

# ELECTIVE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

## 2021-2022

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### Band Course Description

#### **Sixth Grade:**

*Woodwinds and Brass & Percussion* classes continue what you have learned in elementary school. These groups perform together as the Concert Band.

#### **Seventh and Eighth Grade:**

**Symphonic Band:** The middle level band, which combines woodwinds and brass into one class.

**Wind Ensemble:** The *premiere band* at Gunston that represents the school for most important events beyond regular school concerts.

**Percussion Ensemble:** This is a specialized class for all 7th and 8th grade percussionists who have completed *6th Grade Percussion*. Students continue to perform with the Symphonic Band or Wind Ensemble while focusing on their own techniques and music.

*All groups perform a minimum of two school concerts a year. All students also have the opportunity to participate in the spring trip to an amusement park, and audition for APS Honors Bands (6-8) and the All District Band (7-8). The Jazz Band, which meets after school, is also open to select students in grades 7-8.*

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### Business & Information Technology Course Description

**6th Grade Exploring Business & Information Technology:** Students are introduced to beginning keyboarding, coding (Scratch), microcomputers applications, and career exploration. Students learn proper keyboarding techniques including the touch-typing method, speed, accuracy, good organizational skills, composition, language arts, and proper use and care of equipment.

**7th Grade Digital Input Technologies:** This foundation one-semester course introduces the use of relevant and emerging technologies, tools, and applications to prepare students for current workplace practices and everyday life. Students will demonstrate

information processing using a variety of hardware and software and internet-based tools to produce and integrate data in various formats.

**7th/8th Grade Computer Programming:** This is an extremely rigorous, grinding, and challenging year-long course that will develop the students' coding, computational, and financial and digital literacy knowledge and skills while learning computer science principles. The curriculum includes analytical, problem-solving, creativity, critical thinking skills, and computer coding using Python. *Please Note: This course carries high school credit and will apply to high school graduation requirements. It's highly recommended and encouraged that students are enrolled or have taken Algebra I.*

**8th Grade Computer Applications and Internet Technologies:** This one-semester course is designed for students to develop real-life, outcome-driven approach skills for digital citizenship, basic computer operations, keyboarding, application software (word processing, spreadsheets, multimedia applications, databases), and career exploration. This course promotes skills that can be applied across the curriculum and offers preparation relevant to 21st century skills and secondary education.

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## **Chorus Course Description**

**6th Grade Exploratory (The Wheel) :** We will build on musical concepts learned in elementary school!

**7th grade Beginning Chorus I:** We will expand our singing with multiple parts and varied repertoire!

**8th Grade Advanced Chorus II:** We will grow as musicians, vocalists, and learn challenging repertoire for concerts and assessments.

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## **Drama Course Description**

**6th Grade Exploratory (The Wheel)** We play drama games, make puppets, write original scripts, move, tell stories and have fun!

**7th Grade Drama I:** We build on 6th grade (games!) and add poetry, Shakespeare, movies and costume design!

**8th Grade Drama II:** We play games and write our own movie scripts, rock the poetry slam and ACT out loud!

*(Please note: everyone is welcome to take Drama. It is an inclusive course.)*

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## **Family Consumer Science Course Description**

**6th grade Exploring FACS** - prepares students for the demands of 21st century living. This course provides a foundation for managing individual, family, career, and community rules and responsibilities.

**7th grade Teen Living** emphasizes personal responsibility for demands of multiple life roles through topics on: Individual development, personal environments, nutrition and wellness and  
Creating textile products

**8th grade Life Management Skills-** teaches higher order thinking skills through simulated life experiences such as family role playing and caring for children, evaluation of short-and long-term goals, and assessments of different techniques to balance work and family. Students also complete various modules in a self-directed multimedia lab.

**8th grade Individual Development** (full year-HS credit) TBA

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## **Orchestra Course Description**

**Beginning Orchestra:** Beginning orchestra students focus on correct posture and playing position, note and rhythm reading skills, and using the bow properly. Students study solo, small ensemble, and large ensemble beginning level music.

**Intermediate Orchestra:** Intermediate orchestra students focus on improving technical skills, scale studies, note reading, and performing concert literature. Students study solo, small ensemble, and large ensemble intermediate level music.

**Advanced Orchestra:** Advanced orchestra students work on developing strong technical skills including shifting, vibrato, and extensive scale studies. Students will perform advanced level literature in concerts and the District Orchestra Festival. Students also study solo, small ensemble, and large ensemble advanced level music.

*(Please Note: Orchestra is a year long elective)*

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## **Technical Education and Robotics Course Description**

**6th Grade Exploratory (The Wheel) :** We learn all kinds of things about what "Tech Ed" is. Engineering Drawing, The Design & Engineering process, and we make some fun stuff along the way. We use the 3-D printer, sticker cutter and many CAD programs. We dip our toes into coding and fabrication.

### **7th grade Inventions & Innovations:**

We will dive more heavily into fabricating, package design, game making, and turning your ideas into reality.

### **8th Grade Technological Systems**

Here we examine different systems that make the world work. We cover Structures, Sustainability, Electrical, Power systems and more. We do projects that show how these systems work in real life.

### **8th Grade Robotics - (High School Credit)**

This is a challenging course that covers the fabrication of mechanisms and the coding required to make them move. We cover the VEX platform and the Arduino C++ programming language. Students design and create robots that move and perform tasks to solve real world problems.

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## **Video Journalism Course Description**

**6th Grade Wheel:** Students learn the basics of camera shots, shot composition, and how to create amazing videos with their Ipad or computer. Students learn media literacy and advertising techniques to produce (write/shoot/edit) an original commercial.

**7th Grade Semester:** Students gain experience with many media tools connected to digital photography, digital music, animation, graphic design, and video production. Students work on storytelling, scriptwriting, and storyboards to create How- to videos, PSAs, animations, product reviews, and news stories for broadcast and online content.

**8th Grade Full Year:** Students put all their vast knowledge together in this dynamic studio class to produce PR content for Gunston and APS, write and create *Good Morning Gunston*, learn high level filmmaking techniques, participate in regional and national film festivals, and work with staff and younger students on best practices for media production.

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## **Visual Arts Course Description**

**6th Grade Exploratory (The Wheel):** In this month-long course students will develop a curiosity for art and creation. Students will be introduced to introductory skills and techniques on drawing, color theory, and sculpture.

**7th Grade Art I:** Students will be introduced to technical drawing construction and will focus on line, shape, form, value, shading, and color. All art projects will incorporate three areas of artistic study: Culture, History, Technique, and Applications.

**8th Grade Art II:** Students will experiment with different ways to view and express art. Students will explore their personal artistic styles and learn techniques and practices to harness their skills. Traditional and digital methods of art creation will be explored in painting and drawing. Students will also be introduced to the pottery wheel and will focus on form and shape. All art projects will incorporate three areas of artistic study: Culture, History, Technique, Applications, and Art Critic.

*(Please note: This class has semester or year-long options)*