



THE NEW COMMUNITY SCHOOL

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Mission

The New Community School provides a program of college preparation for dyslexic (specific language learning disabled) students, grades 6-12. The program includes both remediation of language skills and academic challenge appropriate for students of average to above-average intellectual potential. The school also provides an environment that values and fosters personal growth, positive self-regard, and the personal characteristics of a productive citizen. The New Community School serves as a resource to the educational community in the education of dyslexic boys and girls. The school is an independent, non-sectarian, and non-profit day school accessible to dyslexic students of all races, creeds, ethnic origins, and socio-economic backgrounds.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of The New Community School is to provide a challenging academic program and intensive language remediation for dyslexic (specific language learning disabled) young people. Our students have average to above average intellectual ability, and specific difficulty manipulating or processing the written symbol. This difficulty results in poor reading, writing, spelling, and math skills that are not commensurate with their intelligence.

The New Community School strives to: 1) remediate each student's reading, writing, spelling, and math performance so that these language performance levels will rise to a level commensurate with each student's intellectual potential; 2) challenge the student intellectually through an academic program that provides a college option and encourages growth in the study skills and academic competencies associated with a college preparatory curriculum; and 3) provide a supportive and expectant environment that fosters in its students personal growth as well as increased self-confidence and self-esteem that is based on both personal and social accomplishment.

The school provides an environment that values and fosters development of personal characteristics typical of a productive citizen. These characteristics include personal responsibility and commitment, a growing understanding of the patterns of logical consequences, an appreciation of group and individual effort, the fulfilling of leadership potential, and a genuine respect for others. Daily life at the school is heavily influenced by an atmosphere of trust reinforced by the school's honor code. This emphasis on integrity and responsibility serves as a forum for discussion, learning, and decision-making about personal choices.

As the school demonstrates success in alternative strategies, approaches, and programs for specific language learning disabled (dyslexic) young people, it will determine ways in which it can serve the broader educational community. The school encourages professional growth, educational research, and the sharing of proven approaches and instructional strategies that benefit the dyslexic young person.

The New Community School admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, hiring, scholarship and loan programs, and athletics and other school administered programs.

Curriculum Overview

The students who come to The New Community School enter with specific language skill deficits. These impair their ability to acquire knowledge and their ability to demonstrate what they know. Standardized testing 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.

Although students remain with us for from one to seven years, the average length of stay at New Community is two to three years. Students leave New Community for a number of reasons: (a) they complete diploma requirements and graduate; (b) they close the gap between their intellectual potential and their skills; (c) they determine that a college preparatory program does not meet their needs; or (d) it becomes apparent that the primary impediment to their progress is no longer their specific learning difficulty. A faculty committee reviews the progress of students in instances where the school may suggest a transfer. Students may be referred for review by faculty members, by their parents, or by themselves. Once a recommendation for a change in placement has been made the school works with the student and his/her family to find the most appropriate new placement and to provide instruction in transition skills.

A primary focus in the middle school is the remediation of reading, handwriting, spelling, composition, and math 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 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. Class sizes average six to eight students.

Students also have one daily period each of social studies and science. These classes are composed of an average of six to eight students. In addition to the academic curriculum these classes focus on developing independent study and organizational skills. 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, allowing untimed tests, oral testing, reading of assignments, etc. in order to give a student full access to the academic curriculum and to ensure successful, productive experiences. 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. Middle school students also receive regular instruction in health, physical education, and practical and fine arts. These classes meet four times per week. The practical and fine arts program includes instruction in keyboarding skills. Beginning in middle school students are required to take a keyboarding class one semester each year until they develop a specified level of competency. They are then asked to use their keyboarding skills for their academic coursework. Most students develop this level of competency after one or two semesters of instruction.

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 practical and fine arts. These meet four times per week and carry .4 credits per semester.

The academic year is 180 days in length. Each full credit academic course meets for 150 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 (four to ten) and physical education classes may be somewhat larger. Language Fundamentals classes in the upper school typically have two or three students.

A forty-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. Many students in grades 6-9 attend a reading period for the first half of extra help during which their English literature assignments are read aloud to them. Reading support for other assignments and writing assistance, as well as access to recordings and computers are also available during Extra Help.

A supervised after school study hall is provided each day 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. 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 in a central location, so that students who have misplaced a sheet can obtain their assignments. A system of color-coded notebooks 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.

Generally, notes are written on the board in classes and students are expected to copy them; teachers at the lower grade levels never lecture, and even at the upper levels lectures are rare. 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. In grades 8-12 academic courses have comprehensive semester exams; a one-week review period precedes semester exams. Sixth and seventh grade students take exams that cover one quarter's (nine weeks) material. 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. These evaluation forms are a private communication between students and teachers and are not shared with administrators. 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 heads 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 head, 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.

Grading System

Students receive numerical grades in full-credit academic courses and in health and physical education classes. A system of Pass/Fail/Honors grades is used in all other courses. The letter equivalents for numerical grades are as follows:

A =	95-100
B =	88- 94
C =	81-87
D =	75-80
F =	Below 75

At The New Community School grade point average 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.) 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 G.P.A. However, if a student repeats a course only the higher of the two grades is counted. Because most colleges seem to prefer a G.P.A. that is expressed on four point scale we translate our numerical grades to a four point scale. The conversion scale used is as follows:

95-100	=	4.0	81-83	=	2.0
93-94	=	3.7	79-80	=	1.7
91-92	=	3.3	77-78	=	1.3
88-90	=	3.0	75-76	=	1.0
86-87	=	2.7	Below 75	=	0.0
84-85	=	2.3			

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 (88) in any of the four academic subjects (English, math, history, and science;) a grade of 88 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.

Evaluation Practices at TNCS

Students receive numerical grades in academic, health, and physical education classes. These grades have letter equivalents. Although evaluation practices differ slightly among departments and across grade levels, all teachers share certain beliefs.

- A Denotes **excellence**. Work that is of “A” quality goes beyond the 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 The grade of “D” indicates that although the student has some understanding of the content he or she has not met all of the basic requirements of the assignment. It may also reflect significant inaccuracies. “D” quality work is **below the expected level** of mastery and understanding for students in a college preparatory program at this grade level.
- 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.

Grades at TNCS reflect mastery of the course objectives. These objectives vary according to grade level and reflect reasonable expectations and degrees of challenge for students. Grades reflect the student’s degree of success when measured by this objective standard, rather than by individual standards for each student.

Grades at TNCS generally do not reflect difficulties with spelling and writing mechanics. Particularly 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. In most instances students who submit work late or who re-do work that is of low quality should expect to receive a grade penalty. Work that reflects significant teacher assistance may not receive a grade at all.

Teachers strive to evaluate students in ways that fairly reflect their true mastery of the published objectives for the course. We recognize that artificially inflated grades, while pleasing on the surface, are ultimately as damaging as unduly low grades, because they misrepresent the student’s true achievements. We recognize that 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. They help students to identify ways to improve their performance and help students and parents to recognize when a lower than desired grade may accurately reflect a student’s best effort.

Graduation Requirements

The credits required for an academic diploma at The New Community School are as follows:

English	4 units
Mathematics	3 units, to include both Algebra I and Geometry*
History & Social Studies	3 units, to include at least 1 unit each of World History/Geography, U.S. and Virginia government, and U.S. and Virginia history
Laboratory Science	3 units, to include both Biology and Chemistry
Health and Physical Education	2 units**
Practical and Fine Arts	1 unit
Electives	6 units. Typically these include additional credits in math, history, science, language fundamentals, and fine and practical arts.
Language Fundamentals	2 units***
Total	24 units

* Modifications of these specific math course requirements may be made by the Head of the School for students whose specific language learning disability includes *severe* difficulty with mathematics. Students with fewer units of college preparatory math will, however, have fewer college options available.

** In order to complete 2 units of health and physical education students are required to complete two full years of health and physical education classes (typically 9th and 10th grades) plus a full semester of health class in the 11th grade. Juniors and seniors are required to take an additional semester of physical education class unless they have successfully completed the required units and are participating in varsity sports at TNCS. They may opt out of one quarter of P.E. class for each varsity sport they participate in. Students do not accumulate additional credits for work in physical education beyond the required two units.

*** Required each year at The New Community School.

In addition to the academic diploma requirements The New Community School requires several courses specific to certain grade levels. Middle school students are required to take a keyboarding class each year until they demonstrate that they have achieved minimum competency in keyboarding. All students in the high school who have not acquired these skills will continue to take a keyboarding class as one of their electives each year. All students must also pass the *Computer Applications* class, typically taken either in middle school or in 9th or 10th grade, unless they can demonstrate that they already have mastered the skills taught in that class. *The S.A.T. Prep/Colleges and Careers* class is required of juniors. All seniors must take and pass *Ethics and Civicism*, a one-semester course that includes a requirement of thirty hours of pre-approved, supervised community service.

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 seems 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. 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.

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) and is a member of the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS). Eighty-five percent of the school's graduates attend college immediately following graduation.

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 fall meetings for parents of 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 twelve independent schools in the Richmond area. Typically close to two hundred colleges send representatives to this evening program. Information on financial aid and financial planning is also available at this event.

Sophomores and juniors take the PSAT each October. Juniors take the SAT at least once. Seniors may take the SAT during any of the national testing periods. The school administers College Board tests 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 cassettes, provision of a reader, and/or use of a computer to record written responses. Juniors take an SAT Prep class as one of their electives. This course prepares students for the Critical Reading, Writing, and Math subtests of the SAT. Additionally, students investigate college and career options and personal finance strategies. Students complete several personal assessments and receive individual feedback to discuss the results. 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.

While most (85%) graduates go on to college or other post-secondary instruction, some graduates choose to enter the work force directly from high school. While 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.

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 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. Members of the chapter shall be expected to serve as examples to others by their attitude, cooperative spirit, and reliability. Serious disciplinary actions 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. 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 6-7

Ms. Butterworth

Middle School English focuses on building fundamental skills in composition and literary analysis. The literature studied include several novels: *Carry on Mr. Bowditch* (biographical), *My Brother Sam is Dead* (historical), and *A Wrinkle in Time* (fantasy/science-fiction). This literary study is supplemented by videos and field trips. Instructional strategies include structured note-taking, daily practice, and discussion. Role-playing, occasional outdoor activities, and audio-visual resources stimulate and reinforce learning. In composition, students are introduced to basic parts of speech, simple sentence patterns, and increasingly complex sentences. 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.

In odd-numbered years the literature curriculum includes three novels: *The Sign of the Beaver*, *The Beaded Moccasin*, and *Stargirl*.

English 8

Ms. Dalrymple

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 the southern American experience and growing up. Literary works studied are: *A Mango-Shaped Space*, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, *Roll of Thunder*, *Hear My Cry*, *Summer of My German Soldier*, and selected poetry. This literary study is supplemented by videos and field trips. Instructional strategies include structured note-taking and discussion. Role-playing, occasional outdoor activities, and audio-visual resources stimulate and reinforce learning. In composition, students review basic parts of speech, simple sentence patterns, and emphasize increasingly complex sentences. They apply these basic structures to longer writing tasks and are introduced to academic writing forms prerequisite to high school. They learn a multi-step writing process and use it repeatedly to develop their creative potential through varied writing experiences.

Middle School students whose reading is significantly below grade level attend a Reading Period that meets during their Extra Help period. During this time, the instructor reads the assigned literature out loud while students follow along in their texts. Comprehension problems are clarified at this time and difficult vocabulary explained.

English 9

Mr. Humphrey and Ms. Simpson

The ninth grade English curriculum focuses on structures of academic composition and analysis of literature. In composition, students first review sentence patterns and structures, and then they practice higher-level academic writing. Throughout the year, students employ a process for drafting and revising written work as well as a model for task analysis and self-evaluation, develop an organizational system for their course materials, and use a variety of study strategies. Literature study comprises units on short stories, two novels, Greek mythology, Socratic dialog, and Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. Students also employ standard literary vocabulary to analyze and evaluate these texts. Students develop their research and academic writing skills while exploring a career. Instructional strategies include structured responses to each reading assignment, class discussion, peer interaction/collaboration, and a variety of enrichment activities.

Ninth grade students whose reading is significantly below grade level attend a Reading Period throughout the first semester that meets during their Extra Help period. During this time, the instructor reads the assigned literature out loud while students follow along in their texts. Comprehension problems are clarified at this time and difficult vocabulary explained. In the second semester, students who had received reading support will transition to the use of recorded literature in preparation for the expectations of the upper grades.

English 10

Ms. Dalrymple and Ms. Nellen

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 move on to novels and plays, both contemporary works (*A Raisin in the Sun*, *Animal Farm*, and *A Separate Peace*) and classics (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*). This material is taught using a multisensory approach, with a combination of audiovisuals (CDs and videos), structured note taking, discussions, role playing, and peer interaction/collaboration. In expressive writing, students build in more effective use of the writing process as well as task analysis and self-evaluation, then move toward competent creation of the multi-paragraph essay.

English 11-12

Ms. Nellen

The eleventh and twelfth grade English curriculum develops students' composition proficiency, critical thinking, literary analysis, library and research skills, and oral communication in a seminar setting. The course is designed as a two-year, rotating curriculum. In the literature curriculum students read non-fiction and novels, as well as classical, Shakespearean, and modern dramas. 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, and they follow a highly structured writing process to complete all lengthy assignments as well as a research paper. Additionally, they become competent as they analyze and self-evaluate writing tasks. 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. Throughout the year, students demonstrate increased independence in writing, research, and studying. Students reading below grade level are encouraged to use recordings of the literature as they follow along in their texts. The literature in 2009-10 includes *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *The Great Gatsby*, *Antigone*, *Macbeth*, and *Fahrenheit 451*.

The literature in even-numbered years includes *Walden*, *The Catcher in the Rye*, *Death of a Salesman*, *Hamlet*, and *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.

Mathematics

Basic Math Concepts

Ms. Hale

Middle school math students in the Basic Concepts course develop concepts and operations with whole numbers. Basic facts will be drilled to an automatic level. 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 correctness of their work. There is an emphasis on applying these operations to practical problems. Other topics will include graphs and charts, measurement, time, and money. 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 supplement daily lessons and drill.

Fractions, Decimals, and Percents

Ms. Leshner

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 estimation will be used to determine if the answer is reasonable. Students are encouraged to use the checking procedures to ensure the correctness of their work. There is an emphasis on applying these operations to practical problems. Other topics will include probability and related problem solving. 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 supplement daily lessons and drill.

Pre-Algebra

Ms. Hale and Ms. Smith

Pre-Algebra is offered to students who have made gains in computation skills, but still need to work on computation or understanding of math concepts to bring those skills to each student's level of ability. The Pre-Algebra curriculum offers an opportunity to work on algebra skills while continuing to review and improve basic computation 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 on a daily basis in a reference notebook, 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.

General Math

Ms. Smith

General Math is offered to those high school students who still need remediation in the areas of whole numbers, fractions, decimals and percents. The General Math curriculum offers an opportunity to work on these skills in a small classroom environment. All processes for operations are related to the concept of numbers and estimation will be used to determine if the answer is reasonable. Students are encouraged to reason through each problem rather than to memorize algorithms. Students are encouraged to use the checking procedures to ensure the correctness of their work. Other topics will include measurement, time, graphs, charts, and probability. Perimeter, area, and volume concepts will be utilized to practice computational skills.

Algebra I

Ms. Bennett

Algebra I is a course offered to students whose computational skills are average or above and who demonstrate the ability to handle abstract mathematical concepts. Students must score at the 40th percentile or better on the Stanford Diagnostic Mathematics Test. Students use manipulative materials to develop understanding of the abstract concepts of algebra. The concrete manipulatives are used to develop understanding of vocabulary, operations with integers, equation solving techniques and operations with polynomials. The students 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 a daily warm-up 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.

Geometry

Mr. Rothschild

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 II

Ms. Leshner

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, basic concepts of Algebra I are reviewed and further developed. Second semester topics are increasingly abstract and theoretical. They include factoring polynomials, rational expressions, radicals, the quadratic formula, and parabolas. Throughout the year, problem solving skills are developed and practiced. 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.

Algebra III and 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. They will develop an understanding of complex numbers and their use in solving equations. 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.

Pre-Calculus

Ms. Bennett

Pre-Calculus 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 number patterns, polynomial equations, applications of equations, and functions. Students will study conic sections and translations and rotations of conics. In addition, students will expand on their previous study of trigonometry. 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 and Probability

(Not offered in 2009-10)

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

People and Technology: Africa and India

Ms. Hughes

In sixth and seventh grade Social Studies students develop skills that are essential in high school level history classes. These include learning to use notebooks, flash cards, highlighting, 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 people in many different parts of the world. **People and Technology: Africa and India** is offered in odd numbered years. During the first semester students study Africa, focusing particularly on Ghana and South Africa; during the spring semester they study modern India. Throughout the year they consider the impact of technology on culture and society and the special problems of rapidly modernizing societies.

People and Culture in the Americas

(Not offered in 2009-10)

People and Culture in the Americas is offered in even-numbered years. It begins with the study of Native Americans, and focuses on the exchange of ideas, culture, and technology between Europeans and Native Americans. During the second semester students examine Latin America, using Mexico and Brazil as case studies.

World History 8

Ms. Noble

The eighth grade world history course examines early humans and the rise of civilization in the ancient Middle East, China, Greece and Rome 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 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, short research projects, and participation in National History Day enhance the classroom experience.

World History 9

Ms. Metcalf and Ms. Noble

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 French Revolution. 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, Imperial China, and Medieval Japan. 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 the study of the French Revolution. The course utilizes a variety of multi-sensory instructional techniques and a wide range of materials. Students complete several research projects of increasing complexity.

American History

Ms. Metcalf

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.

The United States in the Modern World

(Not offered in 2009-10)

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 and World History are inter-related 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. During the spring semester they complete a formal research paper on a course-related topic. Class activities include lectures, group work and a variety of multi-sensory activities. This course represents the final leg in a major curriculum re-structuring. It will be offered for the first time during the 2010-11 school year to members of the classes of 2011 and 2012. Thereafter it will be the regular junior year course.

Government and Politics in the Modern World

Ms. Morris

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 fifty 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.

Modern History

Ms. Morris

The senior history course provides students with the opportunity to explore topics in modern world history in greater depth and with greater sophistication than in earlier years. It also provides them with the opportunity to develop key skills necessary for success in college-level courses: note taking, essay writing, and research. Students complete two major research projects. In the fall 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 one of several creative methods: a visual display, a documentary video or computer presentation, or an original play. This year's theme is *Innovation in History: Impact and Change*. Students make wide use of primary source materials in preparing their projects. They complete a formal research paper in the spring on a course-related topic. At least once a week class sessions are conducted lecture-style. Major themes of the course include: industrialization and its impact on the modern world; the struggle for power among the major powers; totalitarianism; and the rise and fall of communism.

Science

Science 6-7

Mr. Roy

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 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.

In 2009-10 students in grades 6 and 7 will explore the concept of energy. Through the study of simple machines students will be exposed to basic physical science concepts like work, force, friction, motion, and mechanical advantage. In addition, students will examine these principles in relation to the Law of Conservation of Energy. They will discover how our society currently uses energy, what electricity is, how electricity is generated, and possible alternative energy resources of the future. Conservation of resources will be a focus as students are asked to analyze the advantages and disadvantages of today's energy use practices. Consequently, the interaction and effect of humans on the environment will be examined through a study of population dynamics and pollution.

In even-numbered years students in grades 6 and 7 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. This specific study of living organisms will be linked together through a general study of how organisms have changed over time throughout the vast history of life on Earth.

Earth and Space Science

Mr. Lancaster

Eighth grade students study the basics of Earth Science. The broad topics of study will be geology, meteorology, weathering and erosion, and astronomy. The course is developed around the core concept of heat energy transfer. Through developing an understanding of energy transfer the student will have a basis for explaining much of the dynamic nature of the earth. Heat transfer explains daily weather phenomena, is a factor in world climate differences, explains major ocean currents, is one well accepted explanation for the theory of plate tectonics, and explains the movements and reshaping of rocks in the rock cycle. This course of study will lead the student to understand the dynamics of land, air, and water, and how all are linked together to form the physical environment on which life depends.

Physical Science

Ms. White

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.

Chemical Concepts

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. Stannard

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.

Science, Technology, and Society

Ms. McCoy

Students in Science, Technology, and Society learn a risk/benefit decision-making strategy for assessing technology and its effect on society. They learn to ask pertinent questions, obtain evidence, and use it as a basis for decision-making. The nature of scientific inquiry and the limitations associated with scientific evidence are also a focus of the course. An investigation of a current concern is the focus of each unit studied. For example, while studying the atom and radiation the class may gather information about a proposed power plant or the latest treatment for cancer. Other topics of study are the gene, the computer and privacy, learning, ecology, and the expanding universe. In the fall, students choose either to conduct a scientific investigation to submit to the Virginia Junior Academy of Science statewide competition or to write a research paper on a current issue related to science and society. Political and moral issues in science are discussed. Emphasis is on presenting a challenging, interesting, and relevant course that encourages sound scientific reasoning while studying some basic science concepts at a deeper level than in earlier courses.

Language Remediation

All students at The New Community School take one daily period of language remediation in a course called Language Fundamentals. This daily work is aimed at the remediation of each student's specific language learning deficits. Each student's instruction in this class is individualized to meet specific needs and priorities in reading, spelling, handwriting, written expression, organization, and study skills. The tailoring of instruction takes into account the student's learning style, strengths, and difficulties. Language remediation is carefully sequenced and structured and emphasizes a multi-sensory approach to learn patterns in the English language.

Remediation begins at the level of the student's need. The goal is to achieve, as rapidly and effectively as possible, accurate, fluent reading with good comprehension and improved spelling, handwriting, and organizational skills. Basic reading instruction emphasizes sound-symbol relationships, syllabication, word structure analysis, vocabulary, signal words, and phrasing. Instruction in reading comprehension includes understanding sentence and paragraph structure, main and supporting ideas, detecting and recalling significant detail, distinguishing between direct and implied statements, drawing logical conclusions, following a train of thought, recognizing a shift in the direction of thought, drawing inferences, and anticipating the author's thought and conclusion.

Spelling instruction encourages an analytical, problem-solving approach to spelling difficulties rather than dependence on rote memory. Instruction includes the carefully sequenced discovery and recognition of the predictable patterns in the English language. Instruction in legible cursive handwriting and good spatial organization is given when appropriate, and proofreading and self-correcting techniques are built into daily instruction.

The goal of language remediation is to realize maximum progress as soon as possible in an effort to raise language skills to a level commensurate with intellectual potential. The language remediation teacher and academic teachers encourage and require transfer of newly learned skills to the student's work in classroom assignments until these skills become automatic. Some students can return to the regular classroom setting successfully and the school encourages them to do so once they are adequately prepared.

Reports of progress in language remediation are made to the parents periodically throughout the year. Yearly testing allows a formal assessment of progress. Parents are encouraged to request a conference to review specific test results or the Individualized Instructional Plan at any time.

Physical Education

The Physical Education program is composed of two courses, middle school (grades 6-8) and high school (grades 9-12). All classes are coeducational. Students in grades 11 and 12 who have met the state requirement in Physical Education and who are currently participating in a varsity sport are allowed to substitute their team sport participation for their Physical Education class requirements. Students in grades 9-10 take three quarters of Physical Education and one quarter of health instruction. Students in grades 11 and 12 who do not participate in a varsity sport are required to take one semester of Physical Education class. 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.

Middle School Physical Education

Ms. Dalrymple, Mr. Roy, and Mr. Whitlock

Middle School Physical Education places an emphasis on the key elements of cooperation, body awareness, flexibility, endurance, agility, balance, and spatial awareness. Major emphasis is placed on skill development, through a wide variety of physical activities. This is a period of rapid physical and social growth. The course offers challenging activities that provide an opportunity for the development of interpersonal relationships and skills. The emphasis is on team sports for interpersonal and social growth and centers on cooperation and healthy competition. Some of the topics covered are field games, softball, basketball, Vita trail, and gym games.

High School Physical Education

Ms. White and 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 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.

Health

Self-Esteem

Ms. White

Self Esteem begins with a study of mental health, which like physical well-being is essential for a meaningful and productive life. The foundation of this examination of mental health is developing the concepts of a positive self-image and self-esteem. How one develops their self-image also affects the decision-making process in regards to making constructive or destructive choices. Close attention is given to one of the most destructive choices that can be made, which is use of drugs. Different types of drugs are studied with emphasis on an understanding that drug use is addictive and harmful to one's mental and physical well-being. Students examine how the media can influence the choices that relate to health. Students also study the human reproductive system. This nine-week long course ends with a study of the importance of setting goals and planning one's future. The emphasis is that by making daily choices and well-thought-out goals, each person has a great deal of control over their future and maintaining that control leads to positive self-regard.

Responsibility

(Not offered in 2009-10)

Responsibility explores the importance of caring for others and for the family. The course begins with a study of the importance of communication in developing meaningful relationships with others. The development of relationships necessarily involves conflicts and learning how to resolve conflicts in a constructive manner becomes very important. The goal is to resolve conflicts and differences in a way that strengthens relationships rather than weakens them. The students then examine the dynamics and value of friendships including the barriers that must be overcome to develop and nurture existing as well as future friendships. Students study how the media can influence their actions and communication style. Students also study the physical changes that occur during adolescence.

Why Care?

Ms. Dempsey

Why Care? emphasizes care for oneself. The course examines values, how values are formed, and what expressions or behaviors arise based on these values. The course then moves into the value of caring as being the foundation for the well being of the individual, but also essential for the good health of communities and society. Values study also leads naturally to the decision-making process and how decisions not only affect individuals, but also entire communities. Students study how the media can affect the choices they make and how these decisions can be a risky and challenging endeavor for young people. Awareness of both short and long-term consequences is necessary for a good decision-making process. Students study their role in staying safe as well as basic first aid instruction. The last part of this nine-week long course shifts to the myriad of decisions students this age face regarding their sexuality, health and well-being.

Health and Your Body

Ms. Dempsey

Health and Your Body teaches a holistic view of health and wellness. In the nine-week long course students learn that health consists of physical, social, mental, emotional, and spiritual components and that wellness is when all five components are in a state of good health. Lifestyle choices play an important role in maintaining wellness – especially those that relate to nutrition, exercise, rest, and safety. Therefore, a responsible decision-making strategy is taught and practiced in order to promote health and wellness. The course includes a brief unit on safety and first aid. The students watch the movie Philadelphia and discuss such issues as sexually transmitted diseases, empathy for people with health problems, and tolerance of other people's lifestyle choices. Students are evaluated on in-class participation, notebook, performance on oral projects/ reports, tests and special projects.

Substance Abuse and Sexuality**(Not offered in 2009-10)**

Substance Abuse and Sexuality is offered to ninth and tenth grade students in alternate years. In this nine-week long course, students study body control systems. Initially, they explore the functioning of the human senses as well as the function of the brain and nervous systems. The relationship between brain physiology and dyslexia is also examined to help students better understand their unique learning strengths and weaknesses. The endocrine system and its role in sexual development is studied and discussed. In the later portion of the course, the serious, detrimental effects of tobacco, alcohol, and drugs on these body control systems are discussed. Information is presented in a multisensory manner with emphasis on the visual modality, using such methods as charts, models, videos, and drawings. Community resources and guest speakers broaden our students' awareness of the community's role in health services. Students are evaluated on in-class participation, notebook, performance on oral projects/reports, tests and special projects.

Making Choice and Taking Charge**Ms. Greenwood**

This one semester course for juniors introduces some of the issues in developmental, social, and abnormal psychology. Through interactive and multi-sensory instruction students explore topics such as levels of human behavior, the learning process, learning difference, emotional development, normal and abnormal behavior, stress management, interpersonal communication, sexual relationships and personal health, and effective decision-making. The course heightens awareness that individuals can shape many of their own circumstances by knowing themselves well, and by making thoughtful and well-reasoned choices.

Practical and Fine Arts

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. Typically 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. Practical and Fine Arts classes meet four times a week. In the upper school each one semester practical and fine arts course carries .4 credits toward graduation. Students are evaluated using a Pass/Fail/Honors grade system. The courses are scheduled on a semester basis. Students select at least one of their elective courses. Usually students receive either their first or second choice. Most students take a course in *Keyboarding and Word Processing* for one or more semesters, until they develop good keyboarding skills. Successful completion of *Computer Applications* is required for graduation. All juniors take *S.A.T. Prep* for one semester. Seniors take *Ethics and Civicism* for one semester.

Fine Arts Exploratory

Ms. Payne

The Fine Arts Exploratory elective is designed for 6th and 7th grade students to present them with a wide range of art skills and media. Students will participate in completing several projects in a variety of art media to understand and discover the different methods in which art can be produced. Students will explore concepts such as; why do people create art? What does the artwork communicate to me? Does learning about art help me to grow?

Art of Other Cultures

Ms. Payne

The 8th grade Fine Arts curriculum is a semester course designed to present students with a wide range of art skills and media. This course coordinates with the 8th grade history class to study more in depth the art of the different cultures. Students will explore the art of the Stone Age and early man, the art of ancient civilizations, the Middle East, India, China, Greece and Rome. Students consider these questions as it pertains to these cultures: What is art? How can we tell what an art work means? What makes one artwork better than another? What is beauty? What makes an object or an experience aesthetic? In what ways are aesthetic values related to other values? Students will explore creativity and craftsmanship in their work by looking at work of artists from these cultures as well as art styles, both past and present. Student work will be displayed in the Gallery for one show per semester.

Upper School Art Exploratory

Ms. Payne

The Fine Arts Exploratory elective is designed for high school students unsure about their skill in art but who want to explore what art has to offer. This class is intended to present the student with a wide range of art media: drawing, painting, clay, pottery wheel, sculpture, collage, weaving and more.

Drawing and Painting

Ms. Payne

A wide variety of media experiences will be offered in the general disciplines of drawing, painting, and printmaking. Students will further develop their skill in craftsmanship and explore their own style of creative expression. Exploration of careers in the art world will be explored. Students are expected to meet all honors requirements – such as keeping a detailed journal/sketchbook of homework assignments and visit a museum or gallery and complete the art critique worksheet. Students should expect to complete work to be added to a portfolio of work in preparation for college.

Making Objects: Three Dimensional Art

Ms. Payne

Making Objects -Three-dimensional Art is an elective class that may be chosen by the serious high school sculpture student. The objective of the course is to present students with various ways of creating three-dimensional art forms in assorted media: pottery, sculptures, weavings and fiber art, mosaics and plaster. Exercises will be assigned to help students learn to make aesthetic decisions concerning shape, form, volume and mass as they relate to their subject and content. Additionally, students will explore their personal artistic style and learn to integrate it into their individual projects.

Creative Writing

Ms. Butterworth

The Creative Writing elective in upper school is for students who want to learn and practice the “tools” of writing. This elective is designed to help students hone their creative writing skills. Under the teacher’s guidance students will practice various writing techniques, revise and rewrite selected pieces, and develop their personal writing style

Drama 6-8

Ms. Noble

In this beginning course of theatre, students are introduced to an overview of drama. 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. In addition, the student will learn basic evaluative techniques of dramatic productions.

Drama 9-12

Ms. Noble and Mr. Stannard

The drama elective is an introduction to theatre with an emphasis on basic acting skills as well as offering an opportunity to work behind the "curtain" in coordinating costumes, prompting, property management, set design, program, poster and ticket design and controlling lighting and sound equipment. The objective of this course is to give the student a well-rounded theatre education. The student will learn to analyze a script to determine all that is necessary to create a full length play production.

Introduction to Guitar

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 requires 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.

Intermediate Guitar

Mr. Humphrey

Intermediate Guitar is a continuation of the Introduction to Guitar class, a beginner's course of fundamental guitar instruction for students with little or no previous experience with the instrument. Intermediate Guitar focuses on the review, development, and fluency of the fundamental skills learned in the previous course. Intermediate Guitar is a hands-on class that requires each student to have daily access to a 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 bars; however, considerable time will be spent learning how to apply guitar skills to song writing and performance. 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.

Introduction to Photography 6-8

Mr. Masucci

Students in this class explore Photography with the mission of answering this question: What makes a good photograph? Students learn to identify and apply the principles of what makes a good photograph. They will use different types of cameras – from pinhole to digital – and also learn about the different styles of several famous photographers.

Basic Photography 9-12

Mr. Masucci

In the basic photography course students learn to take black and white photographs using a 35 mm camera. 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 how cameras work by using a pinhole camera. They should 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.

Advanced Photography

Mr. Masucci

Advanced Photography is a course that may be chosen by high school students who have already taken a basic photography course. The main objective of the class is to teach students how to go beyond basic photography techniques (taking black and white photographs with a 35 mm camera) and teach them advanced techniques with a 35 mm camera or any other format that the student has an interest in working with. This course will require students to have taken the basic photography class, which provides an understanding of the compositional aspects of picture taking and the technical aspects and how they may be controlled to create a proper, artistic picture.

In Advanced Photography, students will be given assignments that will teach more complex elements of design, both with and without a camera. Students will put their existing photography skills to use, including developing black and white paper and film in a darkroom setting. All students will complete a series of photographs and at least one photographic art project that uses advanced photographic procedures. Students will be required to submit one or more completed projects to a semester Fine Arts show.

Keyboarding

Ms. Hale, Ms. Hughes, and Ms. Metcalf

Keyboarding/Word Processing uses a language based, teacher-directed approach to teach touch typing. All students beginning in their middle school years are required to take keyboarding until a minimum competency is met. 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.

Computer Applications

Ms. Hale and Ms. McCoy

In Computer Applications, students learn to use word processing functions, spreadsheets, charts, graphics, and presentation software. The students are exposed to brainstorming software that helps them organize their thoughts for written expression. Internet research techniques and software are taught as well as computer ethics, etiquette and beginning website design. The course integrates review and practice of touch typing in order to increase each student's entering speed and accuracy. Students are encouraged to practice and use their skills outside of class by typing at least one academic homework assignment each

night. Computer Applications is open to students who have passed Keyboarding/Word Processing or demonstrated a working knowledge of basic computer skills. This course is a graduation requirement and may be taken in either middle or upper school.

Multimedia Design

Ms. Smith

Multimedia Design is an upper school course for students who want to create and display digital projects. Students will learn to use multimedia software to scan documents, add audio clips, and edit digital photos and videos. The convenience of Web 2.0 software is emphasized in order to create projects, communicate, and share work with the teacher and other students. Website design is explored as a way to showcase artwork, pictures, and videos. Students will explore and use ethical principles, etiquette, and safety while accessing the internet. Multimedia Design is open to students who have passed Computer Applications and demonstrate a high level of interest in computers.

Yearbook

Ms. Nellen

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, body copy, and captions; learn the elements of eye-catching design, and fit text and photos into layouts, using desktop publishing technology.

The Best Books You've Never Read

Ms. Butterworth

The Best Books elective for middle school provides a structured opportunity to read for pleasure. Under the teacher's guidance students select, read, and share contemporary, popular fiction. This elective is designed to foster an appreciation for popular fiction and develop a life-long love of books. Through oral readings, independent reading, and audio books, students will develop pleasure-reading habits and improve comprehension and analytical skills.

Sewing and Crafts

Ms. Hale

This course is open to middle school students of all skill levels. Students will complete several sewing and craft projects. They will learn techniques for hand stitching, cross-stitching, sewing on a machine, and jewelry making.

SAT Prep

Ms. Goode and Ms. Leshner

SAT Prep is a required class for all juniors. The focus of the class is to help students prepare for college entrance examinations and begin planning for their post-high school lives. For part of the semester, students work on strategies to improve their performance on the SAT I. The focus is on becoming a savvy test-taker rather than on short-term vocabulary or math growth. Students practice questions in the Math, Critical Reading, and Writing subtests to become familiar with the directions, format, and questions as well as to understand when they should make an educated guess. For the remainder of the semester, students investigate college options, careers, and personal finance strategies.

Ethics and Civicism

Mr. Rothschild

Ethics and Civicism is a required course for seniors. Ethics is the study of moral duty and obligation. Civicism is the study of civic consciousness. Because individuals exist as members of a larger community, civicism places limits on the exercise of individuality. Students in this course study what

moral dilemmas are, primarily through case studies, and then study several ethical frameworks for decision-making that can assist them in choosing the moral course of action. Students will study how the decisions they make can be based on background beliefs, their personal narrative and moral character, and/or moral principles that they espouse. They will learn that an ethic of caring and sense of responsibility to the community in which they live also plays a large part in making difficult moral decisions. Students will plan and carry out thirty hours of community service at an approved, non-profit agency of their own choosing.