



**2019-2020  
Course Guide**

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# Inspire Excellence in Every Student, Every Day

Welcome to Sky Vista Middle School. We are a special place. Our building's distinctive architecture is beautiful and provides great educational functionality. Our teachers are champions for students and are committed to meeting the needs of the entire child. Our staff excels at doing what is best for each unique individual. With an amazing building and the best people in the educational world, we believe we have the right formula for success for every student.

The three years of middle school are a time of accelerated growth opportunities, challenges, and adventures for students. We are honored to inspire your child(ren) during this special time in their lives. Our primary goal is the success of every student, academically, emotionally, and socially. Students develop at different rates and we must honor each of our students and their individuality, while meeting their needs to be challenged, motivated, and encouraged. We will facilitate learning, as well as opportunities for independence and interdependence within our school community to ensure that our students reach their full academic potential. Throughout this educational process, however, it is important to remember the social and emotional needs of this age group and ensure that the school climate is safe, supportive, and kind.

Our mission statement and our values keep us focused on keeping Sky Vista a special place. As a school, our commitment is to *Inspire Excellence in Every Student, Every Day*. We also model and teach our common values:

*Know every student*

*Challenge and expect every student to achieve at a high level*

*Model kindness and respect*

*Develop and maintain relationships*

*Learn, reflect, grow*

This course guide intends to help you understand what your academic experience will be for the 2019-20 school year. The guide contains the most up-to-date information we have available at the time of registration. If warranted, we will adjust our programming to fit the needs of our students.

Thank you for taking the time to read our course guide, and thank you for sending your student to Sky Vista Middle School. We are very excited about the upcoming school year and look forward to having you as part of our success.

# A Day in the Life of a Sky Vista Student

The schedule was designed with our mission and values in mind. It allows for a great deal of flexibility to balance academic instruction, enrichment, and support. While our academic schedule is reviewed annually, if warranted we will make adjustments to meet the needs of our students.

Students can start their day with us as early at 8:00 am. The cafeteria will be open for breakfast from 8:05-8:45. Regular buses will be available immediately after school and leave 10 minutes after the last bell of the day. Late shuttle busses run on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday for students participating in academic support, sports or clubs.

**Core:** Students have five core periods each day: language arts, math, science, social studies, and extended core/integrated core, Academic Lab or ACC.

**Electives:** Students have two elective periods each day. These grade level classes can include a combination of mandatory and student selected electives.

**Lunch:** There is a variety of options for hot and a la carte lunches. Students may also bring a lunch from home. There is time during this period for the students to go outside, visit the media center, or socialize in the cafeteria.

**Cornerstones:** At Sky Vista we strive to create a culture of connectedness, establish meaningful relationships, both academically and socially, as well as promote growth through an intentional focus on the whole child. Our Cornerstones (Respect, Safety, Honor, Excellence) are foundational concepts that we believe ensure positive, inclusive student interactions and growth.

**Respect** - Treat others as you would want to be treated.

**Honor** - Do what is right, even when no one is watching.

**Safety** - Keep our school community safe both mentally and physically.

**Excellence** - Do your personal best every day; Go above and beyond.

On Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays during Cornerstones time, students will have multiple opportunities to learn and exhibit our Cornerstones. Their time can include SSR, Mindfulness, Restorative Circles and community building.

On Wednesdays during Cornerstones, there will be an increased time for the Cornerstones period in which students will participate in an intervention or enrichment of an academic standard.

# Learning Without Limits: The Sky Vista Experience

When we say that our goal is to *Inspire Excellence in Every Student, Every Day*, we mean Every Student. To make this possible, we believe that *every student* must have access and opportunity to engage in rigorous, meaningful learning experiences in preparation for high school success. Our faculty is committed to providing high-level instructional practices that are rooted in relevant academic content and authentic relationships. Aligned with the district goals of College and Career Readiness and Inclusive Excellence for *every student*, there are *no limits* to what students can learn at Sky Vista.

## 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learners

Our students today must be equipped with certain core competencies such as collaboration, digital literacy, critical thinking, and problem solving in order to ensure future success. Education experts widely believe that schools need to teach these skills to help students thrive in today's world. At Sky Vista Middle School, we are committed to empowering students to compete at the highest levels by planning rigorous instruction that incorporates these 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills.

## Academic Calendar

The academic calendar is organized into four quarters lasting approximately nine weeks each. Core classes last all year—four quarters. Some elective classes, such as World Language, Band and AVID (7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup>) also last all year. Other elective classes, such as Art, Technology, and PE last one semester—two quarters. Academic grades are calculated each quarter; grades are not averaged at the semester. For Quarter 1, 2 and 3, a communication will be sent when grades are final in PowerSchool. The year-end Report Card will be mailed home a week after the school year ends.

## After-School Activities

At the end of the school day students may choose to stay and participate in a variety of clubs, grade level activities, or interscholastic athletics. We encourage students to take advantage of these enrichment activities. Students who complement their academic day with extracurricular experiences enjoy school more and make stronger connections with both peers and teachers.

**Athletics** - The athletic program at Sky Vista encourages participation and emphasizes teamwork and sportsmanship. No previous experience is needed, and skills are taught to athletes with varying ability levels. Physicals are not required. Transportation is provided to all away competitions. There is a registration fee to participate in athletics, and scholarships are available. Track, basketball, girls' volleyball, and wrestling are offered at all grade levels.

**Activities** – Sky Vista offers a variety of extracurricular clubs and activities. These may include art club, science club, drama, math league, Math Counts, spelling bee club, Student Government, National Junior Honor Society, and yearbook. Announcements convey when clubs are held and how to join. Some activities do involve an additional fee to cover the cost of materials. Scholarships are available.

**Homework Club** - Teachers will have designated days for afterschool help sessions (except Friday when there are no late buses). Students are encouraged to stay and ask questions, work on homework, and make up missing work.

## **Student Achievement Services (SAS)**

Student Achievement Services provides special education services to students who qualify under the IDEA, CDE, and CCSD guidelines. Specific guidelines mandate qualifications pertaining to a student's inability to receive reasonable educational benefit from universal and/or targeted interventions.

A continuum of services is provided to students by the SAS staff including accommodations and modifications for regular educational instruction and curriculum, consultative programming, team teaching, and classes that address specific skill areas such as reading, writing, and math. Instruction outside the regular classroom is offered based on student need. Student needs are addressed through the implementation of an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or documentation through a Response to Intervention plan (RtI). Teachers, counselors, mental health staff, parents, and the student develop these documents.

Specific Services may also include:

- Mental health support - includes interventions from a school psychologist and/or social worker.
- Speech-Language - supports students in areas such as language development, articulation, voice, and fluency through classroom, small group, or consultative programming.
- Physical/Occupational Therapist - students are supported in these motor areas as needed and provided for by the IEP.
- ILC programming - serving students with significant developmental or cognitive delays and/or students with significant needs w/physical impairments.
- SED programming- serving students with significant behavioral and/or emotional disabilities.
- Other specialty areas as deemed necessary.

SAS teachers work closely with teachers, counselors, para-educators, and parents to monitor programs and progress for each individual student. It is the goal for each student to work toward proficiency according to the Colorado State Standards and to be challenged to excel to their given potential.

# Core Academic Subject Areas

## Language Arts

Literacy is used to access and communicate information and ideas in all disciplines, thus making it the foundation for all learning. The study of literature helps us to understand the human experience that connects us to other disciplines and to other people across time and place. At Sky Vista Middle School, the goal of the language arts curriculum is to blend academia with practical application of reading, writing, speaking, and listening. The Language Arts standards remain constant from elementary through high school, but the complexity of and sophistication with which students apply these skills changes. Students learn to develop critical thinking skills to access and evaluate new ideas and to come to a better understanding of their world. Through this, they will incorporate the conventions of language in order to communicate their ideas for a variety of purposes and audiences and will further develop their literacy skills.

### 6th Grade

Students will explore a variety of fiction and literary nonfiction in order to analyze how setting shapes and influences character and conflict. Additionally, students will determine and practice the methods authors use to create conflict. As our skills begin to develop students will explore a variety of nonfiction texts and resources in order to better understand how to create an argumentative editorial. Students will practice learning what techniques an author can use to help prove their claims. Once students begin to learn how to create an argument, students will examine the different devices that authors use to make their writing better. As the year progresses students will then examine different archetypes through literature and various cultural myths to see why these stories are repeated and help understand how stories are a valuable way of communicating with the world around us.

### 7th Grade

Students will apply specific reading strategies in order to persevere through complex text, leading to an understanding of the relationship between language and history. As the year progresses, students will learn to find the deeper meaning (theme) of a variety of types of poetry. Additionally, students will turn their abstract interpretations into an argument on a poem's theme. Students will also learn how to analyze the elements of rhetoric (including the Rhetorical Triangle and Types of Evidence) and evaluate arguments for their effectiveness. Once students have looked at how to analyze using the rhetorical triangle, they will begin analyzing the elements of a story. Students will consider patterns that exist within the science fiction genre. Students will question the purpose of those patterns in order to come to a conclusion about the existence and function of genre as a whole. Lastly, students will research several existing philosophies on the foundation of identity and examine these philosophies in action through an anchor text (Ayn Rand's *Anthem* or other choice text). Students will then synthesize their understanding of identity to develop and argue their own philosophy.

## 8<sup>th</sup> Grade

Our first unit will focus on the question, “What makes a piece of writing revolutionary?” More specifically, we will be exploring this question by looking at one particular author: Patrick Carman, mystery writer and author of *Skeleton Creek*. To answer this question, we will also be building our background knowledge of the mystery genre, doing an in-depth study of Poe—the founder of the mystery fiction genre. We will then work to study the allegory and how it may allow an author to transcend his or her own time period. Our next unit, *Power of One: Human Response to Suffering*, studies how each of us is a witness to history. Many writers recognize their roles as witnesses and feel compelled to bear witness to the world. They maintain the belief they can change human nature in spite of all the inexhaustible evidence that it never will. As our 8<sup>th</sup> graders move on to high school, we want them to know that they are absolutely in control of how they handle whatever comes their way. Our focus in Unit 4 is on the student as a writer, not just a writer within the discipline of language arts, but also a writer of his or her “story.” In other words, we want students to become the active authors that control their own lives, rather than a passive audience that accepts whatever comes as “meant to be.”



## **Math**

Colorado has adopted the Colorado State Content Standards for Mathematics and the Standards for Mathematical Practice. The math department at Sky Vista Middle School teaches mathematics to instill within each student a desire to understand how to make meaning of their world through mathematics. We are dedicated to providing a math program that provides students the opportunity to become creative problem solvers who utilize mathematics concepts to make meaning of the world around them.

The math program addresses the Colorado State Content Standards for Mathematics and the Standards for Mathematical Practice. This will be achieved through diverse classroom learning experiences that will involve a combination of group and individual instruction, integrated projects, and exposure to the use of technology and its applications. In this program, students will learn to work toward a deeper understanding of the concepts they are studying by being able to model, explain, and justify their solutions. The goal is to prepare students to become creative problem solvers not just in their mathematics courses, but beyond, making math an integral part of how they make meaning of their world on a daily basis.

### **Math 6**

As students transition to middle school mathematics, they will build on their understanding of number sense from elementary school and begin to learn the abstract components of mathematics. In sixth grade, math content will focus on four critical areas, including (1) connecting ratio and rate to whole number multiplication and division and using concepts of ratio and rate to solve problems; (2) understanding division of fractions and extending the notion of number sense to the system of rational numbers, which includes negative numbers; (3) writing, interpreting, and using expressions and equations; and (4) developing understanding of statistical thinking. This work will lay the foundation for the focus on proportional reasoning and algebraic expressions in Math 7 and 8. It is important to note that on this trajectory, students will be able to access advanced courses in high school.

### **Math 6/7**

Students interested in pursuing math and science related interests in middle school, high school, and post-secondary options may choose to access Algebra 1 prior to high school. Math 6/7 and Math 7/8, a two-year compacted course sequence, provides three years of mathematics content in two years, preparing students for Algebra 1 in 8th grade. Math 6/7 will focus on ratio and proportional relationships, number system operations (fractions, decimals, and rational numbers) and writing, interpreting, and using expressions, equations, and inequalities. In addition, students will work with geometric problem solving involving area, surface area, and volume and will be introduced to statistics and probability. The compacted nature of the course will require students to be comfortable and proficient in learning math at an accelerated pace. Placement in Math 6/7 will be determined using a body of evidence to support students' readiness for success in this course.

## **Math 7**

Students in Math 7 will build on their own work with rational numbers and algebraic thinking from Math 6 as they move into deeper and more complex math concepts. Math content will focus on four critical areas, including (1) analyzing proportional relationships and using them to solve real-world and mathematical problems; (2) applying and extending previous understandings of operations with fractions to add, subtract, multiply, and divide rational numbers and apply these operations to real-world situations; (3) use the properties of operations to generate equivalent expressions; and (4) solve real-life and problems using numerical and algebraic expressions and equations. This work will lay the foundation for the algebraic work with linear functions studied in Math 8.

## **Math 7/8**

Students who have successfully completed Math 6/7 may choose to complete this two-year compacted course sequence, preparing them for Algebra 1 in grade 8. Focus in Math 7/8 will be on solving problems using linear equations and inequalities, using radicals and integer exponents, connecting proportional relationships and lines, solving systems of linear equations, and defining, evaluating, and comparing functions. The full content of Math 8 (see Math 8 course descriptions) will be studied in this course. The compacted nature of the course will require students to be comfortable and proficient in learning math at an accelerated pace.

## **Math 8**

In Math 8, students begin a serious study of algebra with the learning of linear functions. With their study of number systems relatively complete, the focus shifts to the abstract application of their understanding of arithmetic. This content will focus on three critical areas, including (1) formulating and reasoning about expressions and equations, modeling bivariate data with a linear equation, solving linear equations, and working with systems of linear equations; (2) developing an understanding of the concept of a function and using functions to describe quantitative relationships; and (3) analyzing two- and three-dimensional space and figures using distance, angle, similarity, congruence, and understanding and applying the Pythagorean Theorem. This work will lay the foundation for their success in a high school Algebra 1 course. It is important to note that on this trajectory, students will be able to access advanced courses in high school.

## **Algebra 1**

Algebra 1 formalizes and extends the mathematics students learned in Math 6/7 and Math 7/8. The major components of study include (1) using equations and inequalities to model real-life quantities and manipulating them to highlight quantities of interest while focusing on the underlying structures of equations and inequalities; (2) understanding of function, function notation, and the domain and range restrictions associated with the function; and (3) working with exponential and quadratic functions through a structural perspective in comparison to linear functions. These concepts lay the foundations for analytic geometry concepts and for the study of different function types in Algebra 2 and other advanced courses. This course is equivalent to the Algebra 1 course taken at the CCSD high schools.

## Science

At Sky Vista we believe that all students should be challenged to think critically on a daily basis, to use evidence to formulate conclusions, and to develop their *own* questions of the natural world. To this end, our science classes are designed to be hands-on and inquiry based. By providing multiple opportunities to investigate scientific content, students at Sky Vista will come to understand that science is built on and unified by key concepts. Students will examine these unifying concepts across the sub-content areas of chemistry, physics, environmental, earth and life sciences. As a result, students will come to understand that science reflects a particular way of building knowledge and making meaning of the natural world.

We address the following Next Generation Science and Engineering Practices in our curriculum:

1. Asking questions (for science) and defining problems (for engineering)
2. Developing and using models
3. Planning and carrying out investigations
4. Analyzing and interpreting data
5. Using mathematics and computational thinking
6. Constructing explanations (for science) and designing solutions (for engineering)
7. Engaging in argument from evidence
8. Obtaining, evaluating, and communicating information

These NGSS practices align with our Colorado Academic Standards in order to help students meet or exceed them by the end of 8<sup>th</sup> grade. For more information on the Colorado Academic Standards for science please visit the following link <https://www.cde.state.co.us/coscience/statestandards>.

### 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Topics

- ✓ Dynamic Earth
- ✓ Ecology
- ✓ Natural Resources
- ✓ Cells
- ✓ Human Body

### 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Topics

- ✓ Climate Change
- ✓ Properties of Matter
- ✓ Photosynthesis
- ✓ Earth History
- ✓ Evolution

### 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Topics

- ✓ Chemical Reactions
- ✓ Waves, Energy, Force, and Motion
- ✓ Astronomy
- ✓ Genetics
- ✓ Weather

### All Grades

- ✓ Scientific Method and Experimental Design
  - ✓ Measurement and Data Collection
  - ✓ Data Processing and Data Analysis
- ✓ Interaction between science, engineering and society
  - ✓ Ways of building scientific knowledge over time

## **Social Studies**

The Sky Vista social studies curriculum recognizes the world as a diverse, complex, and dynamic place. As such, the goal is to provide students with a better understanding of the United States and its place in the larger geo-political context as well as other influential regions in the world. Employing primary and secondary texts, simulations, performance assessments, and instructional technology, students will develop skills and knowledge in areas relating to civics, history, geography, and economics. The social studies curriculum is designed to address the Colorado State Standards of civics, history, geography, and economics.

### ***6<sup>th</sup> Grade: Western Hemisphere***

The 6<sup>th</sup> grade year is focused upon building students' capacities to think and act as practitioners of the Social Sciences. We begin our journey by first introducing and then applying the various perspectives of a social scientist (Anthropologist, Economist, Geographer, Historian and, Political Scientist) to help discover and make sense of our world. Carrying these various perspectives and respective thinking, students will question the power of place upon past and present societies and examine the changing scope of this relationship in a globally connected age. Students will study topics covering the Western Hemisphere, including but not limited to, The Aztec, Inca, and Mayan civilizations, conquest of the Americas, Columbian Exchange, and globalization.

### ***7<sup>th</sup> Grade: Eastern Hemisphere***

The 7<sup>th</sup> grade year is focused on the eastern hemisphere of the world, continuing with the perspectives of social scientists that were learned in 6<sup>th</sup> grade. We focus on the key areas of geography, civics, economics, and history from the beginning of modern humans through the Middle Ages. The year covers a great deal of places and peoples, and students will be exposed to many cultures and civilizations. Students will take an investigative approach to studying history and will use claim, evidence, and reasoning to tackle historical debates that current practitioners are struggling with. Throughout the year, students will make connections to current events. Students will realize why the past is worth studying in the present and for the future of our world.

### ***8<sup>th</sup> Grade: United States***

The 8<sup>th</sup> grade year is focused on exploring American history, from 1607 until 1870. We will explore the themes of American history, which have led to the development of our modern American Identity. Throughout the year, we will analyze historic evidence and documents for students to build an understanding of the American story. For this, students will read primary documents from various periods in our civilization's past. Periodically, students will also analyze different documentaries and films to critique historical accounts and deepen their understanding of the American story and American Identity.

## **ACC, Extended Core and Integrated Core**

### **Academic Core Connections Math**

This class provides supplemental support in numeracy skills. This course will allow students the time and space needed to master the skills and standards being taught in their core math class. This course is planned and taught by a math and SAS teacher.

### **Academic Core Connections Language Arts**

This class at each grade level provides supplemental support in literacy skills. This course will allow students the time and space needed to master the skills and standards being taught in their Core LA class. This course is planned and taught by a Language Arts teacher and SAS teacher.

### **Extended Core (6<sup>th</sup> grade)**

This semester long class aimed at extending the basic core mathematics curriculum by putting math into practice. This is done by focusing on problem solving and critical thinking skills to make mathematics as real and useful as possible, outside the classroom.

### **Integrated Core (6<sup>th</sup> Grade)**

This semester long class provides students relevant and authentic opportunities to apply the reading and writing skills being taught in Core LA class. This course is taught by a Language Arts teacher, who is able to build off the core curriculum and extend the learning for all students.

### **Extended Core (7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade)**

This year-long class provides students relevant and authentic opportunities to integrate the skills they are learning in core classes. Students will strengthen their critical thinking skills as well as build a better picture of the world around them and how they play a role. Time will be spent on students understanding their ability to own their learning with multiple ways to showcase their growth.

# Elective Offerings

## 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Elective Courses

*The following are potential elective offerings for the sixth grade. Students will participate in a “Wheel” for 6<sup>th</sup> grade Electives. This system allows increase opportunities for students to try the awesome variety of electives that Sky Vista has to offer. This means students will have 4-8 of the elective offerings. The classes will be quarter long. The only class that will not be on the wheel is Band.*

### Art 6

Think, brainstorm, create, reflect, and grow as artists. Throughout the quarter, student artists will create personal artworks while exploring the design process. Student artists will have the opportunity to create a variety of two-dimensional art works such as drawing, painting, and printmaking while making connections with their artwork to art history and other disciplines such as Social Studies and Math. Student artists will respond to daily warm-up drawing and writing challenges and produce a sketchbook journal and art portfolio as evidence of their learning.

### AVID Access

AVID ACCESS is an introductory level class designed to help students with their first year of middle school. This course will serve as an introduction to 7th and 8th grade AVID. AVID ACCESS will incorporate the core values of AVID which involve organizational strategies, time management, reading and writing development, questioning skills, test taking and note taking skills, and other tools to teach students how to be the best student they can be.

### Band 6

Sixth grade band is a great opportunity for students at Sky Vista to learn to play an instrument. Students will get to play an instrument of their choice including flute, clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, trombone, baritone, tuba, or percussion. Parent informational meetings will be held before the start of the year to provide various options for acquiring an instrument. Concerts will be scheduled in the evening throughout the year. These concerts give young musicians the chance to show off their new skills for friends and family. This class is designed for both experienced musicians and beginners. (This class is year long and not part of the wheel rotation).

## **Choir 6**

In this class, students will immerse themselves in the elements of sound through movement, improvisation, composition, and production. This is an opportunity to explore choral arrangements of contemporary music and popular songs of the past 100 years. Students in this class have the freedom and are strongly encouraged to take many risks, so as to achieve the highest level of professionalism, confidence and leadership.

## **Engineering Our World – STEM**

The goal of this course is to integrate science, technology, engineering and mathematics into a cohesive learning experience for 6<sup>th</sup> grade students. This class focuses on finding solutions to real-world problems, is guided by the engineering design process, involves regular productive teamwork and immerses students in hands-on learning. This course explores the civil engineering, aeronautics, and biomedical engineering disciplines while providing participants with the opportunity to design and build solutions to problems faced in each area. After completing this course, students are encouraged to continue their education in engineering through the robotics and technical design and engineering courses offered to 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students.

## **Foreign Language World Cultures**

This class is an introduction to the many cultures of spoken languages of our world. You will engage in storytelling, games, reading, writing and other activities to explore our world. The primary objective is cultivating excitement to see and understand different perspectives as well as build confidence in learning.

## **P.E.**

This course provides an introduction to fitness, a variety of sport skills, and cooperative strategies. Students expend their energy in challenging games and understand the fundamentals of being an active individual. A variety of sport games will be covered. This course expands on physical fitness components and focuses on individual and team sport skills. Students participate in activities that will enhance fitness levels and skill improvement. Students understand game rules and regulations of various sports.

## **P.E. Wellness**

This course is designed to help students realize a healthy lifestyle by emphasizing physical fitness, team and individual sports, and personal improvement. Students participate in activities that focus on development of individual skills and on issues dealing with being a lifelong learner and physically active individual.



## Spanish Language Exploratory

This class is an introduction to the basic language skills of Spanish and the beginning of your journey as a lifelong language learner. You will be acquiring the tools you need to become a part of the Spanish-speaking community while learning this interesting language much like the way you learned your first language, through conversation! Your classroom will be an energetic place where Spanish is spoken by teacher and students 90% of the time. You will learn the Spanish language as we tell stories, play games, act mini-dramas, sing, dance, draw, write, read, watch authentic videos, evaluate texts and more, as well as, explore the culture of Spanish-speaking countries!

## Tech Digital/Multimedia Production – STEM

Tech Digital/Multimedia Production is intended to provide middle school students with an introduction to the video production process and the principle ideas and applications for the creation of multimedia products. Instruction will be focused on communication of ideas through a variety of tools/media. The students will use interactive software and hardware tools in order to develop several multimedia projects. Curriculum will include digital storytelling, stop motion, graphic design, and video production. This course is project oriented allowing students to develop critical thinking skills while producing unique projects.

## Theatre Arts 6

This course offers an introduction to all things theatre arts including acting, directing, and technical theatre. We will learn stage fright techniques, play a variety of improvisational games, make our own performance masks based on cultures around the world, learn to direct, and act as theatre professionals by building designs for the lighting, costumes, make up, sets, and/or sounds for a real play.





## Seventh Grade Elective Courses

*The following are potential elective offerings for the seventh grade. Please be aware that the finalized list of course offerings may or may not include all of the ones listed.*

### Art 7

Would you like to challenge and develop your creativity, technique, and understanding of the visual arts? Throughout the semester in Art 7, student artists will navigate their way through the design process while using a variety of tools and materials to complete both two- and three-dimensional artworks such as drawing, painting, and ceramic sculptures. Student artists will also study various artists and art styles that correspond with their projects and investigate the connection between art and other disciplines. Student artists will respond to daily warm-up drawing and writing challenges and produce a sketchbook journal and art portfolio as evidence of their learning.

*\*If Art 7 appeals to you, consider taking Band 7 or Choir 7 because you will have the opportunity to experience different types of music.*

### Art Mixed Media

Do you have a passion for creating and expressing yourself through art? Join Art Mixed Media where you will have the opportunity to strengthen your artistic creativity, technique, and understanding of art while exploring the design process. During the semester, student artists will use a variety of tools and materials to complete both two- and three-dimensional artworks such as drawing, printmaking, and mixed media sculptures. In addition, student artists will discover various artists, cultures, and time periods. Student artists will respond to daily warm-up drawing and writing challenges and produce a sketchbook journal and art portfolio as evidence of their learning.

*\*If Art Mixed Media appeals to you, consider taking Engineering Our World – STEM because you will have the opportunity to experience the creative process while completing your challenges*

### AVID 7

Advancement Via Individual Determination is a global nonprofit organization dedicated to closing the achievement gap by preparing all students for college and other postsecondary opportunities. During this year-long elective, AVID will:

- Teach skills and behaviors for academic success
- Provide intensive support with tutorials and strong student/teacher relationships
- Create a positive peer group for students
- Develop a sense of hope for personal achievement gained through hard work and determination

There is an application process and a minimum 2.5 GPA requirement to participate in this academic elective.

## **Band 7**

Seventh grade band is an opportunity for sixth grade band members to continue their work as a musician! You will participate in many activities that will help you learn teamwork, musical listening skills and encourage you to have fun. As seventh graders, you will have the opportunity to perform in even more concerts and even have the chance to audition for the district honor band. We will pick up with our playing right where we left off at the end of sixth grade, so don't worry about having to start over again!

*\*If you are interested in joining Band for the first time, please see band teacher. (Signature is required.*

## **Choir 7**

In Choir 7, students dive deeply into singing and musical skills. Students will learn about breathing, tone, rhythm, music notation, music history, and sight reading. The class practices and performs a wide variety of musical styles including classical, musical theatre, and pop. No previous experience is necessary! Performance in one evening concert per quarter is required.

*\*If Choir 7 appeals to you, consider taking Theatre 7 to learn more about performing and storytelling through poetry.*

## **Creative Writing 7**

This course is designed to guide students in creative writing through experience in three genres: short story, poetry, and creative non-fiction. The course includes analysis of literary models (professional writings in each genre), individual and class criticism of work in a workshop mode, and lecture on and discussion of literary techniques in each genre. Students will keep a writer's notebook and a final writing project will be due at the end of the semester in a genre of the students' choice. This course encourages exploration and understanding of the human condition through writing. Students can request to take this course for both semesters with teacher approval and work on revising a longer piece for second semester.

## **Robotics – STEM**

The goal of this course is to introduce students to the basics of robotics. They will immerse themselves in the development, building and programming of a LEGO Mindstorm robot. Students will work hands-on in teams to design, build, program and document their progress. Topics may include motor control, gear ratios, torque, friction, sensors, timing, program loops, logic gates, decision-making, timing sequences, propulsion systems and binary number systems. Student designed robots will be programmed to compete in various challenges throughout the semester. While engaging in these challenges, students will build their critical thinking and problem solving skills. This class is intended to prepare and motivate students to continue their education in computer science and engineering courses.

*\*If Robotics appeals to you, check out Drama Production because you get to design an entire play from start to finish. There are a lot of overlaps between engineering and writing, developing, and editing a performance.*

## **P.E.**

This course provides an introduction to fitness, a variety of sport skills, and cooperative strategies. Students expend their energy in challenging games and understand the fundamentals of being an active individual. A variety of sport games will be covered. This course expands on physical fitness components and focuses on individual and team sport skills. Students participate in activities that will enhance fitness levels and skill improvement. Students understand game rules and regulations of various sports.

*\*If P.E. appeals to you, consider taking AVID. It is a helpful guide for academic success in high school and college.*

## **P.E. Wellness**

This course is designed to help students realize a healthy lifestyle by emphasizing physical fitness, team and individual sports, and personal improvement. Students participate in activities that focus on development of individual skills and on issues dealing with being a lifelong learner and physically active individual.

*\*If P.E. appeals to you, consider taking AVID. It is a helpful guide for academic success in high school and college.*

## **Spanish 1A**

This class builds upon the basic language skills you were introduced to in your Spanish Language Exploratory class. You will continue to acquire the tools you need to become a part of the Spanish-speaking community while learning this interesting language much like the way you learned your first language, through conversation! Your classroom will be an energetic place where Spanish is spoken by teacher and students 90% of the time. You will learn the Spanish language as we tell stories, play games, act mini-dramas, sing, dance, draw, write, read, watch authentic videos, evaluate texts and more as well as explore the culture of Spanish-speaking countries! Successful completion of this course will enable students to advance to Spanish 1B.

*\*If Spanish interests you, you might also consider taking Art to further connect art topics and artists that we discuss in Spanish. You might also consider taking Drama to further connect your creativity through dramatic play.*

## **Tech Digital/Multimedia Production 7 – STEM**

Tech Digital/Multimedia Production is intended to provide middle school students with an understanding of video production and the principle ideas and applications for the creation of multimedia products. Instruction will be focused on communication of ideas through a variety of tools/media. Students will use interactive software and hardware tools in order to develop several multimedia projects like music videos, public service announcements, and commercials. Students will be introduced to basic camera composition principles and the skills needed to create video content for today's world. Curriculum will include graphics design and video production. Software used in class will be: Adobe Photoshop (or similar app), Garageband, Final Cut Pro, CrazyTalk Animator, Comic Life, and Google Apps. Projects are given on a group basis according to experience level (beginner-advanced). This course is project oriented allowing you to develop critical thinking skills while producing unique projects.

*\*If this Tech Digital/Multimedia Production class appeals to you, consider taking Engineering Our World or Theatre 7.*

## **Theatre Arts 7**

In this course, students will discover what theatre and music can reveal about history. Students will start at the very beginning (a very good place to start) with the birthplace of theatre-Greece! Students will discover how Greek myths, including famous gods and goddesses, inspired Shakespeare's extraordinary characters, ridiculous plot twists, and undoubtedly human themes. Finally, the students will tackle the history of musical theatre to discover how all of the history of theatre contributes to modern theatre and film.

*\*If Theatre 7 appeals to you, also consider Art 7 or Art Mixed Media because you will learn about different artists, cultures, and time periods.*

## **Eighth Grade Elective Courses**

*The following are potential elective offerings for the eighth grade. Please be aware that the finalized list of course offerings may or may not include all of the ones listed.*

### **Art Digital Photography**

Digital photography is revolutionizing the imagery industry and is now accepted as part of the creation of personal, creative, artistic, and commercial images. In this course, student artists will learn about compositional fundamentals as well as how a camera works. Then, student artists will explore a variety of photographic techniques and ways to manipulate images using computer software. To finish the course, student artists will have the opportunity to examine the creative and artistic side of digital photography and learn about influential artists who have contributed greatly to the advancement of art and photography. Digital cameras, scanners, computer software, various manipulation techniques, and printing options will be explored throughout the semester. Student artists will respond to daily warm-up drawing and writing challenges and produce a sketchbook journal and digital art portfolio as evidence of their learning.

*\*If Digital Photography appeals to you, consider taking Theatre Arts 8 or Tech Video Production 8 because you will have the opportunity to discover and explore various forms of technology.*

### **AVID 8**

Advancement Via Individual Determination is a global nonprofit organization dedicated to closing the achievement gap by preparing all students for college and other postsecondary opportunities.

During this year long elective, AVID will:

- Teach skills and behaviors for academic success
- Provide intensive support with tutorials and strong student/teacher relationships
- Create a positive peer group for students
- Develop a sense of hope for personal achievement gained through hard work and determination

There is an application process and a minimum 2.5 GPA requirement to participate in this academic elective

### **Band 8**

Eighth grade band is an advanced group that continues to build on the skills learned over the past two years. We place a strong emphasis on musicianship and performing more as individuals. This year, we will add a chamber music aspect, which allows all eighth graders to work in small groups to perform a group piece. The eighth-grade band has many performing opportunities, not only at Sky Vista, but also at the local high schools and other local events. Eighth grade band students act as ambassadors for the Sky Vista music program and help with the recruitment process for next year as well as prepare for their own high school experience.

## Creative Writing 8

This course builds on the students' knowledge of creative writing through experience in three genres: short story, poetry, and creative non-fiction, and introduces the option to write a first draft of a novel in any genre. The course includes independent analysis of literary models in the genre of the students' choice, individual and class criticism of work in a workshop mode, and lecture on and discussion of literary techniques in each genre. Students will keep a writer's notebook and a final writing project will be due at the end of the semester. Students can request to take this course for both semesters with teacher approval and work on revising a longer piece for second semester.

## Choir 8

Choir 8 dives deeply into singing and musical skills, with an emphasis on singing more complex and difficult music from all different styles. Students in this class should be passionate about singing with others, gaining refined performance and leadership skills, reading music, and learning how the voice works. No previous experience is necessary! Performance in one evening concert per quarter is required.

*\*If Choir 8 appeals to you, consider taking Theatre 8 or Drama Production to learn more about performing and storytelling.*

## Drama Production

Want to achieve your 20 minutes of fame? Ever wanted to be in a part of a Sky Vista production? How about being the star of the show? Or the director? Ever wanted to design costumes, set, or stage makeup? Do you LOVE technology and are not sure how it fits into the arts? If you answered yes to any of these questions, Drama Production is the class for you! This semester we are going to make your dreams come true while writing, producing, directing, designing, or starring in your own One Act show! Both drama classes are offered each semester so it is possible to take a full year of drama in 8th grade. **A night performance at the end of the semester is a requirement of the class.**

*\*If Drama Production appeals to you, also consider a STEM class! Science, technology, engineering, and math are super important parts of theatre arts and technical theatre.*

## P.E.

This course provides an introduction to fitness, variety of sport skills, and cooperative strategies. Students expend their energy in challenging games and understand the fundamentals of being an active individual. A variety of sport games will be covered. This course expands on physical fitness components and focuses on individual and team sport skills. Students participate in activities that will enhance fitness levels and skill improvement. Students understand game rules and regulations of various sports.

*\*If P.E. appeals to you, consider taking AVID. It is a helpful guide for academic success in high school and college.*

## **P.E. Wellness**

This course is designed to help students realize a healthy lifestyle by emphasizing physical fitness, team and individual sports, and personal improvement. Students participate in activities that focus on development of individual skills and on issues dealing with being a lifelong learner and physically active individual.

*\*If P.E. appeals to you, consider taking AVID. It is a helpful guide for academic success in high school and college.*

## **Spanish 1B**

**Prerequisite: Spanish 1A and teacher signature required.**

This class is a continuation of Spanish 1A and builds upon your basic language skills. You will continue to acquire the tools you need to become a part of the Spanish-speaking community while learning this interesting language much like the way you learned your first language, through conversation! Your classroom will be an energetic place where Spanish is spoken by teacher and students 90% of the time. You will learn the Spanish language as we tell stories, play games, act mini-dramas, sing, dance, draw, write, read, watch authentic videos, evaluate texts and more as well as explore the culture of Spanish-speaking countries! Successful completion of this course will enable students to advance to Spanish 2. **Prerequisite: Spanish 1A**

## **Tech Design and Engineering - STEM**

The major focus of this course is to expose students to the engineering design process, real-world problem solving, teamwork, communication methods, engineering standards, and technical documentation. Students will develop problem-solving skills and apply their knowledge of research and design to create solutions to various challenges that increase in difficulty throughout the course. Students will also learn how to document their work and communicate their solutions to their peers. Some examples of topics covered in this course include the engineering design process, alternative energy, aerodynamics, architecture, civil engineering, technical sketching, modeling, and measurement. This class is intended to give students a strong foundation in engineering topics that will prepare them for success in high school engineering courses.

*\*If this class appeals to you, check out Tech Video Production or Digital Photography. All of them work with how things are put together and how you can shape the result.*



## Tech Video Production 8

### **\*Class may require time outside the normal school day**

This course will focus on providing skills needed to create high quality video content for today's world. You will learn phases of video production, effective use of a camcorder, and video editing techniques. Students will create storyboards for short film as well as use green/blue screens, HD cameras, and professional editing software to create their short films, public service announcements, commercials, music videos, school news, and record live events. This course is project oriented allowing you to develop critical thinking skills while producing unique projects. Students will work collaboratively in small groups along with gaining public speaking confidence. Students can also experience multiple leadership opportunities. TV Video Production students may have opportunities to participate in film festivals. Software used in class will be: Adobe Photoshop (or similar App), Garageband, Final Cut Pro, CrazyTalk Animator, Comic Life and Google Apps.

## Theatre Arts 8

This course offers an advanced look into theatre history as we dive deeper into Greek theatre, Shakespearean drama, musical theatre, and film. This course offers a unique look into acting methods, playwriting, fascinating productions, and how it all has affected the world. Students will perform, critique, and design individualized assignments to tailor learning to personal passions. Both drama classes are offered each semester so it is possible to take a full year of drama in 8th grade.

*\*If Theatre 8 appeals to you, also consider taking Choir 8 because you will get a deeper understanding how the music of musical theatre furthers plot and creates character.*

### Notification of Nondiscrimination

Cherry Creek School District No. 5 ("District") does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, sexual orientation, or disability in admission to its programs, services, or activities, in access to them, in treatment of individuals, or in any aspect of their operations. Sky Vista Middle School does not discriminate in enrollment or access to any of its available programs. The lack of English language skills shall not be a barrier to admission or participation in District activities and programs. The District also does not discriminate in its hiring or employment practices.

This notice is provided as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Questions, complaints, or requests for additional information regarding these laws may be forwarded to the District Compliance Officer, Educational Services Center, 4700 S. Yosemite St., Greenwood Village, CO 80111, telephone (720) 554-4471, or directly to the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, Region VIII, Federal Office Building, 1244 North Speer Blvd., Suite 310, Denver, CO 80204.