

**Little Falls Township Public Schools**

# **Middle School**

## **Electives**

**2017-2018**



## Grades 5 & 6

### Cycle Courses

*All students in Grades 5 and 6 will cycle through the following courses. Each course will run for one marking period.*

- Health
- Spanish
- Art
- Music

### Elective Courses

*Students in grades 5 and 6 will be offered two (2) electives. Electives will run on A days and B days, meaning that each course will meet every other day. If students qualify for BSI, ELA Lab, or Math Lab (refer to Placement Readiness Courses on back cover) these courses will replace an elective. You will be notified if your child is in need of one of these courses. It is important to know that students are not guaranteed their choice elective.*

## Grades 7 & 8

### Elective Courses

*Students in grades 7 and 8 will be offered four (4) electives. Electives will run on A days and B days, meaning that each course will meet every other day. If students qualify for BSI, ELA Lab, or Math Lab, these courses will replace an elective. You will be notified if your child is in need of one of these courses. It is important to know that students are not guaranteed their choice elective.*

## Fine and Performing Arts

### Instrumental Music: Grades 5 & 6 (B), 7 & 8 (A)

*The primary focus is on the development, continuation, and expansion of basic skills begun the previous years that are necessary for effective instrumental music performance. In addition to large group ensembles, individual growth and achievement are encouraged. Topics/skills covered include: tone development, counting, timing, and rhythmic development, reading and notation skills, including sight reading, introduction of scales, simple music theory, development of an extensive vocabulary of musical*

*terms and symbols, ear training and listening skills, equipment care and maintenance, and effective practice habits. This course requires evening performances.*

### **Chorus: Grades 5 & 6 (A), 7 & 8 (B)**

*This is a premier middle school choir for both male and female students who are interested in vocal music performances. It is also an outlet for students who enjoy singing for their own pleasure. The following musical skills will be stressed: proper breathing, pleasant vocal production, blend and balance, expansion of range, good intonation, ear training, and sight reading. Different styles of music will be explored. Participation in various performances is a requirement of the class. Rehearsals, performances, and activities are part of the course grade. These activities are integral elements that support and extend learning in the classroom.*

### **Music Appreciation: Grades 7 & 8 (A & B)**

*Music Appreciation is a listening and theory class designed to expose students to a multitude of styles, genres, and historical periods of music. Through listening guides and class discussion, students will learn how music is written and how to effectively listen as to gain a greater appreciation for its craftsmanship. Students will develop knowledge of proper listening skills, historical cultural knowledge, and aesthetic analytical techniques.*

### **Studio Art: Grades 7 & 8 (A & B)**

*Learn the foundations of art in order to become an independent creative artist. Students will explore numerous projects intended to enhance their visual expression through a wide range of materials, media, and dimensional formats. A variety of technical and conceptual approaches are introduced and practiced throughout the semester. The goal is to challenge, strengthen, and nurture the artist within.*

### **Photography: Grade 8 (A & B)**

*Learn how to take quality pictures and compose through the camera, edit and present your photos, and discover careers in photography. Get ready to wow your friends and family with your professional quality photographs.*



## Science and Technology

### **Maker Space: Grades 5 & 6 (A) , 7 & 8 (B)**

*This course will provide an introduction to the tools, materials, and maker culture - a place for students to develop creative solutions to authentic challenges through the process of Design thinking. Course activities will consist of teamwork and hands on learning in which real world problems and challenges will be explored. Get ready to imagine, plan, build, and create.*

### **Digital World: Grades 5 & 6 (A & B)**

*Digital World is a full year course for fifth and sixth graders. The course will allow students to express their imagination while creating computer based projects. Each project is unique and challenging allowing the students to learn and have fun at the same time. Students will use digitally based programs by way of their Chrome Book to create their vision and explore what the digital world has to offer. Projects can include Prezi presentations, creating comic strips and digital collages.*

### **STEAM: Grade 7 (A) and Grade 8 (B)**

*Next year, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades will be offered integrated STEAM electives, which will allow for a more in-depth study of topics. These courses will link the normal 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum to various design and engineering projects. There will also be research projects which will be shared with classmates through differing technological mediums. Proper collaboration and communication of ideas are central to these classes. Aspects of coding and 3-D printing will likely be incorporated as well.*

## World Language

### **Spanish: Grades 7 & 8 (A & B)**

*Spanish I is an accelerated two year course taken in grades 7 and 8. Students will expand their listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in Spanish. Taking and passing this course will allow the student to place into advanced Spanish classes in high school. Taking Spanish II as a freshman will allow students to take AP Spanish for which they will earn college level credits while still in high school.*

## Communications

### **Book Club: Grade 5 (A) and Grade 6 (B)**

*Do you love to read books? Do you love to finish a great book and discuss that book with friends? If so, this is the elective for you! In the Book Club elective, you will read amazing books and talk about those books with your classmates. As a School #1 Book Club, we will learn more about the authors, find common themes in the books we read, and stage our own battles. The winning teams from the class will go on to the county Battle of the Books competition to compete against other schools who have read the same books. In this elective, you will also gain knowledge and enjoyment from reading good books, sharing them with friends, and – if you qualify – a fun day of competition in the “Battle of the Books”.*

### **Creative Writing: Grades 5 & 6 (A & B), 7 & 8 (A & B)**

#### **Grades 5 & 6 Creative Writing**

*If you have a wild imagination and love to make up stories then this is the class for you! Creative Writing is a year-long course that meets every other day. We will be exploring different genres of writing, through both reading and writing, as well as the other necessary elements needed to improve writing and composition skills.*

*WRITING GENRES COVERED: Journal Writing, Memoir, Poetry, Mystery Stories and Fairy Tales*

#### **Grades 7 & 8 Creative Writing**

##### **Emphasis on Poetry and Short Story Writing**

*If you love writing stories for fun and bringing characters to life then this is the class for you. Creative Writing is a year-long course that meets every other day. We will be exploring different genres of writing, through both reading and writing. This is a project-based class that will focus on the craft and process of poetry writing, myths and children’s literature.*

*WRITING GENRES COVERED: Poetry and Music, Memoir writing, Worldwide Mythology, and Short Fiction.*

### **Journalism: Grades 5 & 6 (A & B) , 7 & 8 ( A & B)**

*What is journalism? How does the news impact our lives? In this course you will be introduced to various types of journalistic writing. You will*

*learn how to gather information, write a story, and edit your work for publication. Emphasis will be placed on writing features, hard news, reviews, and editorials; however, much of the writing will be driven by your interests. Together we will unpack concepts like bias, perspective, and newsworthiness. You must have a strong desire to write and must be enthusiastic to work on our school newspaper, The Hornet Highlights!*

### **Public Speaking: Grades 7 & 8 (A & B)**

*Does the thought of standing up in front of 100 – or even 20 – people terrify you? Most people have a fear of public speaking, but this is a common requirement for many professions and even some academic programs. Taking a public speaking elective can help you become more confident in front of a crowd and more articulate throughout your life. In this public speaking elective, students will build their confidence in their public speaking skills. Students will be provided with numerous opportunities to perform and speak in front of a supportive audience; these opportunities will culminate in special storytelling and public speaking performances. Through numerous class exercises, students will improve their eye contact, body movement, gestures, confidence, and vocal characteristics. So... get ready to become a great public speaker!*

## **Physical Fitness**

### **Fitness For Life: Grades 5 & 6 (A & B)**

*This course is designed for the student who is interested in developing his/her present fitness level. It will focus on fitness and healthy choices. Students will be required to participate in daily cardiovascular and weight training. Students will attempt to meet fitness goals and will be evaluated on their participation and ability to meet their fitness goals.*

### **Healthy Living: Grades 7 & 8 (A & B)**

*Between studying for assessments, completing homework, and maintaining an active social life, you may find it hard to keep up with your personal health and wellness during the school year. In this course, you will learn mindfulness techniques used to reduce stress, improve performance, and maintain a healthy lifestyle as part of your studies. Come and explore mind-body exercises and investigate the science of nutrition to improve your overall health.*



## **Entrepreneurial and Leadership Studies**

### **Current Topics: Grades 7 & 8 (A & B)**

*This course introduces students to current topics that impact citizens living around the world. Students will be expected to seek out and analyze newsworthy events and explain how the event impacts them either directly or indirectly. The focus will be on reading and writing, as well as gaining the necessary public speaking skills to share opinion and research orally. At the end, students will have a sound knowledge of important current events and the confidence to change their surroundings as an active world citizen.*

### **Personal Financial Literacy: Grades 7 & 8 (A & B)**

*If you are interested in an elective that can teach you skills that can be used throughout your entire life, then Personal Financial Literacy is for you! Come and learn about a subject you use every single day of your life – MONEY. In this elective, you will learn about the many facets of money. Savings, budgeting, loans, debt, interest, credit/credit cards, taxes, investments, and yes of course, the stock market!*

*The TREP\$ Program teaches students how to start their own businesses in 6-8 weeks. They learn the lessons in the 6 weekly workshops, and apply them at home as they build their business with the help of their families. The whole school community comes out to enjoy the TREP\$ Marketplace, held right at the school, where the young entrepreneurs launch their businesses together. This year, TREP\$ will be incorporated into this elective.*

*Join me and become the “Chief Financial Officer” of your personal finances.*

### **Peer Group Connections: Grade 8 (A) Must be Selected** □

*Throughout the year, PGC-Middle leaders will work in co-leader pairs as group discussion leaders and positive role models for their younger peers. During weekly sessions, peer leaders will lead discussions and activities with the same small group of fifth graders. The goal is to help fifth graders feel welcomed into middle school and develop skills they need to handle everyday challenges.*

## Placement Readiness Courses

*Grade 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> students will be taking Placement Readiness Courses to ensure they meet the proficiency standards measured by PARCC. These courses are designed to incorporate study skills and additional content support, and intervention strategies into instruction. These courses will replace one elective selection:*

- *English Language Arts Lab*
- *Mathematics Lab*
- *BSI*

## Accelerated Courses at Passaic Valley High School

*Selected 8<sup>th</sup> grade students will be able to enroll in accelerated courses at the high school each day during 0 period which begins at 7:12am and ends at 8:00am. These offerings are one in a series of collaborative projects between the three sending districts of Little Falls, Totowa, and Woodland Park and the receiving high school, Passaic Valley Regional. Students who meet the criteria can take one of the following:*

- *Italian I*
- *STEM I Explorations*

## Activities and Club Opportunities

Grade 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> students will have the opportunity to participate in clubs and activities sponsored by the Little Falls Township Public Schools and PTSA

- \*Art Club
- \*Battle of the Books
- \*Chess Club
- \*Fitness Club
- \*Junior Municipal Alliance
- \*National Junior Honor Society
- \*Retro Video Club
- \*Sources of Strength
- \*Musical/Play
- \*Student Council
- \*Student Senate
- \*Track and Field
- \*Yearbook