MIDDLE & UPPER SCHOOL

Course Catalog: 2026-27

ENGLISH

5 – English 5: Reading

In the reading section of the fifth-grade English Language Arts course, students will strengthen their reading comprehension of both fiction and non-fiction texts. Skill development will focus on summarizing multi-page texts, finding evidence to support arguments, and comparing reading passages. Students will read several full-length texts, including *A Wrinkle in Time* by Madeline L'Engle, *Hatchet* by Gary Paulsen, and *Chasing Lincoln's Killer* by James. L. Swanson.

5 - English 5: Writing

In the writing section of the fifth-grade ELA course, students will master the five-paragraph essay, composing in narrative, persuasive, and expository styles. Students will expand vocabulary and improve grammar and mechanics, including understanding parts of speech, using complex sentence structures, and correcting run-on sentences.

6 - English 6

In this foundational course, students will strengthen their reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills while expanding their understanding of language. Through a diverse selection of novels, short stories, plays, poetry, and nonfiction, students will analyze literary elements and themes across different genres and time periods. Writing assignments will focus on developing clear communication, supporting ideas with evidence, expressing opinions, and fostering creativity. Vocabulary building and grammar instruction are built into each unit. Originality, critical thinking, and respectful debate are cornerstones of the classroom.

6 – Speech (S2)

Do you talk well in front of others? Would you like to? With Speech, you can learn how to talk in front of crowds with confidence. Speech focuses on ensuring that every student who enters can hold their own in front of even the fiercest crowds! You will learn a little bit of improv to break the ice, as well as good speaking habits. The class ramps up as it continues by slowly increasing the size of your audience.

Updated July 2026

7 - English 7

Students will build on the foundation established in sixth grade to refine the skills necessary for middle school writing and analytical thinking. Special emphasis is placed on cause-and-effect relationships through writing and reading fiction and nonfiction genres from various sources for diverse purposes and cultural understanding. We look for cultural diversity through the authors and literary genres studied in our curriculum. Furthermore, students will learn to recognize literary techniques and pinpoint rhetorical devices within any scholarly text. They will learn to identify universal themes addressed through the various literary genres. Students will occasionally be encouraged to present their work and showcase their speaking abilities. Seventh-grade students will receive research-based, explicit, and systematic instruction. They will be trained to think quickly. Assessments of these and other skills vital to academic and personal growth will be conducted in various ways, individually and sometimes collectively, in small groups.

7 – Debate (S1)

Building upon the skills learned in 6th grade speech, this course introduces students to the fundamentals of debate, including argumentation, public speaking, and critical thinking. Students will learn how to construct persuasive arguments, conduct research, and engage in structured debates on a variety of topics. Emphasis will be placed on teamwork, respectful discourse, and the ability to think on one's feet. Through practice and competition, students will develop confidence in their communication skills and the art of persuasive reasoning.

8 - English 8

In 8th Grade English, students will explore literary genres—including science fiction, horror, and historical narratives—through *HMH Into Literature,* using these as a lens to examine real-world topics like technology's future and horror's societal role. A major focus is The Outsiders, where students analyze themes, characterization, and historical context. Daily warm-ups reinforce grammar, vocabulary, writing, and reading skills. Through discussions, creative projects, and analytical writing, students will sharpen critical thinking and communication skills for high school and beyond.

9 – Pre AP English 1

Pre-AP English 1 is a course for ninth graders that combines literature, composition, and presentation skills. In literature, students focus on important works by modern American and global authors. We aim to include diverse cultures through the authors and literary fiction and nonfiction genres in our curriculum. Pre-AP English 1 teaches students to read, interpret, and write about literature and composition. While analyzing and writing literary texts is the main goal, there is also an emphasis on understanding cultural and historical texts. More specifically, the course centers on textual analysis, preparing students for close, critical reading and analytical writing. It trains students to notice small details in a text, helping them develop a deeper understanding of the overall message. It also helps students learn to create complex sentences, which builds a foundation for more sophisticated, longer analyses, while encouraging active engagement with texts, writing, language focus, research, and participation in conversations. Readings might include challenging classics such as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s "Why We Can't Wait" or Sophocles' "Antigone." Excerpts from Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet" will also be examined. Students will be encouraged to prepare and present research individually, showcasing their oral communication skills. Team-building

exercises, as well as reading and writing exercises, will help boost their confidence in various speaking, reading, and writing situations. Ninth graders will receive explicit, research-based instruction that is systematic in approach. Pre-AP English 1 introduces students to key communication elements, including vocal production and listening skills. Students will learn to write argumentative essays and cite their sources correctly.

10 – Pre-AP English 2

In Pre-AP English 2, students engage with a wide range of literature, including novels, short stories, plays, and poetry. Readings include works by William Shakespeare, John Steinbeck, Gabriel García Márquez, Julio Cortázar, Ursula K. Le Guin, Shirley Jackson, and Gwendolyn Brooks, among others. Through close reading and analysis, students will explore literary and poetic devices while refining their writing skills. Assignments include analytical essays, personal narratives, and creative writing pieces. Grammar and vocabulary instruction are incorporated throughout the course to support student growth in both written and spoken expression.

11 - English 11

In 11th Grade English, students will explore classic American poetry and prose, analyzing how literature reflects and shapes history. Through Romanticism, Transcendentalism, and Realism, they'll examine creative expression's impact on the world. A major focus is *The Crucible,* where students study the Red Scare's influence on Arthur Miller and compare the script to its adaptations. Daily warm-ups build grammar, vocabulary, writing, and analytical skills. By engaging with great works and crafting their own, students will deepen their appreciation for literature's lasting influence.

11 – AP Language & Composition*

The AP Language and Composition course offers students opportunities to enhance their skills in reading a variety of print and visual literary texts, responding critically to what they read, analyzing the rhetorical strategies that authors employ to develop their claims and themes, and evaluating texts based on their persuasiveness, significance, and historical insights. AP English Language and Composition aligns with an introductory, college-level rhetoric and writing curriculum. The course emphasizes developing and revising evidence-based analytical and argumentative writing and the rhetorical analysis of nonfiction texts. It also helps students improve their ability to write more effectively for various purposes and audiences, particularly in contextualizing, explaining, analyzing, and persuading through their written essays. Ultimately, the course deepens students' understanding of themselves and their culture by providing opportunities to read, discuss, and respond in various ways to diverse print and visual texts on relevant topics such as education, American politics, the international environment, popular culture, the media's influence on society, American diversity and values, and major institutions in American life, including but not limited to religion and government.

**Will be offered in 2027-28*

12 - English 12

12th Grade English begins with the development of a polished personal essay, suitable for use in the college application process. Throughout the remainder of the year, students will read and analyze significant works of British literature, including selections from Geoffrey Chaucer, William Shakespeare, Charlotte Brontë, Charles Dickens, George Orwell, and Kazuo Ishiguro. Emphasis is placed on deepening close reading skills, recognizing literary and poetic techniques, and refining written expression in preparation for college-level instruction.

12 - AP Literature

AP English Literature and Composition is an advanced course focused on the critical study of fiction, drama, and poetry written in or translated into English. Students will analyze literary works by a diverse array of authors from Mary Shelley *(Frankenstein)* to Khaled Hosseini *(The Kite Runner),* exploring how literature reflects and critiques social structures, historical contexts, and human experiences. Through close reading and thoughtful analysis, students will examine authorial choices and literary techniques that shape meaning and impact. The course prepares students for the AP English Literature exam, which they may choose to take at the end of the year.

SOCIAL STUDIES

5 – 5th Grade Social Studies: Our Changing Nation

Fifth grade standards shift their focus to examining the rights, responsibilities, and struggles that have accompanied securing the rights that Americans hold in the present day. The scope of these standards begins with examining the founding documents of the United States as well as the rights they were designed to protect and the structure and function of a federal republican form of government. The standards progress through significant points in U.S. history where protection of those rights was extended to previously excluded groups during such periods as: The Civil War, The Industrial Revolution, and the Civil Rights Movement. Finally, fifth grade students will develop basic personal finance concepts including earning, saving, borrowing, investing, setting financial goals, and the role of taxes. By asking critical questions and using various sources to find answers, fifth grade students will learn to make a claim, support it with evidence, and clearly communicate their ideas.[1]

6/7 – Pre AP World History & Geography: Pathway 2 (The Early Modern Period – Present)*

The Pre-AP World History and Geography areas of focus prioritize the skills fundamental to the study of history and geography in high school, AP, and beyond. This gives students multiple opportunities to think and work like historians and geographers as they develop and strengthen these disciplinary reasoning skills throughout their education in history and the social sciences.[2] Students learn to evaluate evidence, explain historical and geographic relationships, and incorporate evidence into written and oral arguments. The course explores themes including humans and the environment, governance, economic systems, culture, and society through a study of

[1] https://educate.iowa.gov/media/5527/download?inline
[2] https://pre-ap.collegeboard.org/courses/course-descriptions/world-history-geography

the Early Modern Period (1450 CE to 1750 CE), the Modern Period (1750 CE to 1914), and the Postmodern Era (1914 to the present) in world history.

**This class will alternate each year with Pre-AP World History & Geography: Pathway 1 (The Ancient Period)*

8 - US History

How did the United States evolve into the nation it is today? In the United States History course, you will answer this question by examining how Americans have debated their values, practices, and traditions since before the country's founding. You'll learn to evaluate primary and secondary sources, analyze the claims, evidence, and reasoning within them, and place historical developments in context by drawing connections between events.

9/10 –AP World History: Modern*

AP World History: Modern is an introductory college-level modern world history course. Students cultivate their understanding of world history from c. 1200 CE to the present through analyzing historical sources and learning to make connections and craft historical arguments as they explore concepts like humans and the environment, cultural developments and interactions, governance, economic systems, social interactions and organization, and technology and innovation.[3]

**This class will alternate each year with AP Human Geography*

11/12 - AP US History

AP U.S. History is an introductory college-level U.S. history course. Students cultivate their understanding of U.S. history from c. 1491 CE to the present through analyzing historical sources and learning to make connections and craft historical arguments as they explore concepts like American and national identity; work, exchange, and technology; geography and the environment; migration and settlement; politics and power; America in the world; American and regional culture; and social structures.

11/12 - AP Comparative Government and Politics

In the AP Comparative Government and Politics course, you'll examine the political systems and government structures of China, Iran, Mexico, Nigeria, Russia, and the United Kingdom. Throughout the course, you'll learn how different governments address similar challenges and develop a clear understanding of the comparative method through the analysis of data and text-based sources, making thoughtful comparisons, and constructing evidence-based arguments. Additionally, you'll connect political theories to real-world situations by comparing various political systems, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors, identifying trends and patterns in data, and developing well-supported claims or theses in your essays.

[3] https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-world-history

11/12 – AP African American Studies*

The AP African American Studies course is interdisciplinary and examines the diversity of African American experiences through direct interactions with various sources. Students enrolled in this AP class will explore key topics ranging from early African kingdoms to today's ongoing challenges and achievements. Due to the interdisciplinary nature of AP African American Studies, students in the course will develop skills across multiple disciplines, focusing on historical, literary, visual, and data analysis skills. This course emphasizes the study of the diversity of Black communities in the United States within the broader context of Africa and the African diaspora.

**This class will be offered as an independent study for this school year*

11/12 – US Government (S1)

The United States Government course provides students with a basic understanding of the Constitution's text, history, structure, and case law. Drawing on primary source documents, learners will study the historical and philosophical foundations of America's founding principles from a range of diverse voices.

11/12 - AP Government & Politics (S2)

In the AP U.S. Government and Politics course, you'll delve into the dynamics among the President, Congress, and the Supreme Court, and explore how various political ideologies influence American politics. You'll apply political theories to real-life scenarios, assess the impact of landmark Supreme Court decisions, and analyze data to uncover patterns and trends. Additionally, you'll examine both written and visual sources, ultimately crafting well-supported essays that present a clear thesis.

11/12 – US History Survey (for international students)

Designed for international students, this course provides an overview of key events, themes, and figures in U.S. history from colonial times to the present. Students will explore the nation's founding principles, major conflicts, social movements, and global influence. The course emphasizes historical inquiry and critical thinking, helping students connect American history to broader world events. Through discussions, primary sources, and projects, students will build a foundational understanding of the United States' past and its role in the modern world.

SCIENCE

5 – 5th Grade General Science

In the fifth-grade year, students are introduced to basic ideas in physical, earth, and life science that will be built upon in the 6th – 8th grade years. Through inquiry-based projects, students will learn about matter and its interactions, earth and space systems, and life science and ecosystems.

6 – Earth Science

Rocks, Fossils, Cycles, Space, and Environmentalism. Earth Science focuses on teaching the basics of Earth's systems and history. Intended for 6th graders, this course is a great introduction to middle-level science standards and expectations.

7 – Life Science

The world is filled with living things, big and small! But how do all these living things interact? How can they exist? What happened to the dinosaurs? Why am I tired all the time? Intended for 7th graders, this course covers the basics of the life sciences, from zoology to botany and even a little parasitology, among much more.

8 – Physical Science

The physical science curriculum is based around matter, energy, forces, and other natural phenomena. Students will experience natural phenomena and engineering principles through hands-on exploration. They will study the basics of chemistry and the foundational algebra needed for physics. Students will be learning the fundamentals of lab safety and their importance. Throughout the course, students develop scientific and engineering practices while building the skills needed for high-school-level chemistry and physics.

9 – Biology

Biology is a basic survey course designed for 9th graders to get an overview of many disparate biology topics. We start with ecology and evolutionary biology concepts, then spend time on biochemistry and the structure of the cell. We also cover basic functions of DNA and RNA, how cells divide and reproduce, heredity and genetics, and a summary of human organ systems and development. The study of life is huge and complex, and we try to hit the highlights with a focus on preparation for more advanced study in college.

10 – Chemistry

Our chemistry curriculum closely mirrors a streamlined version of a one-semester college chemistry course. Students will learn how to write, name, and discuss various chemicals, how to work with solutions and gases, and how energy is transferred, with an emphasis on the mathematical relationships that describe various processes. Students will also learn to work with chemical equations to represent reactions and about acids, bases, and equilibrium. We finish the year with an introduction to organic chemistry, and, time permitting, either electrochemistry or nuclear chemistry.

11/12 – AP Chemistry

AP Chemistry is an introductory college-level chemistry course. Students cultivate their understanding of chemistry through inquiry-based investigations as they explore topics like atomic and molecular structure, chemical reactions, kinetics, equilibrium, and thermodynamics.[4]

**This class offering will alternate with AP Biology*

11/12 – AP Physics 1

Physics is a discipline that seeks to describe and predict the behavior of the universe in mathematical terms. The course culminates with an optional AP test, which allows students to apply the credits earned toward their undergraduate degree. The core concepts covered include kinematics, forces, work & energy, momentum, rotational

[4] https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-chemistry

dynamics, harmonic oscillators, and fluids. Overall, students will gain a deeper understanding of how the universe functions at a fundamental level, as well as the mathematical tools used to describe it. Satisfactory completion of Algebra 1 is a prerequisite for enrollment in this course.

11/12 – AP Psychology

Why do humans do what we do and think what we think? What is mental illness – how is it diagnosed and how is it treated? What is the role of situational factors in influencing individual behavior? Psychology helps answer these questions. Psychology is the systematic, scientific study of behaviors and mental processes. Over the year, students will be exposed to major thinkers, famous experimental studies, key concepts, and methods related to the field of psychology. This class is meant to simulate the experience of taking an introductory-level course in psychology in a college setting and will culminate with the opportunity to take the Advanced Placement exam for psychology.

MATH

5 – 5th Grade Mathematics

In fifth grade math, Students focus on mastering multi-digit whole-number and decimal operations, fractions and mixed numbers, volume calculation, and foundational algebraic thinking.[5]

6 – Algebraic Principles

This course is designed to give foundational knowledge of algebra. Students will learn the core principles of the discipline and reinforce existing mathematical knowledge. The course is divided into eight core sections and features topics such as percentages, ratios, basic graphing, fractions, and solving for variables.

7 – Prealgebra

This course is designed to bridge the gap between elementary math and algebra by focusing on foundational algebraic concepts like expressions, equations, inequalities, ratios, percentages, and basic geometry, all while emphasizing problem-solving skills, critical thinking, and real-world applications to prepare students for a successful transition into Algebra 1.

8 – Algebra I

This course is designed to introduce students to fundamental algebraic concepts like variables, expressions, equations, inequalities, functions, and their graphical representations, enabling them to solve real-world problems using these tools while developing strong mathematical reasoning skills and the ability to communicate mathematical ideas clearly; it lays the foundation for further mathematics studies. It is part of a larger “Algebra 1, Geometry, Algebra 2” sequence designed to seamlessly transition students through key mathematical concepts.

[5]https://educate.iowa.gov/media/12208/download?inline

Geometry

This high school math program focuses on problem-based learning and visual learning to deepen students' conceptual understanding of geometric concepts, covering topics like points, lines, angles, shapes, transformations, and spatial reasoning, while incorporating real-world applications and engaging students with interactive activities to build critical thinking and problem-solving skills; it is part of a larger "Algebra 1, Geometry, Algebra 2" sequence designed to seamlessly transition students through key mathematical concepts.

Algebra II

This course focuses on deepening conceptual understanding of advanced math concepts like linear, quadratic, polynomial, rational, exponential, and logarithmic functions through problem-based learning and visual aids, including graphing and data analysis, while also incorporating topics like matrices, systems of equations, and trigonometric functions, all with a focus on real-world applications and critical thinking skills. It is part of a larger "Algebra 1, Geometry, Algebra 2" sequence designed to seamlessly transition students through key mathematical concepts.

AP Precalculus

AP Precalculus combines concepts of trigonometry, geometry, and algebra that are needed to prepare students for the study of calculus. The course strengthens students' conceptual understanding of problems and mathematical reasoning in solving problems. Facility with these topics is especially important for students who intend to study calculus, physics, other sciences, and engineering in college. The main topics in the AP Precalculus course are complex numbers, vectors, matrices, polar coordinates, as well as exponential, polynomial, rational, and trigonometric functions and their inverses. This course culminates with an optional AP exam, which students may use for college credit or undergraduate math placement, depending on their specific program.

AP Calculus AB

AP Calculus AB focuses on students' understanding of calculus concepts and provides experience with methods and applications. Through the use of big ideas of calculus (e.g., modeling change, approximation and limits, and analysis of functions), the course becomes a cohesive whole, rather than a collection of unrelated topics. Students will use definitions and theorems to build arguments and justify conclusions. The course features a multi-representational approach to calculus, with concepts, results, and problems expressed graphically, numerically, analytically, and verbally. Exploring connections among these representations builds understanding of how calculus applies limits to develop important ideas, definitions, formulas, and theorems. A sustained emphasis on clear communication of methods, reasoning, justifications, and conclusions is essential. AP Calculus AB is designed to be the equivalent of a first semester college calculus course devoted to topics in differential and integral calculus, including limits, derivatives and their applications, and integrals and some of their applications. The course will culminate with the opportunity to take the Advanced Placement exam.

AP Calculus BC

AP Calculus BC focuses on students' understanding of calculus concepts and provides experience with methods and applications. Through an exploration of the big ideas of calculus (e.g., modeling change, approximation and limits, and analysis of functions), the course becomes a cohesive whole, rather than a collection of unrelated topics. Students will use definitions and theorems to build arguments and justify conclusions. The course features a multi-representational approach to calculus, with concepts, results, and problems expressed graphically, numerically, analytically, and verbally. Exploring connections among these representations builds understanding of how calculus applies limits to develop important ideas, definitions, formulas, and theorems. A sustained emphasis on clear communication of methods, reasoning, justifications, and conclusions is essential. AP Calculus BC is designed to be the equivalent of a first two semesters college calculus course devoted to topics in differential and integral calculus, including limits, derivatives and their applications, integrals and their applications, parametrically defined curves, polar curves, vector-valued functions, and introduces the topics of sequences and series. The course will culminate with the opportunity to take the Advanced Placement exam.

Business Math/Financial Literacy (S1 & S2)

This Business math course teaches students how to apply math to business problems. Topics include using fractions, decimals, percents, and whole numbers to solve problems in finance, linear equations, basic probability and statistics, interest, marketing, and management. Students also learn how to use spreadsheets and create graphs to represent data.

SPANISH

Spanish 6 & 7 – Spanish Connections

This is a class designed to integrate language acquisition and cultural exploration. The goal of this class is to help students develop a global mindset, a curiosity for new cultures, and a clear understanding of how big and diverse the Spanish-speaking world truly is. Through engaging instruction that uses authentic multimedia resources and relevant, level-appropriate materials, students will discover aspects of the language that go beyond grammar and vocabulary to understand the cultural roots and context of the words they speak.

Spanish 8

In 8th grade, the students start to phase out of the introductory level of Spanish and take their first steps towards the intermediate level of Spanish. The curriculum delves into thematic units about travel and tourism, exercise and healthy living, fashion tendencies, and childhood memories. Interpersonal communication skills are at the core of this year's grammatical approach and include expressing opinions, giving advice, describing past experiences, and sharing childhood memories. The preterite tense of regular and irregular verbs and the imperfect tense are the two most important verb tenses this year. After completion of this class, the students move on to Spanish 2 in their freshman year.

Spanish 1

This is an introductory Spanish class that is offered to 8th graders and high schoolers who join Rivermont without prior knowledge of Spanish. The curriculum helps students develop basic interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational skills built around everyday topics such as greetings, school life, family and home life, sports and hobbies, food, fashion, and travel. Essential grammar structures include basic sentence structure, the use of articles and subject pronouns, conjugation of regular and irregular verbs in the present tense, and an introduction to the preterite tense of regular verbs. Upon completion of this class, the students move on to Spanish 2.

Spanish 2

Spanish 2 is an intermediate-level class where students are expected to engage in classroom discussions, research, and experiences. The students are encouraged to apply the key vocabulary and grammar concepts learned in previous years as they dive deeper into more complex themes and grammatical structures. The Spanish 2 curriculum delves into the world of Spanish cuisine, the movie industry, journalism, and the environment. Grammar concepts include the imperative, subjunctive, and future verb tenses and an introduction to persuasive writing. Upon completion of Spanish 2, the students move on to either Spanish Conversation or Spanish Composition, which are offered every other year.

Spanish Conversation

This intermediate-level class is designed to help students develop stronger interpersonal skills and improve their fluency and oral language proficiency in Spanish. The students engage in various communicative situations ranging from lighthearted conversations to serious debate. Through a thematic approach that includes topics such as personal relations, entertainment, healthy living, tourism, and environmental concerns, students are encouraged to do research, present findings, build arguments, share opinions, and respond to unpredictable situations. Upon completion of this class, students move on to either Spanish Composition (this is the last class required to fulfill WL graduation requirements) or Spanish Film and Literature (this is an optional Honors Class for those interested in pursuing the Iowa Seal of Biliteracy).

Spanish Composition*

This is a process-oriented class designed to help students improve their Spanish writing proficiency. In this intermediate-level class, the students are encouraged to explore and understand the interaction between writer, reader, purpose, and message. The students engage in writing activities that range from free-form, unrestricted writing to more structured projects. Throughout the year, the students explore major modes of writing, such as descriptive, persuasive, explanatory, creative, and personal writing. Upon completion of this class, students move on to either Spanish Conversation (this is the last class required to fulfill WL graduation requirements) or Spanish Film and Literature (this is an optional Honors Class for those interested in pursuing the Iowa Seal of Biliteracy).

**This class will be offered in 2027-28*

Spanish Film and Literature

This is an Honors Class offered to students interested in continuing their Spanish education and pursuing the Iowa Seal of Biliteracy. During the first semester, the students explore authentic Spanish literature in a variety of texts that range from short and simple narratives like children's stories to longer and more complex narratives, culminating with a contemporary youth novel. The curriculum helps students develop literary analysis skills through the exploration of literary devices, themes, characters, and authorial intent. During the second semester, the students will explore motion pictures of different lengths and levels of complexity, as well as different variations of Spanish from different countries. The students will analyze short films in terms of their topic, technical style, cultural resonance, and the filmmaker's vision. This class also offers students the opportunity to pursue the Iowa Seal of Biliteracy and prepares them for the successful completion of the corresponding exam.

TECHNOLOGY

5 – 5th Grade Technology

In fifth grade technology, students will practice typing for speed and accuracy, while also learning about media literacy. Students will also explore the capabilities of the Microsoft Word platform in preparation for intentional use of technology in the later part of middle school.

6 – MS Tech 1 (Digital literacy)

The computer is a fascinating machine capable of a variety of tasks. Digital Literacy seeks to make one better at utilizing the core capabilities of standard computer software. This course will see students studying digital safety, word processing software, presentation software, and diving into video editing and production.

7 – MS Tech 2 (Robotics & 3D printing)

In the second year of the middle school technology sequence, students are introduced to the tools in the makerspace. Students will learn about the design process, how to build LEGO robots, how to program and use a 3D printer, and more.

8 – MS Tech 3 (Coding)

This class is an introduction to programming using the language Python and problem solving through programming logic. Python has consistently been in the top 10 programming languages for several years, with many sites considering it number 1 this year. Being able to program in Python is highly in demand across many career fields, even those that aren't explicitly programming. It is even hotter now, due to its prevalence in machine learning, statistics, and AI.

MS Elective: Short Film Production (S1)

Short Film Production is a course dedicated to the skills of planning, filming, acting, editing, and overall production of short films. Students will develop their filmmaking capabilities by learning about and practicing filming techniques, implementing lighting and audio effects, practicing camera and recording skills, photography skills, editing, and presenting their own creative films.

AP Computer Science Principles

AP Computer Science Principles introduces students to the breadth of computer science. In this course, students will learn to design and evaluate solutions and to apply computer science to solve problems through the development of algorithms and programs. They will incorporate abstraction into programs and use data to discover new knowledge. Students will also explain how computing innovations and computing systems, including the Internet, work, explore their potential impacts, and contribute to a computing culture that is collaborative and ethical. AP Computer Science Principles is equivalent to an introductory, college-level breadth course in computer science and will culminate with the opportunity to take the Advanced Placement exam.

AP Computer Science A*

AP Computer Science A introduces students to computer science through programming. Fundamental topics in this course include the design of solutions to problems, the use of data structures to organize large sets of data, the development and implementation of algorithms to process data and discover new information, the analysis of potential solutions, and the ethical and social implications of computing systems. The course emphasizes object-oriented programming and design using the Java programming language. AP Computer Science A is equivalent to a first-semester, college-level course in computer science and will culminate in the opportunity to take the Advanced Placement exam.

**This class will be offered in the 2027-28 school year.*

US Elective: Engineering Principles (S1)

In Engineering Principles, we cover various aspects of knowledge and skills used across engineering disciplines, including the design process, time/project management, designing for manufacturing, basic use of CAD software, and how engineering as a discipline involves trade-offs across many fields.

Maker Space (S2)

The Makerspace class teaches how to use laser engravers and 3D printers to produce physical objects from digital designs. It also covers the basic use of software for doing 2D and 3D design.

US Elective: Graphic Design (S1)

This class introduces students to the fundamentals of graphic design using Canva. Through hands-on projects, students will learn essential design principles, including color, typography, layout, and branding, while creating high- quality graphics for print and digital media. No previous design experience is necessary.

US Elective: Marketing (S2)

Introduction to Marketing introduces students to the fundamentals of marketing, including branding, consumer behavior, advertising, market research, and digital marketing. Students will learn how businesses promote products and services while developing creative problem-solving and communication skills through practical projects and activities. No prior experience is necessary.

[4] https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-cybersecurity/about

FINE & PERFORMING ARTS

5 – 5th Grade Music

In the 5th grade music course, students will be exposed to several musical instruments and then select one of them to learn to play. Students in the class will form an ensemble and practice together for live concerts in November and May.

5 – 5th Grade Art

In 5th grade art, students build upon technical skills learned in early grades to complete projects that will be displayed around campus. Students learn about artistic self-expression within the boundaries of recognized art forms and styles, such as painting, drawing, mixed media and sculpture.

6 – MS Music (S1)

Middle school music will take a deeper dive into music theory and reading musical notation, as well as learning about musical history and music from cultures around the world. We will continue with instruments that were learned in K-5, including the chimes, recorders, and ukulele.

7 – MS Art (S2)

Middle school art is a bridge between the basics of K-5 general art and moves students towards being prepared for 2D Design! They begin to be introduced to 2-point perspective.

8 – MS Theater (S2)

In this exploratory curriculum, young actors will gain experience in all aspects of performance and stagecraft in the pursuit of gaining the necessary skills and confidence to make staged theatre. The course content explores the areas of improvisation, movement and voice training, ensemble performance, writing and directing, and technical theater in an encouraging environment, where cooperation is key.

9 – Great Works of Art Sequence

In this unique class required of all ninth-graders, students will be exposed to great writing, fine arts, music, and film. Each quarter is taught by a different instructor and exposes students to the most important genres, artists, and specific works within each of the four subfields. Students will leave the course with a better understanding of what makes a work of art timeless and an appreciation for how classic works of art continue to speak to the human condition and influence cultures and societies to this day.

MS/US Elective: Band & Choir

Students in band will pick an instrument and learn to play in an ensemble. The class is perfect for beginners as well as those with more experience. The band and choir will learn skills, practice, and periodically perform for the school at assemblies and during the winter and spring concerts.

MS Elective: Color Guard

Color guard is a type of performance that combines dance, step, and the synchronized spinning of probs like flags or batons. The group typically performs alongside a marching band and acts as a visual representation of the music. In this beginner-level course, students will learn the basics of step and spinning and work alongside the band to bring a performance to life.

US Elective: 2D Art (S1)

2D Art is a hands-on art course where students learn how to create artwork on flat surfaces while building strong foundational skills. Students will explore drawing, painting, collage, printmaking, and mixed media while learning how artists use line, value, color, texture, space, and composition to communicate ideas. Through guided lessons and creative projects, students will turn ideas into a variety of finished pieces throughout the course.

US Elective: Advanced Art/AP Drawing (S2)

Advanced/AP Art is a portfolio-based, inquiry-driven course for highly motivated students who want to grow their art skills and push their ideas further. Students should have completed Drawing I, Painting I, or have prior art experience. In this semester course, students create a body of work that includes finished pieces, process work, and written reflections, preparing for future AP portfolio submission or, if ready, submitting an AP portfolio.

Physical Education

5-8: Middle School PE

The Middle School Physical Education focuses on building students' physical fitness, motor skills, and knowledge of healthy lifestyles. Students will engage in a variety of activities designed to improve strength, endurance, coordination, and flexibility while developing a deeper understanding of teamwork and sportsmanship. Through individual and team sports, fitness challenges, and recreational games, students will explore diverse physical activities and discover what they enjoy most. Students will also learn personal responsibility by having to adhere to a gym uniform (red shirt, black shorts, and gym shoes).

8 – Health (S1)

The purpose of Health Education is to explain a variety of concepts to enhance personal health by delivering age-appropriate topics and discussions. In this class, students will undertake units of study about decision-making skills, stress management, positive mental and emotional health habits, fitness, nutrition, reproductive health, diseases prevention and transmission, and personal safety. This class is specifically for students in the eighth grade.

PE 9: General Wellness

Ninth-grade physical education is designed to promote lifelong fitness, health, and well-being through a variety of physical activities and in-depth learning about the importance of physical health. Students will engage in individual and team sports, fitness training, and recreational activities to improve their strength, endurance, flexibility, and coordination. These courses emphasize goal setting, self-discipline, and teamwork

skills. Students will also learn personal responsibility by having to adhere to a gym uniform (red shirt, black shorts, and gym shoes). Additionally, 9th-grade students will be certified in first aid and adult and infant CPR.

Advanced PE A: Recreational PE

In Recreational Physical Education, students will learn a variety of skills that include how to stay physically fit beyond their high school years, which will involve a variety of modalities that include but are not limited to: rowing, cycling, walking, jogging, racket sports, team sports and many more. There will be some days spent inside the classroom, but the majority of the time will be spent in the gym or outside.

Advanced PE B: Strength & Conditioning

In strength and conditioning, students will learn the founding principles of strength and conditioning, such as developing an understanding of muscle groups, how to improve muscular strength, how to move with good form, and how to create an exercise program. Those choosing to take this class should be ready to exercise daily and need to be willing to get out of their comfort zone when trying a variety of new exercises. Most days, this class will take place in the gym/ weight room, but there will be a handful of in-class instruction days as well.

COLLEGE COUNSELING

9 – Freshman Seminar (S2)

In this seminar, students will create their Scoir accounts and begin to build their college resumes. We will explore values, talk about self-awareness, and discuss how those values factor into our decisions about courses, colleges, and careers.

10 – Sophomore Seminar (S1)

In this seminar, students will continue to work in Scoir building their college resumes, following colleges and universities that may be a good “fit,” and they will dive deeper into careers that may be a good match for them. This seminar involves students researching careers thoroughly and interviewing people who work in those fields. Job shadowing will also be expected.

11 – Junior Seminar (S2)

Students will gain a better understanding of the college and career search, application, and decision processes. Students will fully complete a resume. Attendance at two presentations from admission counselors who visit Rivermont will be required. Students should begin to visit college campuses as well

12 – Senior Seminar (S1)

By the time the first semester of senior year is over, it is expected that students will have applied to at least six colleges (two safety, match, and reach) and will have filed the FAFSA and/or CSS Profile (dependent on circumstances). These will be worked on during Senior Seminar. Information on scholarships and early decision will also be discussed.