pencil bag, and a media stand during the course.

SECOND TRIMESTER - REQUIRED FOR 6th GRADE

Biz Town - Mrs. James

Through daily lessons, hands-on activities, and active participation in this simulated community, students develop a strong understanding of the relationship between what they learn in school and their successful participation in a worldwide economy. This course focuses on economic concepts related to banking, business, citizenship, competition, work-readiness, quality, ethics, and competition. Students participate in a simulation at Junior Achievement BizTown towards the end of the course to put into practice the procedures and adult decision making they have studied all trimester. Students will be assigned jobs and earn two paychecks during their time at BizTown, practice being a consumer as well as a provider of services for fellow students during the simulation.

THIRD TRIMESTER

Introduction to Quilting - Mrs. James

Students will learn the process of creating a quilt. Students will learn to use a rotary cutter, rulers, and sewing machines to create two small quilted projects. Students will be expected to purchase material for this course. Sewing machines will be provided.

Advanced Quilting - Mrs. James

In this course, students will sew curves or use a paper piecing technique to complete 1- 2 small quilts. Students will be asked to purchase the material of their choice. Sewing machines will be provided. Prerequisite: Students who take this course should already have taken a sewing course or be familiar with sewing on a machine and a ¼ inch seam allowance.

Language Arts Course Descriptions

FIRST TRIMESTER

Battle of the Books - Morah Alysha

If you love to read and enjoy talking about books, this is the class for you. Using the 2019-2020 Missouri *Book Battle* reading list, students will choose what they want to read from a selection of modern classics, award winners, and recent favorites. We will explore questions of theme, character, plot, and craft through games, discussion groups and blogs, lively debates, and a variety of creative activities including book trailers, skits, and art projects. Students who are interested will have the opportunity to participate in the regional *Book Battle* this spring where middle school students from around the area come together to compete in games and trivia-style activities.

THIRD TRIMESTER

The Play's the Thing - Morah Alysha

Calling all creative writers! There's nothing like playwriting to improve your dramatic instincts and ability to write dialogue. We will study selections from reader's theatre, plays, and screenplays to explore the writer's craft and then compose short scenes or one-act plays to perform in class. Students will develop their ideas on the page as well as through improvisation and role-playing games.

Social Studies Electives

FIRST TRIMESTER

Breaking Barriers in History - Morah Alysha

This year's middle school trip highlights numerous examples of people who broke barriers in history. Now is your chance to go even deeper. Choose a topic from around the world that addresses the theme of breaking barriers, and spend the trimester working as a historical detective. You'll ask important questions, explore what makes a reliable source, and conduct research in a wide range of primary and secondary sources to become an expert on your topic. For their final project, students will create a website, documentary, performance, paper, or display. Students may choose to enter their projects in the regional National History Day competition in January.

THIRD TRIMESTER

That's Debatable! - Morah Alysha

Can money buy happiness? Should we send humans to Mars? What is the value of homework? The ability to craft a logical, well-reasoned argument and present it in public is an invaluable skill. So is spotting the flaws in someone else's reasoning and being able to defend your thinking under pressure. In *That's Debatable!* students will hone their public speaking, critical thinking, and analytical skills to become experts in the art of persuasion. Students will experiment with different debate styles and persuasive techniques.

Listing By Trimester and Period

	First Period	Second Period
FIRST TRIMESTER		
	PE	PE
	Band	Math in Art
	Introduction to Sewing	Breaking Barriers in History
	Battle of the Books	Robotics
SECOND TRIMESTER		
	PE	PE
	BizTown - 6TH GRADE REQUIRED COURSE	The Modern State of Israel, from Vision to Establishment - 8TH GRADE REQUIRED COURSE
	Band	Israel on the Map - 7TH GRADE REQUIRED COURSE
THIRD TRIMESTER		
	Band	<i>Sofrut, So Fun!!</i>
	PE	PE
	Introduction to Quilting	Advanced Quilting
	The Play's the Thing	That's Debatable!
	Code Blue	