Our Mission

The New Community School empowers bright, talented students who are challenged by dyslexia and related learning differences. The innovative and research-based college preparatory curriculum uses a customized educational approach to build skills in language and math and to foster academic and personal strengths – igniting the passions and gifts of unique minds.

Our Vision

The New Community School transforms lives by creating an educational environment that celebrates the strengths of dyslexia and related learning differences. The School empowers minds that think differently and inspires tomorrow's leaders and innovators.

Our Guiding Principles

- We believe students with dyslexia and related learning differences have the potential to succeed through increased skills, self-esteem and the identification and development of their strengths and passions.
- We believe the blend of research-based academic drill and a rigorous college preparatory curriculum is the foundation of our unique program.
- We believe in educating the whole student. Our student life programs help maximize potential for success and promote positive citizenship.
- We believe The New Community School has a responsibility to determine ways in which it can serve the educational public, including the encouragement of professional growth and educational research through the sharing of proven approaches and instructional strategies for working with the students we serve.
- We believe this program should be available to all students who are appropriate candidates.

Our Goals

- To enhance our financial strength to ensure long-term stability
- To integrate technology into all areas of learning
- To expand and enhance academic and student life programs
- To improve and enhance our campus, facilities and operations
- To build awareness and engagement among our internal and external communities

Curriculum Overview

The students who come to The New Community School enter with specific language skill deficits. These impact their ability to acquire knowledge and their ability to demonstrate what they know. Standardized testing often reveals deficits in reading, spelling, and math computation skills. Deficits in written expression, organizational skills, and study skills are more difficult to quantify, but are no less crucial for academic success at the secondary level. All of the academic departments have built-in structures and strategies that are designed not only to help our students to compensate for their skill deficits but to help them develop reliable and effective organizational and study techniques. As students develop the skills needed to succeed in future educational settings, supports and structures are gradually withdrawn and students are expected to exercise greater independence.

A primary focus in the middle school is the remediation of reading, handwriting, spelling, composition, math, and study skills. Lack of these skills can be the basis for declining self-concept and motivation in school settings. When fully developed these are the skills that can create independence in traditional academic settings. At The New Community School many middle school students spend three periods daily in classes focusing on skill remediation. These include English, math, and language fundamentals, which is direct instruction in reading, spelling, and handwriting. Class placement in math and language fundamentals is based upon diagnostic skill testing; class size typically ranges from three to six students. The English curriculum combines the study of literature with instruction in basic composition skills. Classes average six to eight students.

Middle school students also have one daily period each of social studies and science. These classes are composed of an average of six to eight students. The curriculum is designed to make sense of the world around us and establish dependable patterns of exploration and information gathering in each discipline. While students are acquiring basic skills they cannot be expected to demonstrate academic skills they do not yet possess. Accordingly, the school makes appropriate accommodations: untimed tests, oral testing, reading support, etc. in order to provide full access to the academic curriculum and ensure successful, productive experiences. Students also begin to learn how to use assistive technology both to access information and to demonstrate their understanding. Therefore, all middle school students are asked to bring an iPad (grades 5-7) or a Macintosh computer (grade 8) to school. The program emphasizes "hands-on" learning experiences and is designed to allow all students to participate fully, regardless of the level of their language skills.

A hallmark of our middle school program is the division-wide emphasis on study skills. Students develop a toolkit of study strategies that they can use. Teachers work with students as they implement the strategies and determine which ones are most effective for them.

Middle school students receive regular instruction in health, physical education, and practical and fine arts. These classes meet most days. The middle school practical and fine arts offerings also include courses in art, photography, robotics, multimedia design, sewing, woodworking, strategy games, guitar, American Sign Language, and drama, as well as several multi-disciplinary offerings.

A typical upper school student's schedule includes daily classes in English, math, history, science, and language fundamentals. Academic and Language Fundamentals classes carry one unit of credit per year. Upper school students also take classes in health and physical education and a wide variety of practical and fine arts. These carry .4 credits per semester.

Each full credit academic course meets for approximately 140 clock hours and requires a significant amount of out of class preparation. The average class size in upper school academic classes is six to eight students. Elective and physical education classes may be somewhat larger. Language Fundamentals classes in the upper school typically have two to four students. Upper school students are asked to bring a Macintosh computer to class each day.

A thirty-minute non-credit study hall (Extra Help) is provided for all students each day. During the Extra Help period students may see teachers for help, begin assignments due the next day, or complete tests. Middle school students and some upper school students have the option of an additional study hall during the school day, in place of one of their classes.

A supervised after school study hall is provided in both the middle and upper schools. Students who come to class without homework due that day are required to report to study hall to complete their assignments. Many students also have an additional study hall during the school day or choose to attend the after school study hall on a voluntary basis. In rare instances where a pattern of failure to complete work emerges, a student may be assigned to after school study hall on a regular basis in order to prepare for the next day's classes and thus break the cycle. Failure to report to an assigned study hall is treated as a disciplinary matter. Members of the faculty rotate responsibility for supervising the study halls.

All academic departments employ similar organizational structures and study skills strategies to help students develop these necessary skills. Teachers of all academic classes distribute weekly assignment sheets so that students know what their assignments are and can plan their study time. Each assignment sheet is also posted on the school's Portals website, so that students who have misplaced a sheet can obtain their assignments. A system of color-coded binders and folders keeps materials for each subject separate. Each subject's notebook does have its own organizational system, since the disciplines do not always lend themselves to identical organizational patterns.

Teachers at the lower grade levels never lecture, and even at the upper levels lectures are rare. Depending on the course and grade level, notes may be printed off the Portals, copied in class, or distributed as part of a class activity. Students receive study guides prior to tests; a full-period in-class review session precedes each test. Students whose reading and/or writing skill deficits are severe may have special testing, which may include the services of a reader or a scribe, in order to ensure that skill deficits do not interfere with fair evaluation of mastery of course content. Many students type test responses or use their device's speech to text function to dictate responses. In grades 8-12 academic courses have comprehensive semester exams; a one-week review period precedes semester exams. Seniors who have a "B" or better average for the second semester and who have not exceeded the 10% absence limit for the spring semester are eligible to exempt from the June exam.

These techniques are designed to assure that each student has the appropriate materials needed to study and that he or she learns and practices effective study strategies. As students become more proficient they are encouraged to assume greater responsibility for organizing their study activities in order to prepare them for less structured educational settings.

The curriculum at The New Community School has evolved over time as a result of both formal and informal evaluative procedures. Students complete course evaluation forms in each of their classes once a year. These offer them the opportunity to share their perceptions of the class and of the instructional techniques used, to tell the teacher which topics and activities they most/least enjoyed, and to identify the most important thing they feel they have learned. Teachers evaluate each of their courses in June on a one-page form that becomes the final section of the course objectives for the class. This offers them the opportunity to share their perceptions of what worked/did not work, how the course might be modified in the future, and to offer suggestions for new materials and activities. These are helpful to teachers in planning their classes in the fall and are also extremely helpful to department chairs and the Director of Studies, as they consider major changes in the curriculum. Major changes in a course or new course offerings, are usually developed by a team that includes the Director of Studies, the department chair, and the faculty member who suggested the change. Much of the work for these changes occurs during the late spring and summer. More sweeping changes that involve several courses offered by a department are usually the result of an ongoing process that includes all members of a department.

Technology Vision Statement

At The New Community School, technology is a series of carefully selected tools that support the existing objectives of the school's curriculum. Technology allows teachers to embed the development of creative, collaborative, communicative, and critical thinking skills within the context of the curriculum. Digital citizenship is itself a learning objective reinforced through constant interaction with technology.

Technology is a tool that provides added value to teaching and learning. Technology enriches the materials, methods, and assessments our teachers use to inspire young minds, making learning more interactive and engaging. Technology also allows for a more individualized educational experience for each learner.

Furthermore, The New Community School addresses the specific language-related learning differences of its students by selecting technological tools that help students communicate ideas effectively and access materials and information that would be otherwise inaccessible. Technology levels the playing field in communication and helps students overcome the barriers they face in learning and content production. The New Community School provides direct instruction in these technologies and encourages students to see technology, including assistive technology, as a lifelong learning and communication tool.

In order to sustain these assistive and instructional technology goals, The New Community School is committed to providing supported, managed hardware and software resources. The School employs sufficient support staff to ensure reliable connectivity and accessibility for students, teachers, and administrative staff, and to provide technology integration support for teachers.

In order to maximize the value technology adds to teaching and learning, professional development at The New Community School promotes and enables successful technology integration. Every teacher is constantly growing in their technological expertise through school-endorsed professional development. Through constant learning and sharing, the faculty at The New Community School is knowledgeable about new technologies, including assistive technology, even as the technology landscape constantly changes.

This statement was adopted by the faculty Technology Study Group during the 2013-14 school year.

Grades and Assessment

At The New Community School, grades reflect mastery of the course objectives. Courses are designed to be intellectually stimulating and challenging with the appropriate skill support. Individual courses are described in the Catalog of Courses and outlined in detail in the Curriculum Guide each year. A grade reflects a student's performance in a course and shows the degree of success in meeting the objective at hand. Generally, grades do not reflect difficulties with spelling and writing mechanics; however, in English classes students may be penalized for mechanical errors, if the particular error involves something the students have been taught and are now expected to apply.

Teachers strive to assess students in ways that fairly reflect their true mastery of the published objectives for the course. Students, parents, and other educational institutions rely on our grades to help them evaluate a student's readiness for transfer or post-high school instruction. Teachers work with students and parents to place grades in an appropriate context. Periodic narrative reports and conferences provide additional, more specific insight into each student's progress, including an account of the accommodations necessary for the student to achieve at the level reflected in the letter grade. They help students identify ways to improve their performance and help students and parents recognize when a lower than desired grade may accurately reflect a student's best effort. Grades are reported four times a year, at the middle and end of each semester, and posted on the school's Portal site frequently. Letter grades are given for all courses except electives, LF classes, and many Middle School classes.

Although assessment practices may differ slightly among departments and across grade levels, all teachers share certain beliefs. A brief description of letter grades as interpreted by our teachers is as follows:

A

Denotes excellence. Work that is of "A" quality goes beyond basic requirements of the assignment. It is exceptionally accurate and detailed, and displays a depth of understanding of the content.

B

Reflects work that is better than average. It reflects a solid understanding of the assignment. "B" quality work is accurate and may have flashes of excellence.

C

Work that receives a "C" is good, average quality work. It displays a basic understanding of the assignment. It meets the requirements but may lack some details or supporting information. Work that is of "C" quality is generally accurate, although it may include small inaccuracies. "C" work may reflect understanding on a fairly concrete level, but may not display a more in-depth grasp of the content.

D

Indicates work below the average level of mastery and understanding for students in a college preparatory program at a particular grade level. Although there may be some understanding of the content, performance of "D" quality may reflect significant inaccuracies or omissions.

F

Failing work is work that does not meet the basic requirements and demonstrates that the student does not understand key portions of the content, even at a fairly concrete level.

Grade point average (GPA) is cumulative beginning with ninth grade. The grade point average is the average of semester grades in academic classes only (typically, English, math, history and social studies, science, and foreign language in other schools). It is calculated by the Director of Studies and is used only as required in communications with other schools. It includes courses taken at other schools, high school level courses (i.e. Algebra I) taken in middle school, as well as courses taken here. A failed course is included in a student's GPA. However, if a student repeats a course only the higher of the two grades is counted. We report grades on a four-point scale because most colleges seem to prefer a GPA that is expressed on a four-point scale. Prior to this year, TNCS reported grades on a 0-100 scale, but used a conversion scale to produce a GPA on the four-point scale.

Beginning in September 2017 we have shifted to letter grades. These are reported as follows:

A = 4.0	B = 3.0	C = 2.0	D = 1.0
B+ = 3.5	C+ = 2.5	D+ = 1.5	F = 0.0

In some skill-based classes a student must earn at least a C in order to advance to the next level.

Many courses are graded on a Pass/Fail/Honors scale. A grade of Pass OR Honors reflects a specific level of mastery of a clearly-defined list of course objectives and/or skills. In Middle School Pass/Honors/Repeat math courses, if a student does not meet the criteria for a grade of Pass, his/her grade for the course will be recorded as Repeat and the student will repeat the course the following year, unless the student is entering ninth grade.

Honor Roll

The Honor Roll at the end of each grading period recognizes students who achieve all of the following: no grade below a B in any of the four academic subjects (English, math, history, and science;) a grade of B or better in health and physical education; and a grade of "Pass" or "Honors" in both Language Fundamentals and classes in practical and fine arts. A student who otherwise meets these criteria but receives a grade of "Incomplete" in any class may subsequently be recognized once the incomplete is removed.

Final Academic Honors at the end of the school year reflects year-end grades of "B" or better in all four academic classes and in health and physical education, a year-end grade of "Pass" or "Honors" in Language Fundamentals, and semester grades of "Pass" or "Honors" for all practical and fine arts classes taken in that academic year.

Program Requirements

Diploma Requirements
Requirements for an academic diploma at The New Community School are as follows:

English	4 credits
Mathematics	3 credits, to include both Algebra I & either Geometry or Algebra II*
History & Social Studies	3 units, to include at least 1 unit each of World History/Geography, Government, and American History
Laboratory Science	3 credits, to include both Biology and Chemistry
Practical & Fine Arts	1 credit
Electives	8 credits **
Language Fundamentals	2 credits***
TOTAL	**24 units***

* Modifications of these specific course requirements may be made by the Head of the School. These modifications may impact a student's college options.
**Typically these include Health and Physical Education as well as additional credits in Math, History, Science, Language Fundamentals, and Practical and Fine Arts.
***In most instances students take LF each year they are enrolled at TNCS.

In addition to the academic diploma requirements The New Community School requires several courses specific to certain grade levels. Seventh grade students are required to take a keyboarding class. All juniors are required to take Junior Seminar, which is a multi-disciplinary course dedicated to the preparation for college. Seniors must take and pass the Senior Seminar, which includes a required Community Service component, a job shadowing requirement, and a Senior Speech.

Students in grades 9 and 10 are required to be enrolled in Health and Physical Education classes for both years and will receive academic credit based upon the number of hours of instruction for those classes. Students who are unable to complete a class because of illness or other temporary condition will need to make up missed instruction. They may do so in a variety of ways, including summer school and enrollment in Health and Physical Education in the upper grades. Students who are unable to complete the required Physical Education classes because of **permanent** physical limitations may be granted a waiver of this graduation requirement upon the recommendation of the school nurse, the chair of the Health and Wellness Department, and the Head of School. In most instances every effort will be made to modify class requirements to allow the student to participate to the fullest extent possible.

Research and our experience support the importance of regular physical activity for adolescents. For this reason, students in grades 11 and 12, unless physically unable to do so, are encouraged to engage in regular physical activity for at least part of the year. Opportunities to do so include but are not limited to: participation in varsity athletics at TNCS, participation in individual or team sports or other organized physical activity outside of TNCS, and enrollment in a physical education class at TNCS.

Diploma requirements at The New Community School meet or exceed Virginia State standard diploma requirements, and with the exception of foreign language, meet or exceed the units required for entrance to most colleges. Courses in foreign language are not offered, because the introduction of a second set of language patterns is often counter-productive for students who have not yet mastered the patterns of their own language. Both the English and history departments provide students with many opportunities to become more aware of other cultures and heritages. In addition, language remediation often includes the

study of Latin roots, prefixes, and suffixes, as well as the influence of other languages on the English language. Our research has shown that because The New Community School does not offer foreign language in our program, our students' college options are not typically hindered due to lack of foreign language credits. Where appropriate, students can pursue foreign language studies through customized options with approval from the Head of School. Many colleges which require foreign language will consider waiving that requirement for otherwise well-prepared students with documented learning disabilities. Typical graduates of The New Community School exceed the units in math, history, and science required for college entrance.

Diplomas are awarded once each year in June. Seniors who fail to meet diploma requirements by graduation day may, at the discretion of the Head of the School, participate in the graduation ceremony. Typically, this will be in instances when it is anticipated that they will be able to complete their requirements by July 1. Should they complete their required work by July 1, they will receive their diploma at that time. A student who completes diploma requirements after July 1 would receive a diploma the following June and would be included on the roll of alumni as a member of the class for the year in which the diploma was awarded. Once a student has completed diploma requirements the school will confirm that fact in writing for colleges or employers. Only seniors who are enrolled at the school for the entire senior year may participate in the graduation ceremony. Senior Seminar is a senior course; a student who is not enrolled for the senior year will not be expected to take the Senior Seminar class.

Upper school students carry a full course load each year (typically 6.6 credits) and progress towards the graduation requirement of 24 credits. Occasionally students carry slightly reduced course loads but are still able to make adequate progress towards graduation. Typically, if a student carries a reduced course load each year they will either need to take summer courses or extend their high school career to a fifth year. Students are classified according to the following standard:

- In order to be classified as a sophomore a student must have at least 4.8 credits
- In order to be classified as a junior a student must have at least 10.8 credits
- In order to be classified as a senior a student must have at least 17.5 credits

Credits earned at The New Community School are accepted for transfer by both public and independent schools. The New Community School is accredited by the Virginia Association of Independent Schools (VAIS), is a member of the Southern Association of Independent Schools (SAIS), National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) and is licensed by the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Online Classes and Blended Learning

In recent years we have been able to expand the academic options available to some TNCS students through the use of online courses. A number of students have taken a summer online Physical Education course, either to make up credits missed due to injury or to open up space on their schedule for additional elective options or a study hall. TNCS students have taken these courses through Carone Fitness, an accredited supplemental school specializing in health and fitness-related courses. Typically summer accelerated courses are eight weeks in length and carry .5 credits. A word of warning: an online P.E. course is a serious P.E. course and not designed for the faint of heart. The students get a workout! However, they have more flexibility in their choice of activities, and students who are already involved in athletic pursuits like gymnastics, swimming, or dance may find that they can apply these activities to meet some of the course requirements.

Summer online academic courses are largely geared towards Credit Recovery; they are designed to help students who *almost* passed a course learn just enough to make up the difference between failing and passing. They don't provide enough instruction to present an entire year's academic course content. Consequently, TNCS students have not taken academic courses *for credit* during the summer.

However, each year during the school year several TNCS students take online academic courses in order to study a wide variety of subjects, including Creative Writing, Anatomy & Physiology, Statistics, Psychology, and foreign language. Our students have worked with a number of online providers, although the school's preferred provider is the Virtual High School. Most studies of online K-12 education find that the successful online student is someone who is motivated, organized, independent, responsible, and a good reader. We have found that our students do best when they have a coach – a teacher or tutor who is easily accessible and can provide onsite support. This combination of online and onsite education is called **Blended Learning,** because it blends two different approaches. Not surprisingly, our students also do best when the course they are taking is one that genuinely interests them. Students who are taking an online course instead of a TNCS course often have a study hall during the day that can provide them with the time needed for their coursework and with a teacher who can help them.

Students and parents who are interested in exploring the possibility of future online classes should contact the Director of Studies, Gita Morris, who coordinates these classes. TNCS reserves the right to determine which online credits it will accept and typically requires that end of semester online course exams be proctored by a TNCS faculty member.

Post-Graduation Planning

During the upper high school years (grades 10-12) the school works with students and their families to help make post-graduation plans. Annual meetings for parents of sophomores, juniors, and seniors provide them with information about the college search process and the programs that have been effective for our graduates. The school participates in an annual College Fair organized by a group of independent schools in the Richmond area. Around one hundred fifty colleges send representatives to this evening program. Information on financial aid and financial planning is also available at this event.

Sophomores have a diagnostic administration of the PSAT during the spring semester. Scores are unofficial. Juniors take the PSAT each October and take the SAT at least once. Seniors may take the SAT during any of the national testing periods. The school administers College Board tests five times a year following the guidelines established by the Services for Students with Disabilities program, which allows students with documented learning disabilities accommodations such as extended time, use of an audio version of the test, a large block ("no bubbles") answer sheet, and use of a computer for essay questions. In order to qualify for these accommodations students must complete the College Board's accommodation process. We recommend that this happen during the sophomore year or during the summer prior to the junior year. The accommodation process often requires that a student secure updated intelligence testing and skill testing.

Juniors take the Junior Seminar as one of their electives during either the fall or spring semester. This course includes preparation for the Reading, Writing, and Math subtests of the SAT. Additionally, students investigate college and career options and basic concepts of personal finance. Students and their parents are encouraged to schedule preliminary college planning conferences with the college counselor during the spring of the junior year. During the senior year, students and parents should schedule at least one conference with the college counselor. Students frequently work with faculty members to prepare their college applications.

Occasionally students opt to take the ACT in addition to the SAT. The ACT has a separate accommodation process. Students and parents are encouraged to work closely with the college counselor in order to make sure they can complete this process in time for the testing date they prefer.

While most (85-90%) graduates go on to college or other post-secondary instruction, some graduates choose to enter the work force directly from high school. Although the school does not provide specific vocational training, we do work with non-college bound seniors to identify career interests, personal strengths, and ways to obtain information about their options. Several of the activities in the Senior Seminar course are particularly helpful in this regard: the job shadowing activity, development of a resume, and a series of mock job interviews.

National Honor Society

In July 2005 the TNCS Chapter of The National Honor Society received its first charter from NHS. The object of the chapter is to create an enthusiasm for scholarship, to stimulate a desire to render service, to promote worthy leadership, and to encourage the development of character in students at TNCS.

The criteria for membership are: status as a junior or senior, attendance at TNCS for at least one semester, a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher, involvement in at least two current extra-curricular activities, and exemplary character and citizenship. During the fourth quarter each year sophomores and juniors who meet the grade point average requirement as described below will be invited to apply and describe their extra-curricular activities. Qualifying activities include clubs, athletic teams, and other significant activities at school, such as the Student Advisory Board, as well as community-based activities like Scouts, youth groups, choir, or outside classes. For purposes of NHS membership, "current" is defined as during the current school year. A member of the chapter shall be expected to serve as an example to others by his or her attitude, cooperative spirit, and reliability. Serious disciplinary infractions or frequent after school study hall assignments would be examples of failing to set a good example.

Members are selected by a five person Faculty Council, named by the Head of the School. The Faculty Council meets during the fourth quarter to discuss academically eligible candidates to determine their eligibility as to service, character, and leadership. All sophomores with a cumulative GPA of 3.15 or higher and juniors whose cumulative GPA is at least 3.0 are eligible for consideration. Other members of the faculty may also be consulted as part of this discussion. The announcement of new members is made at the annual Awards Assembly in May. New members are inducted at an evening induction ceremony early in the fall.

Members are expected to maintain a grade point average of at least 3.0 or better and to continue their record of character, service, and leadership. Members who fail to do so may be given a warning or, in the case of flagrant violations, may be dismissed. In lieu of dismissal, the Faculty Council may impose disciplinary sanctions upon a member as deemed appropriate. Violators of the School's rules of conduct or the Honor Code will receive notification in the form of a written warning, except that in the case of flagrant violations of school rules, expulsion, or violation of the law a warning does not have to be given. If a warning is given then a conference may be requested by either party (Faculty Council or student/parent.) If a member continues in violation, the member may be dismissed. Decisions of the Faculty Council may be appealed to the Head of the School.

The chapter meets weekly and conducts one or more service projects each year. All chapter members are expected to participate. These projects have the following characteristics: they fulfill a need within the school or community, have the support of the school administration and the faculty, are appropriate and educationally defensible, and are well-planned, organized, and executed. A faculty advisor, who is appointed by the Head of the School, works with the members of the chapter.

ENGLISH

English 5-6 **Mrs. Carmichael**

English 5/6 focuses on building fundamental skills in composition and literary analysis. The literature studied includes the novel *The Wild Robot* by Peter Brown, selections from Scholastic's *Weekly Reader: News Edition*, and a variety of other short stories and informational text sources. In composition, students are introduced to basic parts of speech and sentence structures. Then, they apply these basic structures to longer writing tasks. They learn a multi-step writing process and use it repeatedly to develop their creative potential through varied writing experiences and cross-curricular activities and projects. Instructional strategies include structured note-taking, daily practice, and regular use of manipulatives to reinforce and review content. Small group discourse, role-playing, kinesthetic learning activities and audio-visual resources stimulate and enhance learning.

In alternate years the literature studied includes *The Mighty Miss Malone* and *Love That Dog.*

English 7 **Ms. Witmeyer**

English 7 focuses on fundamental skills in composition and literary analysis. The literature studied includes: the novel *Boy of the Painted Cave,* an autobiography *John Muir: My Life with Nature*, and a variety of short stories, informational texts, and other selected genres of literature. In composition, students engage in multi-sensory instruction beginning with basic parts of speech combined with sentence building and generation techniques. Students will learn how to create simple, compound, and complex sentence structures. Then, students apply these basic structures to longer writing tasks and are introduced to writing the academic paragraph. They learn a multi-step writing process and use it repeatedly to develop their creative potential through varied writing experiences and cross-curricular activities and projects. Instructional strategies include structured note-taking, daily practice, and regular use of manipulatives to reinforce and review content. Small group discourse, role-playing, kinesthetic learning activities and audio-visual resources stimulate and enhance learning.

English 8 **Ms. Futterman**

English 8 focuses on building skills in composition and literary analysis in preparation for high school as well as remediating basic skills. The literature curriculum focuses on themes relating to coming of age. Literary works studied are: *The Outsiders, The Lightning Thief, Red Kayak,* and selected poetry. In composition, students review basic parts of speech, simple, compound, and complex sentence structures, with emphasis on increasingly complex sentences. They apply these basic structures to longer writing tasks and are introduced to academic writing forms required for high school. They learn a multi-step writing process and use it repeatedly to craft and revise paragraphs and essays as well as to develop their creative potential. Composition work develops student awareness of the elements of writing: content, expression and word choice, format, and mechanics. Instructional strategies include structured note-taking, daily practice, and regular use of manipulatives to reinforce and review content. Small group discourse, role-playing, kinesthetic learning activities and audio-visual resources stimulate and enhance learning.

English 9 **Ms. Goode**

The ninth grade English curriculum focuses on structures of academic composition and analysis of literature. Literature study includes units on short stories, two novels, *To Kill a Mockingbird* and *Lord of the Flies*, and a play, *Romeo and Juliet*. Students study standard literary vocabulary to analyze and evaluate these texts. The composition component includes the review of basic parts of speech and sentence structures and emphasizes the use of increasingly complex sentences in writing. Students use a multi-step writing process as well as a model for task analysis and self-evaluation of written expression. Students develop their academic writing skills with a collaborative English/History research paper. Instructional strategies include structured notes, daily review and practice, and regular use of manipulatives to reinforce concepts. Small group discussion, role-playing, kinesthetic learning activities and audio-visual resources stimulate and enhance learning.

English 10 **Ms. Butterworth**

Tenth grade English first provides a review of students' composition skills and skills of literary analysis and then builds greater sophistication. The literature curriculum focuses on understanding characters' actions and motivations and on analyzing the varying authors' use of characterization techniques, settings, and universal themes. The students begin by studying short stories and poetry before moving on to novels, drama, and a memoir (*Persepolis*, *A Raisin in the Sun, Things Fall Apart,* and *The Glass Castle).* This material is taught using a multisensory approach, with a combination of a variety of enrichment activities, structured note-taking, discussions, role playing, and peer interaction/collaboration. In composition, students review basic parts of speech, simple, compound, and complex sentence structures, and emphasize increasingly complex sentences. They also build in more effective use of the writing process as well as task analysis and self-evaluation, and then move toward competent composition of the multi-paragraph essay. Instructional strategies include structured note-taking, daily practice, and regular use of manipulatives to reinforce and review content. Small group discourse, role-playing, kinesthetic learning activities and audio-visual resources stimulate and enhance learning.

English 11 **Mrs. Orsini**

The eleventh grade English curriculum develops students' composition proficiency, critical thinking, literary analysis, research skills, and oral communication in a seminar setting. In the literature curriculum, students read non-fiction, novels, and modern dramas: *Walden, The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, Death of a Salesman, Hamlet,* and *The Great Gatsby*. Students are encouraged to use audio versions of the literature as they follow along in their texts. Students also employ a discipline-specific vocabulary to analyze and evaluate these texts. In composition, students follow a structured writing process to complete all lengthy assignments as well as a research paper. Additionally, they practice self-evaluation of writing tasks. Throughout the year, students demonstrate increased independence in writing, research, and studying. Students will be introduced to the more rigorous demands they are likely to encounter as they pursue their education beyond high school.

English 12 **Ms. Butterworth and Mrs. Orsini**

The twelfth grade English curriculum strengthens students' composition proficiency, critical thinking, literary analysis, research skills, and oral communication in a seminar setting. In the literature curriculum, students read non-fiction, novels, and dramas: *Oedipus Rex, Antigone, Macbeth, Animal Farm, Fahrenheit 451*, and selected speeches and essays. Students also employ a discipline-specific vocabulary to analyze and evaluate these texts. In composition, students develop skills preparatory for first-year college writing courses. Students develop an individually effective writing process. Major writing assignments, including the research paper, are self-directed. They refine their ability to self-evaluate their written work. Throughout the year, students practice independence in reading assigned texts and studying. Students are expected to use audio support as needed. In final preparation for college English composition classes, students will learn to transfer their composition skills and understanding into the more rigorous demands they are likely to encounter as they pursue their education beyond high school.

MATHEMATICS

Math Foundations **Mr. Morgan**

Middle school math students in the Math Foundations course develop concepts and operations with whole numbers. Basic facts will be drilled to an automatic level using a systematic, multisensory approach. All processes for operations are related to the concept of the numbers and estimation will be used to determine if the answer is reasonable. Students are encouraged to use the checking procedures to ensure the accuracy of their work. There is an emphasis on applying these operations to practical problems. Other topics will include money, time, and an introduction to basic fractions. Teaching techniques include a daily warm up of written computational practice or review of math facts, supervised note-taking, written practice of new topics, and nightly homework. Games, measurement tools, and cooperative group activities complement daily lessons and drill.

Fractions, Decimals, and Percents **Ms. Harley**

Middle school math students in the Fractions and Decimals course develop concepts and operations with rational numbers. All processes for operations are related to the concept of rational numbers, and students are encouraged to use checking procedures to ensure the accuracy of their work. There is an emphasis on applying these operations to practical problems. Teaching techniques include a daily warm-up of written computational practice, supervised note taking, written practice of new topics, and nightly homework. Games, measurement tools, and cooperative group activities complement daily lessons.

Basic Geometry and Measurement **Ms. C. Smith and Mr. Morgan**

The Basic Geometry and Measurement curriculum offers an opportunity to work on measurement, analysis, and Geometry concepts while continuing to review and improve basic computational skills involving whole and rational numbers. The ultimate goal of the course is to be able to apply whole and rational number concepts and operations in these areas while simultaneously strengthening mastery of basic computational skills. Instructional methods will include written practice, drill and reinforcement of basic facts, and written homework, balanced with kinesthetic, manipulative, and creative learning activities, working together toward conceptual reinforcement.

Middle School Pre-Algebra **Ms. Hale**

The Pre-Algebra curriculum offers an opportunity to work on algebraic concepts while continuing to review and improve basic computational skills. The ultimate goal of the course is to be able to solve equations with rational number solutions. As the students demonstrate improved computational skills with whole numbers, decimals, fractions, percents, and integers, they use those numbers in equation solving and in solving word problems using equations. Each student takes notes in a binder and then practices the process or skill in class and on nightly homework. There is an emphasis on the benefits of self-checking in algebra and resulting self-corrections.

High School Pre-Algebra **Ms. C. Smith and Mr. Keevil**

The Pre-Algebra curriculum offers an opportunity to work on algebraic concepts while continuing to review and improve basic computational skills. While numerous concepts are taught, the ultimate goal of the course is to be able to solve equations with rational number solutions. As the students demonstrate improved computational skills with whole numbers, decimals, fractions, percents, and integers, they use those numbers in equation solving and when completing word problems using equations. Each student takes notes in a reference notebook, and then practices the process or skill in class and on homework assignments. There is an emphasis on the benefits and results of self-checking in algebra.

Algebra I **Ms. Lesher and Ms. Hale**

Algebra I is offered to students who have completed Pre-Algebra with a grade of "C" or better, have passed the year-end exam, and have demonstrated computational and application skill levels sufficient for the study of algebra. A primary focus in Algebra 1 is instruction on graphing linear equations and problem solving

techniques of various types of equations. Additional topics include operations with integers, systems of equations, operations with polynomials, and factoring. The students will discover how patterns and relationships are incorporated into the real number system. Throughout the year problem solving skills are taught and practiced. Teaching techniques include warm-ups for computational practice, lecture and note-taking, manipulative and written practice of new topics, and one-to-one instruction when needed. Students are also introduced to the graphing calculator.

Algebra II **Ms. Lesher**

Algebra II is offered to those students who have completed Algebra I with a grade of "C" or better and who have passed the year-end exam. First semester topics include solving and graphing linear equations and inequalities, determining equations of lines, matrices, and polynomials. In each area, students review and continue to develop basic concepts of Algebra I. In the second semester, topics become more abstract and theoretical. They include factoring polynomials, rational expressions, radicals, the quadratic formula, and parabolas. Throughout the year, students develop and practice problem solving skills. Teaching techniques include daily warm-up of computational practice, discussion and note-taking, written practice of new topics, and one-to-one instruction when needed. Students will also be introduced to the graphing calculator.

Geometry **Ms. Savarese**

Geometry is usually offered to students who have successfully completed Algebra I. The focus is on understanding all concepts of Geometry and on improving critical thinking skills. After basic concepts and vocabulary are introduced, students use inductive reasoning to develop theorems about parallel lines, congruent triangles, quadrilaterals, and similar figures. Deductive reasoning skills are developed through solving practical problems and through exercises which require drawing conclusions based only on clues given. There is more opportunity in this course than in traditional Geometry courses for students to work with concrete models and drawings and prove to themselves that certain concepts and theorems are true. These skills are developed further through problems requiring informal proof-writing. Throughout the year, students analyze figures and use their understanding of that type of figure to apply appropriate formulas. This requires a thorough understanding of the vocabulary of Geometry.

Algebra III/Trigonometry **Mr. Rothschild**

Algebra III/Trigonometry is offered to students who have successfully completed Algebra I, Algebra II, and Geometry. The topics are chosen to prepare students for the types of math courses that we anticipate they may take at the college level. Topics include a thorough study of functions, series and sequences, and a review of solving systems of equations by algebraic methods. Matrices are used to solve systems with three variables. Students will learn to recognize and develop arithmetic and geometric sequences and series. Students spend much of second semester studying trigonometry topics, including basic trig relationships, graphing trig functions, applications and identities. The instruction in this course constantly calls on the previous math knowledge and often leads to observations of patterns and relationships in math that the students have not noticed before. These observations are enhanced and expanded through the use of graphing calculators and other technology.

Pre-Calculus **Ms. Savarese**

Precalculus is offered to students who have successfully completed Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry, and Algebra III/Trigonometry. This course prepares students for calculus by using methods emphasizing technology, real-world applications and student discovery. Topics include a thorough study of Trigonometry, functions and their graphs, applications of equations and graphs, and conic sections. The instruction in this course constantly calls on previous math knowledge and often leads to observations of patterns and relationships in math that the students have not noticed before. These observations are enhanced and expanded through the use of technology, including graphing calculators and computer applications.

Statistics **(Not offered in 2017-18)**

Statistics and Probability is offered to students who have successfully completed Algebra I, Algebra II, and Geometry. The topics chosen will allow students to understand and enjoy statistics. As they grow in their understanding of statistics, they will enjoy learning a subject that has many real world applications from such fields as natural science, business, economics, medicine, social science, archaeology, and consumer interest. Students will learn how to organize data in several different ways. They will study averages and variation, as well as regression and correlation. They will develop an understanding of probability theory, the Binomial Distribution, and the Normal Distribution. The students will study how information about samples relates to information about populations, and by using sample estimates, use sample data to draw conclusions about populations. Then the students will test their conclusions using various statistical formulas.

HISTORY AND SOCIAL STUDIES

Social Studies 5-6 **Ms. Oliver**

In fifth and sixth grade Social Studies students develop skills that are essential in middle and high school history classes. These include learning to use notebooks, flash cards, and study guides to prepare for tests; learning to read maps; developing basic research skills; and developing the ability to understand cause-effect relationships. They develop skills while learning about the history, geography, and culture of our country. In **American Geography and Social Sciences** students learn about the various social sciences to appreciate how each – Geography, Economics, History, and Political Science – helps us to make sense of the world around us. Much of the year is spent in a focused study of the geography of our country, as students learn about the ways that the physical environment has influenced the way Americans live, both now and in the past. Hands-on activities help them to appreciate the challenges and opportunities Americans have faced in each of the five regions of our country.

In alternate years fifth and sixth grade students take **Early American History.** They learn about the earliest inhabitants of our country and European exploration and settlement. They then explore some of the major conflict points in the early history of our country: slavery and the slave trade, the decision to seek and fight for independence, and the settlement of the west. They participate in a variety of engaging activities that help them to appreciate the struggles and achievements of early Americans and have the opportunity to visit some of the places where our history occurred.

World History 7 **Mr. Wise**

The seventh grade world history course examines early humans and the rise of civilization in the ancient Middle East and India and considers these issues: How do we learn about the past? How did early man develop? What is a civilization? What causes civilizations to rise and fall? How are ideas transferred from one civilization to another? How can we compare civilizations that are different from one another? What impact does religion have on society? How can ancient civilizations still impact our lives today? In this class, students polish and extend skills developed in earlier social studies classes in order to prepare for the challenge of high school classes. The course utilizes a variety of multi-sensory instructional techniques and a wide range of materials. Field trips, outside speakers, and short and long research projects enhance the classroom experience.

World History 8 **Mrs. Noble**

The eighth grade world history course examines the rise of civilization in ancient China, Greece, and Rome and considers these issues: How do we learn about the past? How did early civilizations develop? What is a civilization? What causes civilizations to rise and fall? How are ideas transferred from one civilization to another? How can we compare civilizations that are different from one another? What impact does religion have on society? How can ancient civilizations still impact our lives today? In this class, students polish skills developed in earlier social studies classes in order to prepare for the challenge of high school classes. The eighth grade curriculum is designed to provide a bridge between the middle school classes and the greater demands of the high school curriculum. The course utilizes a variety of multi-sensory instructional techniques and a wide range of materials. Field trips, outside speakers, shorter research projects, and participation in National History Day enhance the classroom experience.

World History 9 **Ms. Latta and Mrs. Beene**

In ninth grade World History students continue many of the themes from the eighth grade course, as they learn about world civilizations from the fall of Rome through the era of The Scientific Revolution and The Enlightenment in Europe. They examine the impact of geography, resources, government, religion, and ideas on human societies. During the fall semester they learn about Medieval Europe, the rise of Islam, and Imperial China. In the spring they examine the European Renaissance, the Protestant Reformation, and the explorations that once again connected Europe with civilizations in other parts of the world. They conclude with a study of the Scientific Revolution and the Enlightenment in Europe and how these changes and

discoveries led to the French Revolutions. The course utilizes a variety of multi-sensory instructional techniques and a wide range of materials. Students complete at least one research project about a topic or person studied this year.

American History **Mr. Carmichael**

American History is a year-long survey course in American history from Jamestown through the dawn of the twentieth century. Students view American History in terms of our pursuit of five key ideals articulated in the Declaration of Independence: equality, rights, liberty, opportunity, and democracy. During the fall semester students complete a short research project; during the spring they write a longer formal research paper. Learning strategies include a variety of engaging, multisensory classroom activities. The primary objective of the course is to acquaint students with the major issues and events in American history so that they may develop their own well-reasoned and well-informed opinions and exercise capably their responsibilities as citizens. During presidential election years students also spend some time studying campaign issues and the positions the candidates have taken on those issues.

The United States in the Modern World **Ms. Morris**

This course provides students with the opportunity to explore the history of the first half of the twentieth century. It employs a somewhat non-traditional approach in its recognition of the extent to which American History and World History are interrelated during this time period. It also provides students with the opportunity to develop several key skills necessary for success in college-level courses: note taking, essay writing, and research. Students complete two major research projects. During the fall semester they work in groups to prepare National History Day projects. These projects allow groups of students to research a topic related to the annual theme and then present the results of that research in either a documentary video or an original play. This year's theme is: *Conflict and Compromise in History.* Students are encouraged to make wide use of primary source materials in preparing their projects. During the spring semester they complete a formal research paper on a course-related topic. At least once a week class sessions are conducted lecture-style, in order to prepare students for the type of instruction they will encounter in college. Class activities also include group work and a variety of multi-sensory activities. Major topics include: World War I, the Russian Revolution, the 1920s, the Great Depression in the U.S. and elsewhere, Hitler's rise to power, and World War II in the U.S. and around the globe.

Government and Politics in the Modern World **Mr. Carmichael**

This capstone course focuses on government, politics, and modern history. Students explore how our political system works and why it works the way it does. They explore both the workings of the branches of government and the role individual citizens play in the political process. They investigate the major events of the past sixty years, both in our own country and elsewhere and consider the relevance of the five ideals of rights, equality, liberty, opportunity, and democracy for Americans today. In preparation for future education they refine academic skills, including taking notes from lecture and writing a formal research paper. Most importantly, they prepare themselves to take on the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a democracy. Class activities emphasize multi-sensory, interactive strategies and rely heavily on student involvement and initiative.

Advanced Placement U.S. History **Ms. Morris**

A.P. United States History is a college-level course offered to students who have successfully completed our introductory American history courses and who have been recommended by the Language Fundamentals department. It serves as an advanced L.F. course, designed for students who no longer require traditional language remediation but who would benefit from continuing to develop their reading and writing skills through the medium of a challenging academic course. The course follows the Curriculum Framework developed by the College Board. However, because enrollment is predicated on the assumption that students have already studied American History, the focus in class is on historical thinking skills rather than on acquisition of facts. Students use a college level textbook, which does, however, provide them with a deeper and richer body of knowledge than they have encountered in previous courses. Students will have the

opportunity to take the AP U.S. History exam in May and may acquire college credits if their score is high enough. The course deals with a fairly broad time period (pre-1492 through the present) and is organized around seven themes, each of which is best approached by considering American history across time periods: American & National Identity; America in the World; Geography and Environment; Migration and Settlement; Politics and Power; Culture and Society; and Economy (work, exchange/trade, and technology). Class activities focus primarily upon reading, writing, and discussion rather than on note taking or information acquisition. Many will also focus on theme exploration across broad periods of time, rather than on a more chronological approach. Because students in this course typically are also enrolled in a regular History course, this class does not include a major research project or the teaching of research skills. Unlike traditional L.F. classes, this course does include tests, a fall semester exam, and grades, much like a traditional academic course.

SCIENCE

Middle School Science focuses on how science relates to daily living. Students learn science concepts through hands-on experiences such as model building, field observations, and laboratory activities. They learn to approach problems by using the scientific method and carrying out scientific investigations in the lab. Students are also taught how to communicate results of experiments through charts and visual presentations. The science process skills of classification, measurement, observation, prediction and inference are integrated throughout the course. The emphasis is placed not on the memorization of facts but on a thorough understanding of important concepts. Teamwork and communication is essential as students develop skills to design and analyze in-class experiments. Students are taught how to set up and maintain a notebook that is useful to them on a daily basis for homework and in preparation for tests.

Science 5-6 **Ms. Taylor**

In 2017-18 students in grades 5 and 6 will study the characteristics of living organisms and what distinguishes simple cellular organisms from higher-level organisms. Students will learn about the concept of classification and the criteria for life. The study of living organisms will be linked through a general study of the diversity of life on Earth. The focus will be on ecosystem dynamics, relationships, and finally the impact human activity can have on natural ecosystems.

Science 7 **Mrs. Morgan**

Middle School Science focuses on how science relates to daily living. Students learn science concepts through hands-on experiences such as model building, field observations, and laboratory activities. They learn to approach science problems by using the scientific method and carrying out scientific investigations in the lab. Students are also taught how to communicate results of experiments through charts and visual presentations. The science process skills of classification, measurement, observation, prediction and inference are integrated throughout the course. The emphasis is placed not on the memorization of facts but on a thorough understanding of important concepts. Teamwork, communication, and critical thinking are essential as students develop skills to design and analyze in-class experiments. Students are taught how to set up and maintain a notebook that is useful to them on a daily basis for homework and in preparation for tests.

Science 8: Science Issues in the 21st Century **Mr. Lancaster**

8th grade science students need to become increasingly aware of science related issues that will have an impact on their adult lives. Two essential questions are: "How do the physical and living world interact to sustain the earth's ecosystem?", and "What is the human impact on the balance of the ecosystem?" The course will also examine space exploration and the quest for finding another planet that might support life. Students will also continue their development in the understanding and application of the scientific method. As students examine issues such as global climate change and energy usage they will have the opportunity to develop communication and critical thinking. They will be asked to form, support, and share opinions about such issues as global climate change and the impact of energy usage on the natural environment. The goal is to have students better informed about the issues that will surround them and a greater willingness to accept personal responsibility for their individual impact on the earth's ecosystem.

Physical Science **Mr. Roy and Mr. Foulger**

Physical Science is a practical study of the relationship between matter and energy. An emphasis on problem-solving and experimental design gives students the opportunity to be actively involved with each topic of study as they learn how scientists work. Application of physical laws and chemical processes become current and meaningful as such topics as automobile safety and technological advances are studied. Fundamental physical science principles are introduced through student involvement rather than by rote memorization. Chemical and physical properties of matter, electricity, magnetism, sound, light, technology and the laws of motion are taught focusing on the interests and needs of today's students. Information concerning high interest areas such as lasers, radio, television, computers, and stereo equipment is included. Complex ideas

are presented simply, developed logically, and reinforced with concrete, hands-on activities. Students use their experience in observation, in data gathering, and in studying cause and effect relationships to interpret happenings in their environment.

Chemistry **Mr. Stannard**

Chemistry is the study of how substances act and interact in the presence of various forms of energy, such as heat or electricity. The purpose of the Chemical Concepts course is to help students realize the role of chemistry in their personal lives; use chemical principles to think more intelligently about current issues that involve science and technology (thus developing decision-making skills); and develop a lifelong awareness of the potential and limitations of science and technology. Each unit in the course centers on a technological issue now confronting our society. The topic serves as a foundation for studying the chemistry needed to understand and analyze it. The course begins with a study of water in the fictional community of Riverwood and continues with an explanation of chemical resources, petroleum, and air. The setting for each is the school, town, region, or world community. Each unit culminates in an activity designed to help students apply their chemical knowledge in investigating a problem, proposing solutions to the problem, and analyzing the effects of their solutions, including any new problems that may result.

Biology **Mr. Foulger**

Biology introduces students to increasing levels of complexity in living systems. The course covers the interdependence of organ systems in an organism. Students learn the place of humans in relation to other living things. Specific areas of emphasis include genetics, metabolism, reproduction, evolution, microbiology, and the study of vertebrates and invertebrates. The variety of topics demonstrates the large body of information within the discipline. Much of the information covered in lectures is supplemented with hands-on activities to strengthen understanding of the concepts presented. Lab participation is an integral part of this course.

Environmental Biology **Mr. Stannard**

Environmental Biology provides a more in-depth examination of important concepts introduced in the first year of biology such as the nature of microbial life, which is examined using aseptic technique in the laboratory. Students explore ecosystems and nutrient cycling in the classroom and through collaborative field studies. The controversies over genetically modified organisms and other important biological issues are explored. Interactions with several local scientists provide a real-life analysis of biology-related careers. In addition, students learn a risk/benefit decision-making strategy for assessing the impacts of scientific decisions on the health of ecosystems. Scientific inquiry and the limitations associated with scientific evidence are also a focus of the course.

LANGUAGE REMEDIATION

Most students at the New Community School take a daily period of language remediation and instruction called Language Fundamentals (L. F.). The goal of this class is to improve each student's specific language-based learning skills, and instruction is individualized in groups of 2-4 students. The L.F. teacher uses a diagnostic and prescriptive approach to guide instruction, based on daily observation as well as knowledge of the student's cognitive strengths and weaknesses. The program aims to develop a solid foundation in basic language skills upon which more advanced competencies in reading and writing are built. As students develop automaticity and fluency in accurate word recognition, spelling, and oral reading, their program increasingly emphasizes reading comprehension and written expression.

Basic language instruction is carefully sequenced and structured and emphasizes a multi-sensory approach to learning. It is based on phonetic principles with the aim of improving the student's reading and spelling accuracy through structural word analysis. Instruction encourages an analytical, problem-solving approach to reading and spelling difficulties rather than dependence on rote memory. Daily lessons include fluency-building drill and practice. Students are taught cursive handwriting as appropriate, with emphasis on legible form, accuracy, and stamina. Direct teaching of comprehension skills focuses on developing vocabulary, understanding sentence structure, recalling details, and recognizing and summarizing main ideas.

Instruction for advanced L.F. students provides opportunities to apply learned skills, grapple with complex text and language, and acquire learning strategies for college success. Comprehension strategies include distinguishing between direct and implied statements, making inferences, drawing logical conclusions, determining the author's tone and biases, and making evaluative judgments. Writing instruction aims to develop clarity, organization, voice, and persuasive effect in students' written responses to reading. Techniques for proofreading written work are emphasized at all levels of instruction.

The goal of L.F. classes is to raise language skills to a level commensurate with the student's intellectual potential. Instruction begins at the level of the student's need, and progresses as he or she demonstrates skill growth and competence. The pace of instruction is determined by informal observation and assessment as well as periodic normative testing. The L.F. teacher communicates the language goals in the Individual Instructional Plan to parents and provides quarterly updates of progress through written reports and/or conferences. In collaboration with academic teachers, the L.F. teacher supports the transfer of skills to the student's classwork, promoting academic competence and independence.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Middle School Physical Education **Mr. Brown and Mr. Whitlock**

Students in this course will acquire the knowledge and skills for movement that provide the foundation for enjoyment and continued social development through physical activity. Students will learn specialized skills and concepts that lead to confidence and competency in a variety of physical activities. Physical activity will include lessons from team sports, individual sports, and aerobic sports. Students could experience activity levels of moderate to high intensity. There will be regular fitness assessments administered according to national guidelines. This class meets four days a week throughout the year.

Health 5-6 **Ms. Chambers**

Students in grades five & six differentiate reliable from unreliable health information and resources. Students develop refinement in understanding health concepts and practicing health skills. They apply physical, mental/emotional, social, environmental, and community health skills and strategies to improve or maintain personal and family health. Students begin to understand adolescent health issues and concerns and the relationship between choices and consequences. Emphasis is placed on demonstrating interpersonal skills, assuming responsibility for personal health habits, and practicing behaviors that promote active, healthy lifestyles. They understand how to be a positive role model and the impact of positive and negative peer pressure. Students demonstrate injury-prevention behaviors at school and elsewhere. Students will analyze the various influences on health including advertising, peers, heredity, and various media on personal and community health. Health is a nine-week course.

Health 7-8 **Mr. Creasey**

Students in grade seven and eight generate and choose positive alternatives to risky behaviors. They use skills to resist peer pressure and manage stress and anxiety. Students can relate health choices to alertness, feelings, and performance at school or during physical activity. Students exhibit a healthy lifestyle, interpret health information, and promote good health. Students understand the origins and causes of diseases, including the relationship between family history and certain health risks. They begin to relate short-and long-term consequences of health choices and apply health skills to specific personal, family, and community health concerns. Students can discern relationships among all components of health and wellness and knowledgeably use consumer information. Health is nine week course. All 7th grade students take Health during the fall semester, while all 8th grade students take health in the spring.

High School Physical Education **Mr. Whitlock**

High School Physical Education recognizes the continuing dramatic changes in physical and social growth. Students are challenged more physically in endurance, strength, coordination, and agility. The curriculum, which is a progression from team to individual activities, employs instructional approaches appropriate for dyslexic students. These approaches include traditional techniques such as routine warm-up activities as well as sequential, organized instruction and activities. All classes emphasize, in appropriate degrees, personal development, psychomotor development, and cognitive development. The programs and activities focus on the more traditional games of flag football, basketball, volleyball, team handball, and softball. Emphasis is placed on the understanding of rules of play, proper playing form, and game strategy. Sportsmanship, team cooperation, and leadership are also fostered in each activity. In addition, emphasis is placed on acquiring an appreciation for the mastery of each sport at various levels. The course also emphasizes stimulating exposure to other recreational and life sports, such as vita trails, bowling, table tennis, badminton, and tennis. Students develop a respect for healthy physical activity and recognize it as a necessary part of the lifestyle of the healthy individual.

Advanced Physical Education **Mr. Gobble**

This course is a continuation of the Be an 11! program presented by BiggerFasterStronger, Inc. Students will work to achieve personal greatness by setting goals, tracking progress and coaching each other to reach new heights. Students will learn specialized skills and concepts that lead to confidence and competency in a

variety of training movements. Physical activity will include strength training, plyometrics, agility training, and mobility practice.

Health 9-10 **Mr. Brown**

Students in Upper School Health integrate a variety of health concepts, skills, and behaviors to plan for their personal, lifelong health goals. These include awareness and consequences of risky behaviors, disease prevention, overall wellness, and identification of community health resources. Students demonstrate competence in their knowledge and skills. They see themselves as having an active role in creating a healthy lifestyle for themselves, for their families, and for the community.

PRACTICAL AND FINE ARTS ELECTIVES

Practical and Fine Arts elective classes at The New Community School expose students to activities and skills of a non-academic nature. These courses offer opportunities to learn new skills, develop artistic talent, or pursue a well-defined interest. Most often these courses are heavily weighted with "hands-on" productive activities and emphasize both individual growth and positive group interactions. Each course has goals that address subject knowledge, social and recreational opportunities, community involvement, and leadership. Students are evaluated using a Pass/Fail/Honors grade system. Most courses are scheduled on a semester basis. Students usually select at least one of their elective courses. Usually students receive either their first or second choice.

However, there are several elective courses that are mandatory. Students in grades 5-6 take the *Mindfullness* course for nine weeks; most often they take a course in *Keyboarding and Word Processing* for nine weeks in the 7th grade. Students in the 8th grade take the *Capstone* course, also for nine weeks. All juniors take *Junior Seminar* for a semester. Seniors take *Senior Seminar* for a full year.

Middle School Exploratory Classes

The Exploratory courses give fifth and sixth grade students an opportunity to sample some of TNCS's most popular electives by choosing two out of the six modules. In these 9-week versions of Art, Strategy Games, Introductory Robotics, Programming, Sewing & Crafts, and American Sign Language students will learn fundamentals that will prepare them for a full-length version in the future. In **Art**, students will develop visual communication skills. Students will understand and utilize the essential elements of art and principles of design. Student will create artworks that are inspired by famous artists and art movements. In **Introductory Robotics**, students who have an interest in future participation on the TNCS Robotics team, Sabernetics, will design and build a Lego EV-3 robot and learn the basics of programming it as well as learn about the Lego FIRST Tournament. In **Strategy Games** students will learn about both classic and contemporary board games and develop effective strategies to achieve a game's objective. Students will define and practice good sportsmanship and fair play, enhancing their skills of decision-making, problem-solving, and reasoning. The **Programming** Exploratory introduces students to the basics of computer programming using a variety of resources, including Scratch and Swift Playground. Students will primarily use block-based programming to create simple, fun programs that encourage creativity and algorithmic thinking. In **Sewing and Crafts,** students will learn basic hand-stitching techniques that will enable them to complete a pillow or a stuffed animal project of their choice. Additional fun craft projects will also be completed throughout the quarter. The **American Sign Language** elective focuses on the basic fundamental skills of the language and Deaf culture. Expressive and receptive will begin at the foundational level of fingerspelling and conversational vocabulary. Students will demonstrate their knowledge of course content through sign performance, projects, and discussion.

Fine Arts Classes

Art 7-8 **Ms. Webb**

Art 7/8 focuses on the creation of art works that explore personal identity and other cultures of the world. This course presents students with a wide range of art skills and media. The projects taught are designed to allow students personal expression, art skill development and knowledge about art of other cultures. Students will explore drawing, painting with acrylics, watercolor, collage methods, sculptures, and hand-building clay methods. Students will create art projects inspired by other cultures throughout the globe. Students will then examine how artists' identities are reflected in their art and learn to interpret works of art for themselves. Students will use symbolism to create works of art that represent their growing understanding of who they are.

Watercolors 5-8 **Mr. Lancaster**

Watercolor is a unique art medium. The mixing of water and various pigments on paper can create many combinations of color blending and shapes that are unpredictable. Students will be given opportunities to explore the many techniques used by watercolor artists. Several of the primary techniques are wet-on-wet, wet-on-dry, graduated blending, and use of other materials such as salt and wax. The students will also explore how artists use watercolor to create value tones that are essential to believable paintings. The students will be given the opportunity to create personal paintings in addition to choosing from many small art projects that are possible with watercolor.

iPad Photography 5-8 **Mr. Creasey**

In this middle school class students will be introduced to the fundamentals of photographic composition. They will examine the evolution of the camera using alternative camera methods, and gain a true appreciation for foundational photography methods through everyday cameras, such as iPad and Smart Phones. Students will also be introduced to several compositional methods used in the production of quality digital photographs. Using their iPad device, students will develop an understanding of digital technology and learn to use photo-editing apps. Students will come away with an understanding of both the compositional and technical aspects of picture taking that will prepare them for the Photography courses offered to upper school students.

Introduction to Visual Arts 9-12 **Ms. Webb and Mr. Creasey**

Introduction to Visual Arts is a team-taught upper school course that provides students with the pre-requisite experiences needed for most of the more advanced visual arts classes offered. Students will spend nine weeks in an introductory Drawing class. Students will develop their skill to see in order to build upon their ability to draw. Students will primarily learn to use graphite and charcoal and create art works from direct observation. Students will maintain a sketchbook that will continually track their growth with exercises and assignments specifically designed to engage right brain thinking. They will also spend nine weeks in an introduction to darkroom photography. They will look at the history of photography and the evolution of the camera. Students will be introduced to a number of professional photographers along with their photographs. Students will come away with an understanding of the power and importance of photography throughout history. They learn about light theory by using alternative methods of photography and a pinhole camera. They will develop a basic understanding of both the compositional aspects of picture taking and the technical aspects. They will also learn how to develop black and white paper and film safely in a darkroom setting.

Ceramics and Sculpture 9-12 **Ms. Webb**

In Ceramics and Sculpture students will learn to make educated decisions regarding form in order to create sculptural works of art. The course will primarily focus on ceramics work. Essential techniques for handbuilding in ceramics will be taught. Students will also have the opportunity to grow their wheel throwing skills. Additional sculptural materials such as fibers, wire, and paper maché may be used alone or in conjunction with ceramics work. This course will teach the artistic behaviors necessary to plan and sequence a successful art project.

Level II: Drawing from Observation with Color (*not offered in 2017-18*) **Ms. Webb**

Students who have completed *Introduction to Visual Arts* may continue to develop their skills in Level 2: *Drawing from Observation with Color*. Students will gain new knowledge in color theory and technical use of colored pencils and oil sticks along with continuing to build skills with graphite and charcoal art materials. Students will maintain a sketchbook that will continually track their growth with exercises and assignments in challenging subject matter such as figure, perspective and still life. Students will also continue to build upon the executive functioning skills necessary to plan and sequence a successful art project.

Level II: Oil and Hot Wax Painting 9-12 **Ms. Webb**

After students develop their ability to see in order to draw in prerequisite *Introduction to the Visual Arts* students will then further their understanding of two-dimensional art in *Oil and Hot Wax Painting*. This course will

divide the semester into 2 distinct quarters. The first quarter will focus on oil paint, an advanced level material that naturally allows for realistic, long-term rendering and blending. The final quarter will focus on hot wax (encaustic) paint. This material naturally lends itself to more abstract expressive creations that can be painted, melted, carved, and worked in many experimental ways. Students will complete works from direct observation, imagination and photographic reproduction. Color theory, aesthetic theory and famous painters will be discussed in order to guide students towards independent and purposeful creative behaviors.

Honors Art 12 **Ms. Webb**

Honors Art is a course designed for students who are seriously interested in honing and growing their technical and conceptual skills in the fine arts. Students will be taught artistic behaviors that will direct their own creative investigations. This course requires a higher commitment of time and effort in comparison to other art courses. Students will be challenged to utilize a variety of creative approaches to explore a central topic of their choosing. Students will be assessed on their growth and comprehension. Assessments will serve as a guide to individual student-directed learning. Each student will create a concentration of work that will be exhibited in a gallery setting. Students will also have the opportunity to sell a piece of their work at a professional art show.

Advanced Photography 10-12 **Mr. Creasey**

In *Introduction to Visual Arts*, students learned to take black and white photographs using a Pinhole camera. *Advanced Photography* is a course that teaches students to go beyond basic photography techniques. The course focuses on techniques with a 35 mm camera. This course will require students to have taken the basic photography class which provides an understanding of the compositional and technical aspects required to create a proper, artistic photo.

In *Advanced Photography*, students will be given assignments that will teach more complex elements of design. Students will put their existing photography skills to use, including developing black and white paper and film in a darkroom. This is a project based course where students learn to design, complete, and evaluate week long assignments. Students will be encouraged to submit completed projects for school or public display.

Digital Photography 9-12 **Mr. Creasey**

This is a course for upper school students who are curious about photography and desire a basic introduction to digital methods. Students will be introduced to the fundamentals of photographic composition. They will examine the history of photography and the evolution of the camera. Students will also be introduced to a number of composition methods used in the production of quality digital photographs. Students will develop an understanding of digital technology and become proficient in DSLR camera use. Students will come away with an understanding of both the compositional and technical aspects of the digital photograph. Students must supply their own DSLR camera (no tablet or phone cameras).

Drama Skills 5-8 **Mr. Keevil**

In this drama course, students explore the many facets of the theater. The course will cover aspects of play production, including script analysis, stage design and management, blocking and scene work, acting techniques, and costume and prop management. Students will also have the opportunity to work back-stage for the Upper School Drama Production and help to craft the sets.

Drama 6-8 **Ms. Noble and Mr. Keevil**

In this introductory course of drama, students are introduced to an overview of the elements of the theater. Basic acting and stage terms are incorporated through a series of activities and simple presentations. The student will identify responsibilities involved in a variety of dramatic presentations. Students will learn the skills necessary to produce a large-scale performance.

Drama Skills 9-12 **Mr. Keevil**

In this drama course, students explore all aspects of what it takes to produce a play. This includes acting, directing, improvisational work, costume design, set design, and stage management. Classes include acting games as well as brief lessons on the history of theater, television, and film. Students will analyze portions of famous scripts and learn how to "block" short scenes. Students in this course will also have the opportunity to help behind the scenes with the Middle School Drama Production.

Drama 9-12 **Mr. Keevil and Mr. Stannard**

This course is an introduction to theater with an emphasis on basic acting skills, as well as offering those interested an opportunity to work behind the scenes. The objective of this course is to give the students a well-rounded theater education. Throughout the semester, students will develop their improvisational and acting skills to develop a character. Students produce a large scale production that is presented to an audience over two nights.

Introduction to Guitar 5-8 **Mr. Humphrey**

Introduction to Guitar is a beginner's course of fundamental guitar instruction for a group of six or fewer students with little or no previous experience with the instrument. The course is a hands-on class that allows each student to have daily access to an acoustic guitar in good, playable condition. Students receive a substantial amount of individual instruction in playing notes, scales, and chords and in reading guitar tablature and strum charts. Students can progress at their own rates and focus on types of music that appeal to them. The emphasis is on contemporary guitar music, not classical guitar. In addition, students will learn to play in groups and have opportunities to try other instruments such as keyboard, percussion, banjo, and bass guitar.

Introduction to Guitar 9-12 **Mr. Roy**

Introduction to Guitar is a beginner's course of fundamental guitar instruction for a group of six or fewer students with little or no previous experience with the instrument. The course is a hands-on class that allows each student to have daily access to an acoustic guitar in good, playable condition. Students receive a substantial amount of individual instruction in playing notes, scales, and chords and in reading guitar tablature and strum charts. Students can progress at their own rates and focus on types of music that appeal to them. The emphasis is on contemporary guitar music, not classical guitar. In addition, students will learn to play in groups and have opportunities to try other instruments such as keyboard, percussion, banjo, and bass guitar.

Creative Writing 9-12 **Mrs. Orsini**

Creative Writing gives students the opportunity to develop their own writing identities. Through a workshop setting, students will experiment with a variety of forms and creative strategies and communicate with peers to strengthen pieces. Workshops will be supplemented with discussion about writers' craft in a variety of model texts. Students will finish the course by collaborating to publish a school literary magazine. Students will leave the course with tactics to find inspiration for writing in the world, media, and imagination—and to continue to evolve as writers.

Technology Courses

Keyboarding 7 **Ms. Hale**

Keyboarding/Word Processing uses a teacher-directed approach to teach touch typing. All 7th grade students are required to take keyboarding. Students set individual goals to improve their keyboarding speed and accuracy as well as to improve their word processing skills. Students move through the objectives as quickly as they are able. Students are encouraged to use their newly acquired word processing skills outside of class as soon as possible to complete one academic homework assignment each day on the computer.

Multimedia Design 5-8 **Mrs. C. Smith**

Multimedia is for students who want to create and display digital projects. Students will learn to use multimedia software to edit digital photos. Videos will be enhanced with visual effects and audio clips. Student creations will be displayed on the internet while students explore and use ethical principles, etiquette, and safety. Multimedia Design is recommended for students who demonstrate a high level of interest in creating projects on a computer.

Programming 7-8 **Mr. Wise**

This course will introduce students to the basics of computer programming. Students will learn basic computing ideas, programming language and syntax, and web design. Students will progress from block programming to text-based programming. This course does not require any background in programming, just an interest in learning about computers and how we can make them work for us.

Robotics 6-8 **Mr. Wise**

The Robotics elective course provides students opportunities to develop skills in engineering, research, innovation, communication, and collaboration with the ultimate aim of competing in the First Lego League's Annual Challenge. Students work as a team to build, program, and operate a robot; research the challenge project, identify a specific problem, develop an innovative solution, and create a presentation of it; and develop the characteristics necessary to meet FLL's core values based on accountability, responsibility, initiative, sportsmanship, curiosity, and communication.

Robotics 9-12 **Ms. Butterworth**

In the VEX Robotics course students learn the principles of the Engineering Design Process and design and build a robot to compete in the world's largest robotics competition, VEX Robotics. Throughout the course, students will explore a variety of STEM concepts and will have opportunities to specialize in individual areas of interest including building, programming, and determining game-strategy to maximize the team's success at competition.

Advanced Technology Projects **Ms. DelMonte**

Advanced Technology Projects is for students who want to plan, create, and display digital projects. Students will learn to plan and execute digital projects that utilize a variety of tools and software. The teacher will serve as a facilitator and provide support for students as they execute projects. Student products will be displayed digitally. This course is open to students who have passed Computer Applications and demonstrate a high level of interest in computers.

Yearbook **Mr. Keevil and Ms. Orsini**

The Yearbook elective is a course designed to instruct students in the fundamentals of graphic design and the processes associated with print production with the ultimate aim of producing *Dimensions*, the TNCS yearbook. Students take and edit photographs, write headlines and captions, learn the elements of eye-catching design, and fit text and photos into layouts using desktop publishing technology.

Additional Practical Arts Courses

8th Grade Capstone **Mr. Lancaster**

The Eighth Grade Seminar is a 9-week required course. Designed as a capstone experience for eighth graders, the course will incorporate 21st century skills such as collaboration, critical thinking, creativity, communication, and entrepreneurship. The course is divided into mini-units. Students will complete a "Pursue Your Passion" project. This project will be self-selected based on personal interest, research based, and require a product at the end. Students will also participate in a small business group. As a team, students will: brainstorm and decide on a business idea, design the concept, try the idea in real life, and then debrief and analyze the success of the business.

The Green Garden Project 5-8 **Ms. Witmeyer**

The Green Garden Project (TGGP) elective will incorporate working with your hands and activating your mind through researching, planning, and implementing ways to beautify our campus inside and out. TGGP will build gardens and living walls, as well as plant and maintain seasonal produce, herbs, and flowers throughout the semester. We will also incorporate art and ceramics by designing and creating hanging planters and flower vases to support our indoor/outdoor garden projects. Some of our time will be spent supporting a community recycling initiative of paper and cans. Most importantly, this elective's mission will be focused on community, outreach and education, and designing lovely spaces for our campus to enjoy.

MindFULLness 5-6 **Ms. Harley**

The MindFULLness elective is a 9-week exploratory course to enhance student life of 5th and 6th grade students at TNCS. Fostering a "growth mindset" and mindfulness training is transforming students' lives and schools across the country. Students will learn meditation practices to become more proactive, rather than reactive, to deal with stress in daily life. Role-playing and group talks will help develop social-emotional intelligence and build respect and empathy for self, others, and community. "Train the Brain" games and activities will enhance executive functioning skills that can impact decision-making, problem solving, and reasoning. Assessing learning styles and study preferences will help students navigate academic challenges to meet with success. Exploring the mission and history of TNCS will help connect how the school's purpose aligns and defines their role as a Saber.

Advanced Strategy Games and Logic 5-8 **Mr. Morgan**

The Advanced Strategy Games and Logic elective course continues the exploration of contemporary strategy games. These more challenging games include complex rules, resource management, multiple objectives, and more reasoning/logic. Students will examine rules for each game and develop effective strategies to achieve the game's objectives. Building a safe environment for competitive and cooperative play, they will define good sportsmanship and fair play. Using the art of play will enhance student's cognitive skills of decision-making, problem solving, and reasoning. Students will be given the option to learn from gameplay experiences to collaborate and create a simple board game of their own.

Introduction to the Woodshop, 5-8 **Mr. Humphrey**

This is an introductory hands-on course in which students learn the physical properties of wood and how those properties inform the design of a practical and attractive product. They learn to make simple drawings from which to build individual projects. The focus is on shop safety, the safe use of hand tools, and the basic techniques of shaping, joining, and finishing wood. Students develop a foundation for a lifelong interest in wood craftsmanship, and explore creative expression in wood. There is little use of power machinery in this course, as many of the techniques of fine craftsmanship depend on competent use of traditional hand saws, planes, and chisels.

Woodworking: Basic Handcraft Skills 9-12 **Mr. Humphrey**

Woodworking: Basic Handcraft Skills is a hands-on course in which students learn the physical properties of wood and how those properties inform the design of a practical and attractive product/project. They learn to make simple drawings from which to build individual projects. The focus is on shop safety, the safe and correct use of hand tools, and some techniques of basic joinery. Students develop a foundation for a lifelong interest in wood craftsmanship, and explore creative expression in wood. There is a minimal use of power machinery in this course, as many of the techniques of fine craftsmanship depend on competent knowledge and use of traditional handsaws, planes, chisels, and other hand tools.

Junior Seminar **Ms. Latta, Ms. Savarese, and Ms. Lesher**

The Junior Seminar is a semester-long required course for juniors. Centered around the theme of *Preparing for College,* it focuses on SAT Preparation and exploration of college and career options. Students work on strategies to improve their performance on the SAT. Students practice questions in the Math and Evidence-based Reading and Writing subtests to become familiar with the directions, format, and types of questions. They work with the college counselor to explore college programs and services available to students with learning differences.

Senior Seminar **Mrs. Beene**

The Senior Seminar is a year-long required course for seniors. Centered on the theme of *Preparing for Adulthood,* this course incorporates study of a number of topics relevant to TNCS seniors: leadership, wellness and mindfulness, career-planning, professionalism, dyslexia's impact on the individual, global issues, ethics, citizenship, public speaking, and life skills.

At the start of the fall semester, students will explore different leadership styles to determine their own while also participating in a number of team-building activities. They will then begin a unit on mindfulness and mental health. Students will compare and discuss different ways to deal with stress, depression, and college woes; they will learn and experience a variety of mindfulness techniques. Following this unit, students will investigate career options, establish a relationship with a professional in a chosen field, and hone their professional skills. Students will also learn about issues related to being a dyslexic adult, and new concepts about dyslexia.

In the spring, students will begin study of civicism and ethics as they investigate global issues. Moral dilemmas are presented through case studies and viewed through ethical frameworks for decision-making. As a capstone, students will research and lead a class discussion on their chosen global issue. After this unit, students will develop public speaking skills culminating in their senior speech. Throughout the year, students will plan and carry out thirty hours of community service at an approved, non-profit agency of their own choosing.

Independent Study **High School Faculty**

An Independent Study elective course is offered to motivated, well-organized high school students with a demonstrated record of success with independent projects. Students pursue well-structured academic projects of personal interest and work with faculty coaches who have an expertise or interest in that area. Examples of possible projects include: National History Day entries, entries for the Virginia Junior Academy of Sciences competition, preparation of a portfolio for art school admission, online courses, and independent writing projects. Students may elect to pursue an Independent Study for a semester or a full year.