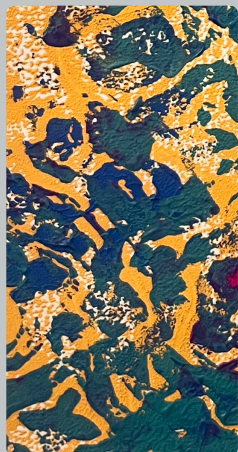
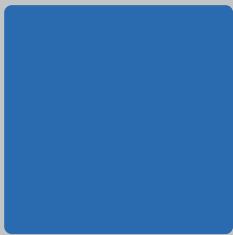


PXMS

2026-27

COURSE CATALOG



SHANGHAI
AMERICAN
SCHOOL

Illustration by Bryce Fisher '32

SHANGHAI AMERICAN SCHOOL

JULY / AUGUST 2026						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
26	27	28	29	30	31	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
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16	17	18	19	20	21	22
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SEPTEMBER 2026						
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OCTOBER 2026						
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NOVEMBER 2026						
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DECEMBER 2026						
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2026-2027

IMPORTANT DATES

July

27 First Day for New Hires

August

3 First Day for Returning Faculty
 5 New Family Orientation - Puxi
 6 New Family Orientation - Pudong
 7 PK, G6 & G9 Student Orientation
 10 First Day for K-12 Students
 11 First Day for PK Students

September

24 Professional Learning Day (no school)
 25-30 Mid-Autumn Festival/National Day Break (no school)

October

1-3 National Day Break (no school)
 29 Fall Conferences (early release for students)
 30 Fall Conferences (no school)

November

26 Professional Learning Day (no school)
 27 November Break (no school)

December

16 End of Semester 1 (full day)
 17 Winter Break Begins (no school)

January

1 New Years Day (no school)
 4 School Resumes/First Day, 2nd Semester
 22 Professional Learning Day (no school)

February

4-12 Chinese New Year/Lunar New Year Break (no school)

March

11 Spring Conferences (early release for students)
 12 Spring Conferences (no school)
 26 Professional Learning Day (no school)
 29-31 Spring Break (no school)

April

1-2 Spring Break (no school)
 5 Tomb Sweeping Day (no school)

May

1-4 Labor Day Break (no school)

June

9 Dragon Boat Festival (no school)
 11 End of School Year (early release for students)

JANUARY 2027						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
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FEBRUARY 2027						
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MARCH 2027						
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MAY 2027						
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JUNE 2027						
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27	28	29	30			

LEGEND

- School Break (no school for students & academic staff)
- Official Chinese holidays (school closed)
- Professional Learning Day (no school for students)
- Early Release for students
- Other important dates, see above

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WELCOME FROM YOUR PRINCIPAL & VICE PRINCIPAL



ERICA CURRY
Puxi Middle School
Principal

We are pleased to present this course catalog, which offers an overview of our middle school program and our philosophy regarding middle school education, along with the courses available for the 2026-2027 school year.

We believe that sharing this is essential for fostering a comprehensive understanding of the teaching and learning that will take place in the classroom. This will help strengthen the partnership between families and the school.

In our commitment to providing a well-rounded educational experience, we encourage students to explore a variety of subjects that not only align with their interests but also challenge them to grow. Our curriculum is designed to inspire curiosity and critical thinking, equipping students with the skills needed for future success. We invite families to engage in discussions about the potential impact of each course on their child's overall development.

For courses that can be selected based on preferences, we strive to honor those choices. However, we cannot guarantee first choices, as scheduling must consider a balance of gender, class sizes, and the number of available sections.

If you have any questions, please reach out to your child's school counselors: Ms. Claire Greene (Grade 6) at Claire.Greene@saschina.org, Jessica Ferguson (Grade 7) at Jessica.Ferguson@saschina.org. or or Ms. Ty Urquhart (Grade 8) at Ty.Urquhart@saschina.org.

Thank you for being an essential part of our learning community!

Ms. Erica Curry, Principal
Email: Erica.Curry@saschina.org

Ms. Bina Shah, Vice Principal
Email: Bina.Shah@saschina.org



BINA SHAH
Puxi Middle School
Vice Principal

OUR PHILOSOPHY

At SAS Puxi, our vision for middle school education aligns with research on young adolescents and is directly linked to our SAS Mission. We frame all our decisions—ranging from scheduling and curriculum to the balance between academic, social and emotional wellbeing, and extracurricular activities—around three guiding principles: academic excellence, developmental responsiveness, and support for all learners.

To support students' cognitive development, we purposefully engage their natural sense of wonder and curiosity, creating intellectually rigorous, inquiry-based, and relevant learning experiences. Our differentiated approach addresses the diverse needs of each student, fostering intellectual curiosity and a sense of responsibility within an academically challenging environment. We believe that every child learns best and remains engaged when they feel valued, challenged, and can connect their learning to their individual interests and styles. This holistic approach empowers our students to thrive both academically and personally, preparing them for future challenges and opportunities.

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

At Puxi Middle School, our curriculum, instruction, and assessment are aligned with a rigorous program of study that empowers every student to meet or exceed established standards. We prioritize culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP), ensuring that our teaching practices reflect and honor the diverse backgrounds and experiences of our students.

Teachers employ a variety of instructional strategies across all grade levels and subjects, integrating Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles to provide equitable access to learning for all. This includes the use of technology and artificial intelligence (AI) tools that enhance personalized learning experiences and promote engagement. Our lesson objectives and daily learning targets clearly communicate the high expectations we hold for our students, supporting them as they develop skills aligned with our Transdisciplinary Transfer Goals (TTGs) and content area standards.

In this inclusive and challenging environment, students acquire the skills necessary to gain knowledge and think critically and creatively about that knowledge. By fostering this supportive atmosphere, we prepare our students not only for academic success but also for their roles as responsible global citizens, equipped to navigate and contribute to an evolving world.

DEVELOPMENTALLY RESPONSIVE

Teachers at Puxi Middle School recognize the unique characteristics of young adolescent development. Our educators, administrators, counselors, and support teams collaborate to create a comprehensive support system for students and their parents, focusing on social and emotional education.

While adolescents seek independence, they also require the guidance and involvement of the school community, in partnership with parents, to foster their academic, social, and emotional growth. This collaborative approach ensures that students receive the support they need during this critical developmental stage.

SUPPORT FOR ALL LEARNERS

Our faculty and administrators expect high-quality work from all students and are committed to helping each student achieve their potential. Evidence of this commitment at Puxi Middle School includes the support available to students, as appropriate, through our Learning Support, Counseling, and Multilingual Learner (MLL) sheltered immersion programs.

ADVISORY

Our middle school advisory program is a vital component dedicated to enhancing Social Emotional Learning (SEL) among students. Each student is assigned to an advisory group led by a teacher, consisting of approximately 13-15 students, and they meet daily with their advisor. The advisor acts as the primary advocate, offering support in various situations and fostering a safe and trusting environment. This program is closely linked to our curriculum and academic excellence, as it reinforces the importance of social-emotional skills in achieving academic success.

The goal is for students to develop meaningful connections with their advisor and peers within the group. To maximize the advisory experience, students are encouraged to arrive on time and actively engage in connection activities and SEL lessons, which are designed to promote personal growth, resilience, and a sense of belonging within the school community, while also supporting their academic journey.

STANDARDS BASED REPORTING

The Puxi Middle School report card uses a standards-based format that communicates how students are performing in relation to clearly defined subject-area academic standards. SAS also reports on student progress in relation to five School-wide Transfer Goals and one overarching learning behavior as part of the Learner Profile. Both Academic Progress Standards and Learner Profile categories are measured using a 4-level proficiency scale - Beginning, Approaching, Meeting, and Exceeding. The target is for all students to meet the standard indicated by a "Meeting".

SAS Academic Progress and Learner Profile expectations are challenging and rigorous. Consequently, "Meeting" a standard indicates full demonstration of knowledge and skills. "Exceeding" the standard indicates an exemplary demonstration of learning that goes beyond what is expected for the standard or category.

ASSESSMENTS FOR AND OF LEARNING

Assessments provide a reliable measure of knowledge, conceptual understandings, skills, and attitudes toward learning. Teaching, learning, and assessment are mutually dependent on one another, and assessments are used to both evaluate learning (Assessment of learning) and inform instruction (Assessment for learning). We use two types of assessments for and of learning:

1. **Formative assessment (During instruction):**

On-going teacher observations of performance during instructional activities allowing for real-time adjustments to instruction and learning strategies. By incorporating a variety of formative assessments—

such as quizzes, class discussions, peer reviews, and reflective journals—educators can identify areas where students may need additional support or enrichment. This ongoing assessment helps create a responsive learning environment, fostering growth and ensuring that all students are on track to meet their academic goals.

2. Summative assessment (After instruction):

Summative assessments are critical evaluations that occur at the end of an instructional period to measure student learning, skill acquisition, and academic achievement. These assessments, such as exams or projects provide a comprehensive overview of what students have learned and how well they have met the established learning objectives.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACADEMIC FEEDBACK AND ENGAGEMENT

In addition to ongoing teacher feedback on formative and summative assessments, as well as the opportunity to directly contact teachers throughout the academic year, we provide parents and students with two formal conference opportunities. The 2026-2027 conference dates are:

- Fall Conferences – October 30 & 31, 2025
- Spring Student-Led Conferences – March 12 & 13, 2026

SCHOOLGY

Students and families can access learning behaviors and academic progress data through Schoology, our adopted learning management system for middle school. Teachers will update student data at least every two weeks, reporting one formative or summative assessment during this period. Families will be notified if there are concerns about a child's academic progress or learning behaviors. Parents/guardians should check Schoology regularly to review student progress and teacher feedback. You are encouraged to reach out to individual teachers directly if you do not see consistent feedback recorded.

TECHNOLOGY IN THE CLASSROOM

Shanghai American School's goal is to use technology in innovative and authentic ways to transform learning and communication. Our aim is to create an environment where all members of the community experience enhanced personal and educational growth, think critically and are dynamic consumers and creators, while understanding the role of technology in addressing the challenges of the 21st Century.

Shanghai American School is a 1:1 Mac school; each student in Grades 6-12 has their own computer provided by the student's family. The use of cloud software such as Office 365 and Schoology (our Learning Management System) facilitates student collaboration, sharing, and allows for prompt feedback from teachers and classmates. All SAS applications and cloud resources are universally accessible by parents and students. Through guided use of technology and AI by skilled educators, students arrive at a deeper understanding of content in all areas of the curriculum.

DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP

SAS is a Commonsense accredited school that follows the Common Sense Digital Citizenship curriculum. SAS believes that all students deserve support in becoming responsible digital citizens by learning how to make safe and smart choices online. Students will focus on six different topics from K-12 which include: Media Balance & Wellbeing, Privacy & Security, Digital Footprint & Identity, Relationship & Communication, Cyberbullying, Digital Drama & Hate Speech, and News & Media Literacy.

THE HUB LIBRARY

The Hub Library is a dynamic space designed to support student learning, exploration, and literacy development. The library serves as a resource hub for both students and teachers, providing access to a wide range of print and digital materials. Through research lessons coordinated with classroom teachers, students develop essential information literacy skills, including evaluating sources, conducting effective research, and using information responsibly.

The library's collection includes a diverse selection of fiction and nonfiction books, online databases, and e-books, ensuring that all students can access resources in formats that suit their learning preferences. The Hub Library is open before and after school, as well as during breaks and lunch periods, offering a welcoming environment for independent study, quiet reading, and research support.

Our dedicated library staff is committed to helping students locate resources, develop research strategies, and foster a lifelong love of reading. More information about available resources can be found at libguides.saschina.org. Please contact our Middle School Librarian, Ms. Brenna McCandless with further questions. Brenna.McCandless@saschina.org.

MULTILINGUAL LEARNER (MLL) SERVICES

At Shanghai American School, we believe multilingualism is an asset. We celebrate students' multilingualism as a strength; all students bring valuable language resources and cultural knowledge to our learning community. In PXMS, students build academic language needed to learn in every subject area. Teachers use inclusive, language-rich practices so students can participate meaningfully, think critically, and communicate effectively.

Some of our multilingual learners (MLL) benefit from targeted language support to ensure equitable access to grade-level learning. Through our collaborative sheltered immersion model (CSIM), MLL specialists work collaboratively with teachers in English Language Arts and Social Studies to co-plan, co-teach, and co-assess. Language objectives are integrated with grade-level content, and instruction is differentiated and scaffolded based on students' English proficiency, so students develop language and content together through engaging, language-rich learning experiences.

Throughout the year, MLL specialists monitor students' progress and use multiple sources of data to identify strengths, set goals, and adjust support. Data sources may include classroom performance, common assessments, and WIDA assessment data.

At PXMS, we value students' home languages and cultures and encourage families to continue using and developing their home languages, which supports identity, connection, and long-term learning.

LEARNING SUPPORT

The Middle School Learning Support program is designed to provide individualized academic and social-emotional support for students with identified learning needs. The program's goal is to empower students to become confident, independent learners by addressing their unique learning profiles and promoting growth during the middle years.

Learning Support services are delivered through a combination of tailored approaches to meet each student's needs. Indirect

services involve consultation with classroom teachers to ensure that accommodations and instructional strategies are effectively integrated, alongside regular check-ins with students.

Collaborative team teaching enables learning support specialists to work closely with core subject teachers in co-planning, co-teaching, and co-assessing, providing in-class support for students who thrive in the general education setting. For those requiring additional support, direct instruction is offered in small groups, focusing on pre-teaching, re-teaching, and targeted skill development. This multi-tiered approach guarantees that students receive the appropriate level of support to thrive academically and socially.

SCHOOLWIDE TRANSFER GOALS

CRITICAL THINKERS — SAS students are critical thinkers who develop ideas and construct arguments by questioning, evaluating, synthesizing, and considering perspective.

SAS students . . .

- Consider multiple approaches and perspectives to evaluate decisions
- Ask relevant, discerning questions to stimulate reflection
- Evaluate evidence and sources to support arguments and conclusions
- Synthesize and apply new understanding to a variety of contexts

SKILLFUL COMMUNICATORS — SAS students are skillful communicators who advocate for self, others, and ideas in more than one language by listening, responding, and articulating through multiple media.

SAS students . . .

- Use appropriate listening skills to integrate information across contexts
- Respond to emotions in self and in others
- Articulate ideas with exceptional clarity
- Select an appropriate medium/a to communicate with an audience

EFFECTIVE COLLABORATORS — SAS students are effective collaborators who help teams innovate outcomes to achieve a goal by holding themselves and others accountable, contributing in productive ways, and sustaining respectful interactions.

SAS students . . .

- Hold themselves and others accountable for team agreements
- Build on the perspectives and contributions of others
- Develop and implement appropriate strategies to manage interactions

CREATIVE LEARNERS — SAS students are creative learners who engage their imaginations to generate novel ideas, demonstrate flexible thinking, evaluate approaches, and take action.

SAS students . . .

- Use their imagination to generate novel ideas
- Demonstrate flexible thinking
- Use strategies to evaluate the creative process
- Execute ideas with exceptional clarity and effectiveness

ETHICAL GLOBAL CITIZENS — SAS students are ethical global citizens who take action based on informed decisions filtered through empathy, integrity, sustainability, and social justice.

SAS students . . .

- Acknowledge and respect perspectives and cultures with consideration and care
- Take action with honesty and sincerity
- Make decisions and take actions to impact sustainability significantly
- Engage in authentic opportunities to impact others positively

REQUIRED COURSES

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS (ELA)

The Middle School English Language Arts (ELA) program is aligned with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), which emphasize the development of essential literacy skills across reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language. The ELA program is designed to cultivate students who are critical readers, effective writers, and thoughtful communicators, capable of engaging with diverse texts and ideas. Through exposure to a variety of literary genres, writing styles, and discussion formats, students learn to analyze complex texts, construct evidence-based arguments, and express themselves clearly and creatively.

Middle school students develop skills and competencies in the following areas:

- **Reading**
Analyzing fiction and nonfiction texts; identifying themes, character traits, and literary elements; citing textual evidence to support claims; comparing and contrasting perspectives across texts.
- **Writing**
Composing narrative, informational, persuasive, and reflective texts; organizing ideas logically; developing voice and style; revising and editing based on feedback; incorporating conventions of grammar, punctuation, and sentence fluency.
- **Speaking and Listening**
Participating in academic discussions, including Socratic Seminars; presenting ideas clearly; listening actively; engaging in collaborative conversations; responding thoughtfully to peers.
- **Language**
Building vocabulary; applying grammar and usage rules; developing command of the English language to enhance both writing and speaking.

Multilingual Learners are supported through their engagement in a variety of formative and summative assessments aligned with the Common Core State Standards. They participate in individual and group projects, discussions, presentations, and writing tasks, all supported through teacher and peer feedback. Throughout the academic year, students are expected to read independently at home each day, selecting books from a variety of genres including realistic fiction, science fiction, dystopian, fantasy fiction, biography, informational nonfiction, and historical fiction.

Sixth Grade English Language Arts

In Sixth Grade, students focus on developing foundational reading and writing skills. They explore fiction genres through narrative writing projects, experimenting with storytelling techniques and character development. Students analyze characters and themes, support claims with textual evidence, and engage with dystopian fiction texts. Grammar instruction supports writing development, covering parts of speech, pronouns, sentence fluency, and punctuation conventions. In nonfiction writing, students compose personal narratives, literary essays, persuasive essays, and reflective personal essays, building critical thinking and revision skills throughout the year. Independent reading is emphasized, encouraging students to read broadly and deeply from self-selected books.

Seventh Grade English Language Arts

Seventh Grade ELA builds upon foundational skills by introducing more complex texts and writing tasks. Students engage in literary analysis, focusing on character traits, textual evidence, and analytical reasoning. They explore dystopian and science fiction genres, demonstrating their understanding through creative projects. Students also collaborate on original story development, working through the writing process to refine ideas. Later units include historical fiction book clubs and Socratic Seminars, where students deepen discussion skills and make connections between literature and historical contexts. The year concludes with research-based projects that emphasize evaluating sources and presenting findings clearly. Independent reading continues to be an essential component of the curriculum.

Eighth Grade English Language Arts

In Eighth Grade, students refine advanced reading, writing, and communication skills. They analyze diverse short stories to improve narrative writing techniques, including sequencing, pacing, and reflection. Students apply these skills in creative projects, such as developing original scripts. Analytical writing is emphasized through essay composition, focusing on structure, clarity, and literary themes. Students participate in academic conversations and Socratic Seminars, practicing active listening, evidence-based discussion, and effective communication. The curriculum also includes research writing, where students explore personal interests and global topics, applying critical evaluation of sources. The year concludes with a poetry portfolio project, allowing students to showcase their growth as writers and performers.

MATHEMATICS

The Middle School Mathematics program is aligned with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), providing a clear progression of skills designed to foster mathematical reasoning, problem-solving, and critical thinking. Through exploration of number systems, algebraic reasoning, geometry, statistics, and probability, students develop a strong foundation that prepares them for higher-level mathematics. The program emphasizes real-world application, logical reasoning, and the ability to communicate mathematical thinking effectively.

Mathematics students engage in a variety of formative and summative assessments aligned with CCSS, including problem-solving tasks, projects, and data analysis activities. Regular feedback supports students in building fluency, confidence, and deeper understanding of mathematical concepts.

Sixth Grade Mathematics

In Sixth Grade, students focus on building a strong foundation in mathematical reasoning and problem-solving. They explore ratios, rates, and unit rates, developing an understanding of proportional relationships. Students extend their number sense to include negative numbers, and strengthen their fluency with fractions, decimals, and percentages. Algebraic thinking is introduced through work with expressions, equations, and inequalities. Geometry topics include area, surface area, and volume of various shapes. Additionally, students are introduced to statistics by analyzing data using measures of center and variability.

Seventh Grade Mathematics

Seventh Grade students apply and expand their mathematical understanding while refining reasoning skills and problem-solving strategies. They explore proportional relationships in real-world contexts such as discounts, interest, taxes, and scale drawings. Algebraic reasoning strengthens as students solve multi-step equations and inequalities and analyze linear relationships. They develop fluency with operations on all rational numbers and apply properties of operations to simplify expressions and equations. Geometry instruction includes relationships among angles, circles, and three-dimensional figures. In statistics, students investigate probability and use data to draw conclusions about populations.

Eighth Grade Mathematics

Math 8 develops strong foundational skills in algebra and geometry, with a focus on linear relationships and systems of equations. Students learn to represent and analyze relationships using graphs, tables, and equations, building a deep understanding of slope and rate of change. In geometry, students explore transformations, the Pythagorean Theorem, and volume of three-dimensional figures including cylinders, cones, and spheres. Students also analyze data using scatterplots and lines of best fit to identify patterns and make predictions. This course emphasizes conceptual understanding, problem-solving, and clear mathematical reasoning, providing a strong

and appropriate foundation for success in future mathematics courses at the high school level.

Placement Note: Math 8 is a rigorous, grade-level course designed for all students and provides a strong foundation for success in high school mathematics.

Integrated Math 8 (Accelerated)

Integrated Math 8 is an accelerated course that builds on Math 8 concepts while incorporating key topics from Integrated Math 1, preparing students for advanced high school mathematics. The course emphasizes deeper algebraic reasoning through the study of functions, including function notation, piecewise functions, and the analysis of systems of equations and inequalities. Students apply mathematics to solve complex problems and model relationships using multiple representations. The course also introduces exponential functions, including growth and decay. In geometry, students extend their understanding of transformations and volume and are introduced to triangle congruence. The course moves at an accelerated pace and requires strong foundational skills, independence, and persistence in problem-solving.

Placement Note: Placement in Integrated Math 8 is recommended for students who demonstrate strong mathematical understanding, independence, and readiness for an accelerated pace.

SCIENCE

The Middle School Science program is an integrated, inquiry-based curriculum aligned with the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). Students engage in scientific investigations, engineering practices, critical thinking, and problem-solving to explore a variety of life, physical, and earth science concepts. The curriculum emphasizes the development of scientific literacy and curiosity, encouraging students to apply scientific principles to real-world contexts.

Throughout middle school, students build competency in key Science and Engineering Practices, including:

- Developing and Using Models
- Analyzing and Interpreting Data
- Constructing Explanations and Designing Solutions
- Engaging in Argument from Evidence
- Planning and Carrying Out Investigations

Each grade level focuses on specific topics in life science, physical science, and earth and space science, with an emphasis on skill development, conceptual understanding, and connections between scientific disciplines.

Sixth Grade Science

Sixth Grade Science establishes a strong foundation in scientific practices while introducing students to a broad range of topics.

Key areas of focus include:

- **Life Science**
Impact of Resource Availability on Populations of Organisms.
- **Physical Science**
Force and Motion, Kinetic and Potential Energy, Thermal Energy, Particle Motion.
- **Earth and Space Science**
Weather/Climate, Natural Hazards, Rock Cycling.

Students explore core scientific concepts through laboratory investigations, data collection, and collaborative problem-solving. Emphasis is placed on lab safety, critical thinking, and the development of models to represent scientific phenomena. Students explore fundamental questions such as how forces influence motion, the movement of thermal energy and its effects on weather, and how Earth's geological processes lead to the formation of natural hazards and rocks.

Seventh Grade Science

Seventh Grade Science builds upon prior knowledge, guiding students through engaging units that focus on life science, physical science, and earth and space science concepts:

- **Life Science:**
Cell Structure and Function, Metabolic Reactions and the Human Body, Growth and Reproduction (Genetics), Matter and Energy in Ecosystems
- **Physical Science:**
Interactions of Matter in Chemistry
- **Earth and Space Science:**
Dynamic Earth Systems and Tectonic Plates

Students investigate the structure and function of cells in the human body, dive deeper into the microscopic world of genetics and heredity, explore chemical reactions and matter interactions, and analyze data to understand Earth's dynamic systems. The curriculum emphasizes the application of models, data interpretation, and argumentation from evidence, encouraging students to connect scientific theories to real-world contexts.

Eighth Grade Science

Eighth Grade Science serves as the culmination of the middle school science experience, refining students' skills in scientific reasoning and problem-solving.

Key areas of study include:

- **Life Science:**
Biological Evolution—Unity and Diversity
- **Physical Science:**
Designing Solutions—Shark Tank Project; Sound and Light Waves
- **Earth and Space Science:**
Earth's Place in the Universe, Weather and Climate Systems; Human Impact on Earth's Environment

Students explore the unity and diversity of life, analyze weather patterns, investigate Earth's changing climate, and consider the impact of human activity on the environment. In addition, students apply engineering and design principles to develop innovative solutions to real-world challenges. Through interdisciplinary projects, students practice scientific modeling, engage in critical discussions, and communicate their findings effectively.

SOCIAL STUDIES

The Middle School Social Studies program explores the human experience through inquiry, critical thinking, and real-world application. Aligned with the C3 (College, Career, and Civic Life) Framework, the curriculum emphasizes the development of reading, writing, research, communication, and collaboration skills. Students investigate essential questions, analyze primary and secondary sources, and apply historical and contemporary knowledge to understand civic responsibility and global perspectives.

Throughout middle school, students engage in inquiry-based learning, build disciplinary literacy, and explore significant themes such as culture, governance, economics, conflict, and human-environment interaction. Each grade level fosters responsible citizenship by encouraging students to draw meaningful connections between the past, present, and their own lives.

Six Grade Social Studies

In Sixth Grade, students are introduced to foundational social studies concepts and skills through inquiry-driven units. They investigate topics such as what social studies is and how to be study it successfully, how historical evidence and inference are used to understand the past, and the evolution of laws over time. Students also explore how individuals take informed action to create positive social change and examine cultural and geographical influences on ancient trade along the Silk Road. Throughout the year, students develop skills in formulating questions, evaluating source credibility, and communicating conclusions. Collaboration, critical thinking, and responsible citizenship are emphasized as students learn to apply these skills in various contexts.

Seven Grade Social Studies

Seventh Grade Social Studies builds on the skills introduced in Sixth Grade, guiding students through a deeper exploration of history, geography, and civics. Students analyze key historical events and examine how geographic, political, and cultural factors shape societies over time. They engage in collaborative projects and discussions, evaluating primary and secondary sources to draw evidence-based conclusions. Emphasis is placed on developing inquiry skills, understanding systems of governance and civic responsibility, and considering economic structures and social movements. Students continue to refine their communication and critical thinking abilities while making connections between historical themes and the contemporary world.

Eighth Grade Social Studies

In Eighth Grade, students refine their inquiry and analytical skills while exploring complex historical and contemporary issues. They begin the year by conducting independent inquiry projects, connecting their personal interests to broader social studies themes and strengthening their research skills. Students analyze multiple perspectives on local and global issues through public speaking and debate, fostering empathy and civic awareness. The curriculum also includes an in-depth study of World War I, where students examine historical narratives and primary sources to understand the origins and impacts of global conflicts. Additionally, students explore migration, identity, and resilience by analyzing the experiences of migrants throughout history.

The year culminates in an interdisciplinary Shark Tank project, in which students collaborate to develop business proposals addressing environmental challenges, integrating their learning from both social studies and science. Throughout the year, students are encouraged to evaluate evidence, synthesize information, and communicate their ideas effectively, preparing them to be informed, responsible global citizens.

HEALTH

The Middle School Health program is aligned with the SHAPE America National Health Education Standards, which provide a comprehensive framework for supporting students in making informed, healthy decisions. The program emphasizes personal well-being, social-emotional development, and responsible decision-making. Through interactive, age-appropriate learning experiences, students develop knowledge and skills to support their physical, mental, emotional, and social health, while fostering a safe, inclusive, and empathetic community.

The SHAPE America standards guide students in developing competencies in the following areas:

- **Healthy Habits**
Understand the importance of building healthy habits as teenagers, including sleep, technology use, productivity, and stress management.
- **Healthy Relationships**
Building respectful relationships with self and others, recognizing boundaries, and fostering empathy.
- **Mental and Emotional Health**
Managing stress, understanding emotions, and developing coping strategies.
- **Growth and Development**
Understanding social, emotional, and physical changes during adolescence, including human development, gender, and identity.
- **Decision-Making and Advocacy**
Making informed choices, analyzing influences (including media and technology), and advocating for personal and community health.

Students engage in a variety of formative and summative assessments, including individual projects, group discussions, and reflective activities. Teacher and peer feedback support student growth throughout the course.

Sixth Grade Health

In Sixth Grade Health, students engage in a trimester-long course exploring key aspects of teen development including Healthy Habits, Growth and Development and Healthy Relationships. Using the Habit Loop Model, students begin to recognize the cues, behaviors and rewards; or negative effects of behaviors, and how they can affect other habits - with a focus on sleep, technology usage, stress, and productivity. The growth and development unit addresses the social, emotional, and physical changes experienced during puberty, helping students navigate these transitions confidently. Students practice building healthy relationships, boundaries, and learn how to recognize positive friendship traits. Students participate in discussions and activities that build empathy, respect, and self-awareness, creating a safe and inclusive learning environment.

Seventh Grade Health

The Seventh Grade Health course focuses on nutrition and cultural influences, health media literacy, and healthy decision-making. Students explore how dietary choices and habits impact health and well-being and analyze influences on health behaviors. Additionally, students critically evaluate health information, develop skills to recognize misleading wellness claims, and access valid and reliable sources of health information. Using a decision-making model, students channel their personal values to navigate peer pressure scenarios and understand the influences and risks associated with substance use. Students leave the course empowered to make informed choices and navigate health information effectively.

Eighth Grade Health

In Eighth Grade Health, students examine the relationship between brain development, emotions, behavior, and decision-making. They learn how the adolescent brain processes stress and risk and explore mindfulness techniques to manage impulsivity. The course also investigates the influence of media and technology on mental health and behavior, including the impact of social media design, smartphone use, and body image. Using valid sources of health information, students deepen their understanding of mental health and explain the importance of mental health care in adolescence. Students further examine human development, healthy relationships, gender constructs, stereotypes, and consent. They use science-based resources to foster inclusion, belonging, and identity development. Students leave the class with skills to set boundaries, communicate effectively, and encourage healthy and safe relationships.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The Middle School Physical Education program gets students moving, thinking, and working together. Through a wide variety of sports, games, and movement experiences, we focus on building the physical, social, and emotional skills that lead to a lifetime of active health.

Aligned with SHAPE America standards, our curriculum is designed to meet students where they are. Whether an experienced athlete or a new participant, each student is supported through differentiated instruction that builds confidence, competence, and a love for movement.

Students develop skills in four key areas:

- **Skill Development:** Applying motor skills in dynamic, game-based environments.
- **Physical Fitness:** Building strength, endurance, and flexibility through engaging and varied activities.
- **Collaboration and Communication:** Working as a team to solve problems and achieve shared goals.
- **Personal Responsibility:** Setting goals, reflecting on progress, and owning their growth.

A Curriculum Built for Progression. Throughout the year, students explore a rotating sequence of units designed to ensure continuous skill-building. Activity categories include:

- **Invasion Games** (e.g., basketball, soccer, hockey)
- **Net & Wall Games** (e.g., volleyball, tennis, badminton)
- **Striking & Fielding Games** (e.g., softball, cricket)
- **Movement** (e.g., gymnastics, dance, cultural movement)
- **Aquatics** (swimming and water safety)
- **Target Games** (e.g., archery, golf)

By exposing students to this range of activities, the program ensures that every learner finds an entry point to success. The goal is not just to teach sports, but to inspire students to lead active, healthy lifestyles during their time at SAS and beyond.

Sixth Grade Physical Education

In Sixth Grade Physical Education, students move from informal elementary play to a more structured study of movement and physical literacy. The program builds foundational skills and introduces game strategies across three game categories: Invasion Games (e.g., soccer, basketball, floor hockey), Net & Wall Games (e.g., volleyball, badminton, pickleball), and Striking & Fielding Games (e.g., t-ball). In the Movement unit, students investigate rhythm, pattern, and cultural expression through activities such as Wushu. The Aquatics unit focuses on water safety, stroke mechanics, and confidence-building, with introductory experiences in snorkeling and paddle boarding. Across all units, instruction emphasizes preparation, effort, cooperation, sportsmanship, and a positive attitude.

Seventh Grade Physical Education

Seventh Grade Physical Education challenges students to apply foundational skills with greater complexity and intent. Game-based units deepen tactical awareness—students learn to read play, anticipate outcomes, and make strategic decisions in Invasion, Net & Wall, and Striking & Fielding games. In Aquatics, students refine stroke technique and build endurance; the unit also emphasizes performing arts through artistic swimming, during which small groups collaboratively prepare and present a routine. Fitness instruction advances from basic participation to a clear understanding of fitness components (strength, endurance, flexibility) and methods for tracking personal progress. Students may also explore Chinese culture by preparing and performing a Dragon Dance for Lunar New Year.

Eighth Grade Physical Education

Eighth Grade Physical Education reinforces skill transfer across activities and builds a foundation for lifelong fitness. Students refine tactical decision-making through advanced gameplay and assume leadership roles as coaches and officials in Invasion, Net & Wall, and Target games. The Aquatics unit introduces water polo while focusing on stroke efficiency and endurance across multiple strokes. Fitness instruction centers on designing personal workout plans and deepening understanding of training principles. Through Outdoor Pursuits and collaborative challenges, students demonstrate responsibility, resilience, and peer leadership in physically demanding situations—fostering life skills that support an active lifestyle.

REQUIRED COURSES WITH PREFERENCES

VISUAL ARTS

The Visual Arts program follows the National Core Art Standards (NCAS), which provide a forward-looking framework designed to engage students and support success in the visual arts across a variety of experiences. These standards aim to inspire students to become visually literate learners who understand the role of visual arts in society, as well as the roles they may pursue within the visual arts world, including artist, designer, curator, critic, or art historian.

The NCAS standards for middle school help students develop skills and competencies in the following areas:

- **Creating**
Generating and recording ideas and observations; organizing and developing artistic ideas and work; refining and completing artwork. Developing skills and exposure to various materials.
- **Presenting**
Selecting, analyzing, and interpreting artwork; developing and refining artistic techniques through practice and reflection; conveying meaning through visual choices.
- **Responding**
Perceiving and analyzing artwork; interpreting intent and meaning in artwork; applying criteria to evaluate artwork.
- **Connecting**
Synthesizing and relating personal experiences to create art; connecting artistic ideas and works to societal, cultural, and historical contexts to deepen understanding.

Visual Arts students engage in a variety of formative and summative assessments aligned with course standards. Individual and group projects are supported through teacher and peer feedback.

Sixth Grade Visual Arts

This trimester-length course introduces students to the NCAS standards while exploring a variety of media. Students build foundational skills in drawing, printmaking, and sculpture. Emphasis is placed on creative thinking strategies, learning through making, and experimenting with different materials. Students are encouraged to make connections between their art and the world around them. Exposure to diverse artistic practices and artworks helps students deepen their visual thinking and develop transdisciplinary artistic behaviors.

Seventh Grade Visual Arts (Semester and Full Year)

This course focuses on the exploration of artists and art history from a variety of contexts. Students continue to refine the foundational skills learned in Sixth Grade, with increased emphasis on refining their use of media. Working in both 2D and 3D media—including drawing, painting, digital drawing, and clay—students engage in a process of creating artwork, making connections to other subjects, and reflecting on their personal beliefs and values. Through a cycle of researching, generating ideas, planning, making, and reflecting, students deepen their understanding of artistic processes. Students enrolled in the full year-long course further develop unit concepts and art-making techniques.

Eighth Grade Visual Arts (Semester and Full Year)

In this course, students continue to explore artists from a variety of contexts while focusing on refining their use of media and communicating with an audience. Students work in 2D and 3D media—including digital drawing, collaging, painting, printmaking, and clay—and engage in an in-depth process of creating and presenting artwork. This process includes researching, generating ideas, planning, experimenting, refining, making, and displaying their work. Students enrolled in the full year-long course dive deeper into unit concepts and advanced art-making techniques.

DESIGN TECHNOLOGY

The Puxi Middle School Design Technology program is guided by the principles of Design Thinking and emphasizes the development of creative, practical, and sustainable solutions. Students explore what it means to be a designer through different lenses such as engineering, physical product design, digital creation, and business relations. The program encourages students to apply design concepts in real-world contexts, fostering collaboration, problem-solving, and innovation.

The Design Technology curriculum focuses on a variety of design cycles, processes, and methods, providing students with a deeper understanding of how real-world solutions are developed. A key emphasis is placed on sustainability and service learning, as well as the creation of solutions that have practical and societal value.

Middle school students progress through and are assessed on five stages of the Design Cycle:

- **Empathizing Needs**
Understanding client or user needs and identifying design challenges.
- **Defining Specifications**
Outlining clear, achievable goals and criteria for design solutions.
- **Ideation and Planning**
Generating ideas, planning processes, and developing prototypes.
- **Prototyping and Skills**
Building and refining prototypes using a variety of tools and techniques.
- **Testing and Evaluation**

Students are expected to analyze outcomes, gather feedback, and make iterative improvements.

Students collaborate on larger projects, simulating real-world practices in project management and teamwork. Assessments include both formative and summative evaluations, with opportunities for teacher and peer feedback.

Sixth Grade Design Technology

This trimester-length course introduces students to the fundamentals of Design Thinking and processes. Students develop an understanding of how design concepts are applied to create real, practical solutions in both physical and digital environments. Key skills include Computer-Aided Design (CAD), robotics and programming, and design thinking principles. Students are encouraged to explore, experiment, and apply their learning to generate creative solutions, building transferable skills that connect to other learning areas.

Seventh Grade Design Technology

(Semester and Full Year)

This course challenges students to apply practical and creative thinking skills to solve a variety of design problems. Students engage with the design process to develop solutions that reflect their understanding of the world around them. The curriculum includes 3D design and creation, the use of hand and power tools, laser technology, media editing, film development, robotics, and coding. Students gain experience with advanced technologies and techniques that enable them to produce high quality, practical and creative design solutions. In the full year-long course, students explore these concepts in greater depth, further refining their skills.

Eighth Grade Design Technology

(Semester and Full Year)

Building upon prior knowledge, this course deepens students' understanding of advanced design processes. Students apply practical and creative thinking skills to engineer solutions to open-ended problems of their own choosing. Areas of focus include analog construction, digital fabrication using 3D AutoCAD and printing, laser cutting/engraving, robotics, and micro-controllers. By the end of the course, students possess a broad range of knowledge, skills, and concepts, empowering them to design innovative solutions. In the full year-long course, students engage in extended projects, allowing for deeper exploration and refinement of design techniques and processes.

BAND (Full Year)

The Middle School Band program is designed to develop students' skills in instrumental music performance, music theory, and ensemble collaboration. Aligned with recognized music education standards, the program emphasizes foundational and advanced techniques, musical literacy, and performance etiquette. Students learn to express themselves musically as individuals and as members of a large concert ensemble.

Students may choose from the following instruments:

- **Woodwind:** Flute, Oboe, Bassoon, Clarinet, Saxophone
- **Brass:** Trumpet, French Horn, Trombone, Baritone, Tuba
- **Percussion:** Pitched and Non-Pitched Instruments

Students are required to present a minimum of two major formal performances per semester, held outside of school hours. Assessment includes participation in ensemble rehearsals, individual skill evaluations, and public performances.

Equipment:

Students must acquire their own instrument for the course. The band director will gladly assist families in selecting quality instruments. When possible, the school provides larger instruments (such as trombone, baritone, tuba, larger saxophones, or bass clarinets) for classroom use. Students playing flute, oboe, clarinet, saxophone, or trumpet will need to purchase their instrument.

Sixth Grade Band

Prerequisite: Needs 1 year of playing

Sixth Grade Band is a year-long course focused on introducing and developing fundamental playing techniques. Through etudes and band repertoire, students build foundational skills in breath control, music reading, and instrument-specific techniques. Students also begin to learn essential music theory concepts and ensemble skills. Instruction is supported by material from the first-year method book.

Seventh Grade Band

Prerequisite: 1-2 years

Seventh Grade Band builds upon foundational skills, refining breath control, finger facility, intonation accuracy, and music reading abilities. Students are introduced to more advanced techniques and repertoire, enhancing their ensemble performance skills. Instruction is supported by material from the second-year method book, with an emphasis on developing proficiency and musical independence.

Eighth Grade Band

Prerequisite: 2-3 Years

Eighth Grade Band prepares students for participation in high school band. Students review core techniques while developing advanced performance skills through challenging repertoire and etudes. Focus areas include finger dexterity, intonation accuracy, and expressive musical interpretation. Instruction is supported by material from the third-year method book,

emphasizing ensemble collaboration and readiness for more advanced music study.

ORCHESTRA (Full Year)

The Middle School Orchestra program develops students' proficiency in string instrument performance, music literacy, and ensemble collaboration. Aligned with National Core Arts Standards, the program builds fundamental techniques while fostering artistic expression across three progressive years.

Students may choose from the following instruments:

- **Violin**
- **Viola**
- **Violoncello (Cello)**
- **Double Bass**

Throughout the program, students develop essential string techniques including bow control, left-hand facility, intonation accuracy, and artistic expression. As students' progress, they explore advanced concepts such as shifting, stylistic articulations, and composition. The curriculum emphasizes both individual growth and ensemble skills, preparing students for continued musical study at the high school level.

Students are required to present a minimum of two major formal performances per semester, held outside of school hours. Assessments include the evaluation of formal and informal performances, technical proficiency, musical literacy, ensemble skills, and individual and ensemble artistic development.

Sixth Grade Orchestra

Prerequisite:

at least one year of prior experience preferred and/or private instruction on violin, viola, violoncello or double bass. Grade 6 Orchestra is a year-long class and will provide students with the opportunity to play their instrument in an ensemble setting. This class will review and expand upon fundamental techniques through a variety of method books and string repertoire. The Grade 6 Orchestra will present at least two major performances throughout the year: one in the winter and one in the spring.

The goal of this ensemble is to develop confidence and proficiency of playing a stringed instrument within an ensemble.

Emphasis will be placed on music reading skills, bow technique development, left hand facility, tone quality, intonation, composition, improvisation and musical expression. Students in this orchestra will have the opportunity to audition for the Association of Music in International Schools (AMIS) Honor's Orchestra and American International School of Guangzhou (AISG) Honor's Orchestra.

Equipment:

Each student will need to acquire their own instrument and accessories for this course and the director will gladly assist families in the purchase of good quality locally made instruments for students. SAS has, however, a limited number of instruments for rent. The school will, when possible, provide the use of bigger instruments such as violoncello or double bass for use during class.

Seventh Grade Orchestra

Prerequisite: Grade 6 Orchestra or at least two years of prior experience preferred and/or private instruction on violin, viola, violoncello or double bass.

The goal of this ensemble is to aid students in becoming a more independent musician through practice, self-evaluation, and instrument proficiency. Intonation accuracy, finger speed and agility, bow control, articulation, expression, dynamic range, introducing different positions and shifting, and ensemble skills will be emphasized. Students in this orchestra will have the opportunity to audition for the Association of Music in International Schools (AMIS) Honor's Orchestra and the American International School of Guangzhou (AISG) Honor's Orchestra. Grade 7 Orchestra is a year-long class and will provide students with the opportunity to play their instrument in an ensemble setting. This class will review and expand upon fundamental techniques through a variety of method books and string orchestra repertoire. The Grade 7 Orchestra will present at least two major performances throughout the year: one in the winter and one in the spring.

Equipment:

Each student will need to acquire their own instrument and accessories for this course and the director will gladly assist families in the purchase of good quality locally made instruments for students. SAS has, however, a limited number of instruments for rent. The school will, when possible, provide the use of bigger instruments such as violoncello or double bass for use during class.

Eighth Grade Orchestra

Prerequisite:

Grade 8 Orchestra or at least three years of prior experience or private instruction on violin, viola, violoncello or double bass.

The goal of this ensemble is to aid students in experiencing creative self-expression through the development of proficiency in playing a stringed instrument. Advanced techniques such as playing in higher positions, artistic phrasing, performance style according to musical demands, bow control and advanced bow strokes, mixed meter, music theory, and composition will be emphasized in this course. Students in this orchestra will have the opportunity to audition for the Association of Music in International Schools (AMIS) Honor's Orchestra and the American International School of Guangzhou (AISG) Honor's Orchestra. Grade 8 Orchestra is a year-long class that serves as preparation for high school orchestra. With the continuation of the string curriculum, intermediate techniques will be introduced and practiced through a variety of method books and string orchestra repertoire. The Grade 8 Orchestra will present at least two major performances throughout the year: one in the winter and one in the spring.

Equipment:

Each student will need to acquire their own instrument and accessories for this course and the director will gladly assist families in the purchase of good quality locally made instruments for students. SAS has, however, a limited number of instruments for rent. The school will, when possible, provide the use of bigger instruments such as violoncello or double bass for use during class.

DANCE

The Middle School Dance program is designed to introduce students to a variety of dance styles while developing foundational technique, physical coordination, and performance skills.

Students study multiple dance styles, including:

- **Modern Dance**
- **Jazz Dance**
- **Ballet**
- **Contemporary**

Each style incorporates foundational skills in flexibility, strength, musicality, turns, extensions, leaps, control, coordination, and focus. In addition to physical practice, students explore dance composition, choreography, and the historical and cultural contexts of dance.

Students of all ability levels are encouraged to participate and engage in the creative process through collaboration, discussion, and performance. Public performances are integral to the program, providing students with opportunities to apply their skills, face new challenges, and build confidence. Students may take dance as a semester or full-year course in Grades 7 and 8.

Sixth Grade Dance

Sixth Grade Dance is an exploratory trimester course that introduces students to a variety of dance styles and foundational techniques. Students engage in physical practice, creative expression, and collaborative activities while developing their understanding of global dance perspectives. Emphasis is placed on learning about different dance styles, origins, and cultural relevance, as well as fostering appreciation of the performing arts. No prior dance experience is required for this course.

Seventh Grade Dance (Semester and Full Year)

Seventh Grade Dance is designed for students committed to developing their dance skills. Prior training is helpful but not required. Students deepen their technique across four core styles: Modern, Jazz, Ballet, and Contemporary. They refine foundational skills and begin learning original choreography and repertoire, engaging in multiple public performances throughout the year. The course also introduces basic concepts of dance composition, helping students build confidence and collaborative skills as they prepare for more advanced studies.

Eighth Grade Dance (Semester and Full Year)

Eighth Grade Dance builds upon prior skills, advancing students' abilities from beginner to intermediate level. Students continue to strengthen their technique in Modern, Ballet, Contemporary, and Jazz, while also being encouraged to explore supplemental dance styles such as street dance, emerging genres, and fusions. The course emphasizes refinement of technique, performance skills, and the introduction of dance composition. Students explore creative tools for choreography and personal expression, preparing them for advanced dance opportunities in high school.

DRAMA

The Middle School Drama program is designed to develop students' skills as confident communicators, collaborators, and performers. Students explore a variety of acting theories, movement and voice techniques, and ensemble practices while engaging with theatre traditions from different cultures and historical periods. The curriculum fosters creativity, critical thinking, and an understanding of theatre as a medium for personal expression and social commentary.

Drama students participate in a range of formative and summative assessments, including performances, collaborative projects, and scriptwriting exercises. Performances range from internal showcases to public productions, providing opportunities for students to apply their learning in authentic settings.

Sixth Grade Drama

Sixth Grade Drama is a trimester-long course that builds on skills introduced in Grade 5, with a focus on performance theory and ensemble collaboration. Students explore voice and movement techniques, study different theatre styles and practitioners, and engage in collaborative performance projects. Emphasis is placed on developing effective communication skills both on stage and in real-world contexts. The course culminates in an internal class performance, with occasional opportunities for parents to attend showcase events. No prior experience is required.

Seventh Grade Drama (Semester and Full Year)

Semester Drama

This semester long course builds confidence through hands on acting, ensemble work, drama games that build collaboration, communication, and performance skills, and approaches such as improvisation, movement, and staged play productions. Students also learn introductory design concepts and begin experimenting with how performance can communicate ideas and emotions.

Students share their work with classmates and wider school, community audiences. Choice is naturally part of drama as students shape staging, movement, and vocal work, and the course also includes a dedicated Learner Agency unit. Taking Grade 6 Drama is helpful but not required; curiosity and creativity are all you need.

Full Year Drama

The full year Drama offering includes all the experiences of the semester course, acting, ensemble work, improvisation, movement, staged play productions, and foundational design, while providing students more time to expand these skills. They continue to grow in creative expression and in understanding how design choices can support performance.

Choice is embedded throughout Drama and students also engage in a Learner Agency unit that supports intentional ownership of artistic decisions. Throughout the year, students present work for peers and for wider school, community audiences while moving into more advanced devising, ensemble collaboration, and technical theatre roles.

Eighth Grade Drama

Semester Drama

Students build upon their Grade 7 Drama skills while also revisiting key foundations to support newcomers joining Drama for the first time. They explore multiple approaches to theatre making, learn how to direct and give design support to performers, and take part in a staged class production.

Although Drama naturally offers creative freedom through acting choices, staging decisions, and movement work, this course includes a Learner Agency unit that provides guided opportunities for students to shape their learning and artistic pathways. Students present work for classmates as well as audiences beyond the immediate classroom community.

Full Year Drama

The full year Drama course includes all the experiences of the semester program, acting, devising, directing, design exploration, and a staged production, while giving students extended time to develop their craft. Students continue to explore theatrical approaches and deepen their understanding of how lighting, costume, sound, and staging support performance.

Creative choice is woven throughout performance work, and the course also includes a Learner Agency unit that helps students take increased ownership of their artistic direction. Across the year, students share performances with peers and members of the broader school community and also explore filmmaking, global theatre styles, and sustained approaches to performance. They create and stage original or published works, to support their artistic growth.

VOCAL & MODERN MUSIC

The Middle School Vocal & Modern Music program is designed to develop students' skills in music composition, multi-part singing, instrumental performance, and ensemble collaboration. Students are introduced to a variety of musical roles, techniques, and theory, with an emphasis on pop and contemporary styles. Core instruments include guitar, piano/keyboard, and voice, with opportunities for students to focus on their chosen area of interest.

Throughout the program, students develop musical creativity, learn strategies for practicing and performing individual parts, and gain experience in ensemble settings. Public performances are an essential part of the course, allowing students to showcase their progress and collaborate as part of a musical group.

All courses are assessed using the National Common Core Arts Standards, with emphasis on both individual growth and ensemble performance. Year-long courses allow for greater depth of learning and expanded opportunities for individual exploration, while semester courses provide focused skill development.

Sixth Grade Vocal & Modern Music

Sixth Grade Vocal & Modern Music is a trimester course introducing students to foundational skills in music composition, multi-part singing, basic guitar playing, and ensemble collaboration. Students explore a range of musical roles and develop techniques for practicing and performing individual parts. The course culminates in a public performance where students apply the skills they have learned. No prior experience is required.

Seventh Grade Vocal & Modern Music

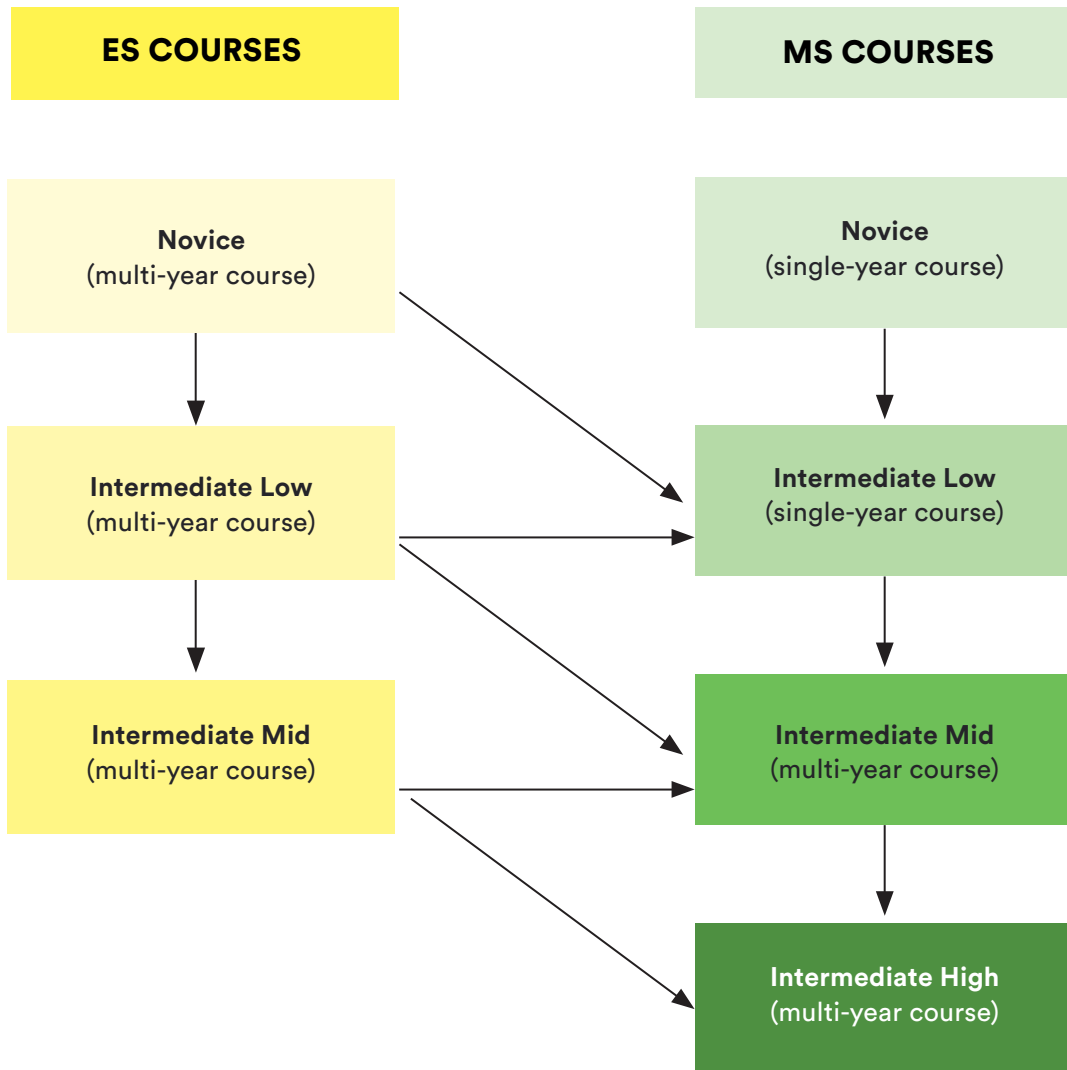
(Semester and Full Year)

Seventh Grade Vocal & Modern Music focuses on deepening students' skills in music composition, ensemble performance, and instrumental technique. Students choose either piano or guitar as their focus instrument and receive instruction in music theory and techniques related to contemporary and pop music. Emphasis is placed on developing musical creativity, practicing individual parts, and collaborating effectively within a group. Multiple public performances are required throughout the course. Both semester and year-long options are available, with the year-long course providing additional time for advanced skill development and individual exploration.

Eighth Grade Vocal & Modern Music

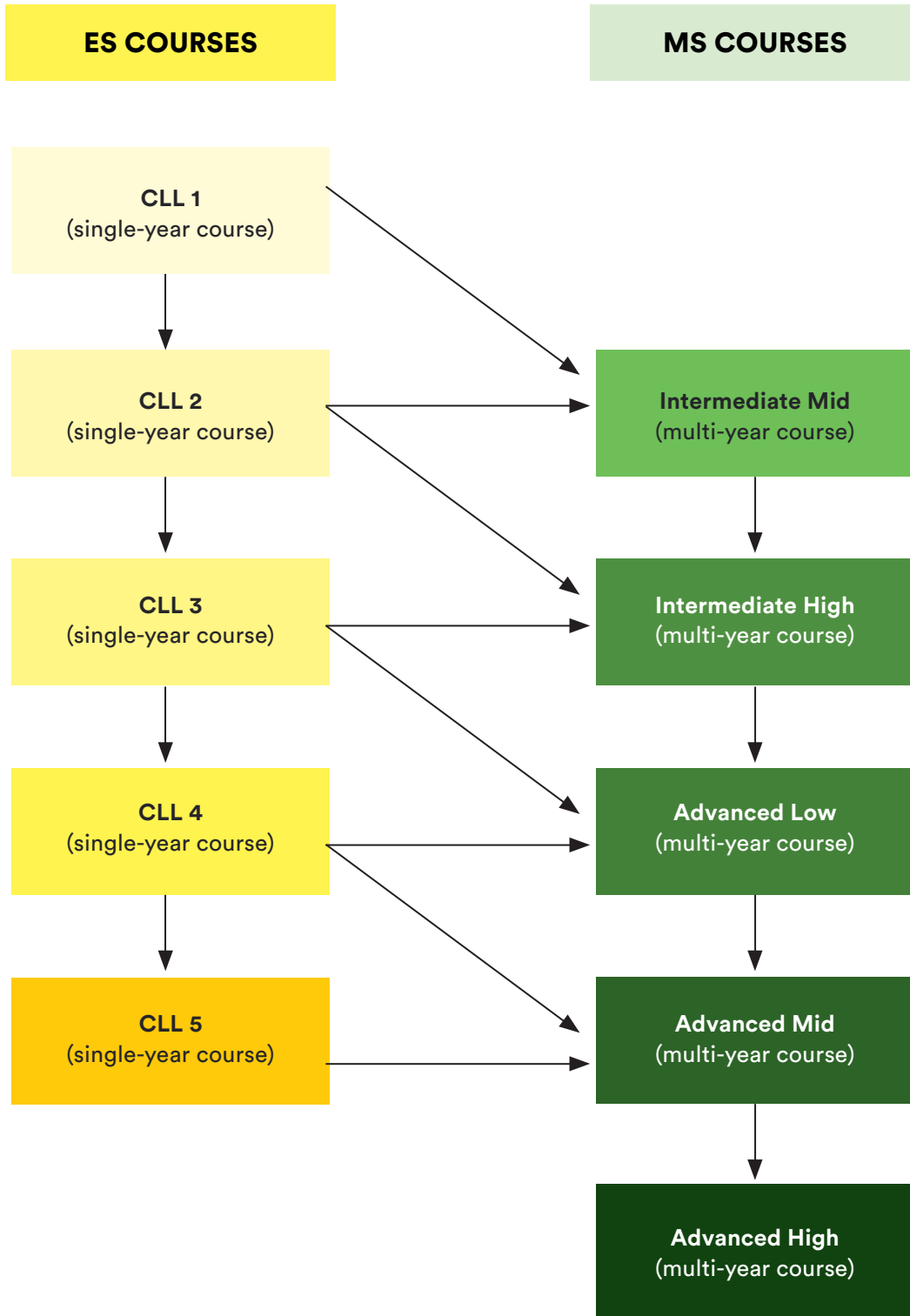
(Semester and Full Year)

Eighth Grade Vocal & Modern Music builds upon the foundational skills learned in earlier grades, advancing students' abilities in composition, instrumental performance, and ensemble collaboration. Students continue to focus on either piano or guitar while applying advanced techniques and theory related to contemporary music. Emphasis is placed on individual musical creativity, leadership within ensemble roles, and preparing for multiple public performances. Both semester and year-long options are available, with the year-long course offering expanded opportunities for deeper exploration and refinement of musical skills.

ES-MS CHINESE LANGUAGE COURSES**Chinese Language and Culture Stream**

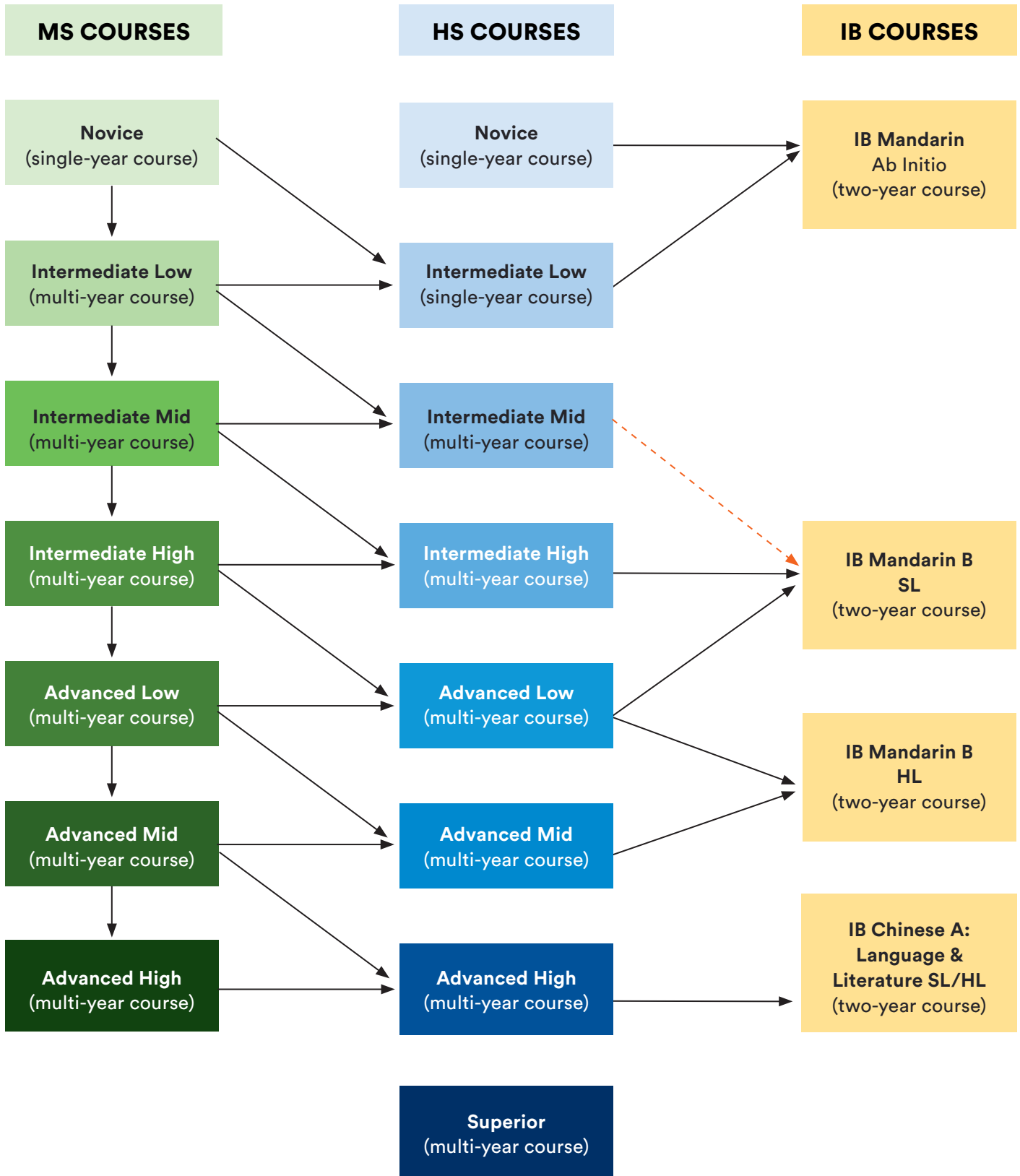
ES-MS CHINESE LANGUAGE COURSES

Chinese Language and Literature Stream



MS-HS CHINESE LANGUAGE COURSES

Chinese Department Flow Chart



May require support and/or summer work

GLOBAL LANGUAGES

(Chinese, French, or Spanish)

Our global languages courses at Puxi Middle School are full year courses and offer a rich and immersive experience for students eager to explore new cultures and enhance their communication skills. We provide comprehensive instruction in Chinese, French, and Spanish, each designed to foster language proficiency and cultural understanding. Through engaging lessons, interactive activities, and real-world applications, students will develop their speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills. Our curriculum emphasizes not only language mechanics but also the cultural nuances that shape each language, preparing students to be global citizens in an interconnected world. Whether students are beginners or looking to expand their existing knowledge, our courses cater to diverse learning needs and promote a lifelong love for language learning.

CHINESE

Novice Chinese

Duration: Single-year Course

This one-year course is designed to give students a solid base in the foundational aspects of Chinese conversational language and literacy in a character-based language. Successful completion of this course means that students will be able to demonstrate mastery of the following skills:

Oral language: Speakers at the Novice level can answer a variety of familiar questions about topics related to daily life using practiced complete sentences most of the time. When prompted, he/she can ask a variety of familiar questions.

Reading: At the Novice level, students can use reading strategies such as reference to images, contextual clues, radicals and familiar characters to figure out the meaning of basic text.

Writing: Students can recognize radicals and use proper stroke order to write characters. Students can combine basic characters to form words. Students can independently write practiced patterns of sentences with familiar vocabulary.

Intermediate Low Chinese

Duration: Single-year Course

Prerequisite: Successful demonstration of the skills of the Novice course

This one-year course is designed to enable students to expand upon their already established foundation of the basic structures of spoken and written Chinese. Successful completion of this course means that students will be able to demonstrate mastery of the following skills:

Oral language: Speakers at the Intermediate Low level can answer a wide variety of familiar and original questions about his/her daily life. He/she is able to ask a variety of questions and talk about topics related to daily life in a series of sentences.

Reading: At the Intermediate Low level, students can use reading strategies such as reference to images, contextual clues, radicals and familiar characters to independently read text with varied sentence length.

Writing: Students can independently write sentences on familiar topics. The length of writing tasks has a word count of 100-150 characters.

Intermediate Mid Chinese

Duration: Multi-year Course

Prerequisite: Successful demonstration of the skills of the Intermediate Low course

This multi-year course is designed to enable students to independently converse in Chinese in order to solve basic problems, engage in extended, friendly conversations, and read and write original text within familiar contexts. Successful completion of this course means that students will be able to demonstrate mastery of the following skills:

Oral language: Speakers at the Intermediate Mid-level can ask and answer a wide variety of original questions about his/her daily life. He/she speaks consistently in connected sentences that show originality of thought and the ability to solve authentic problems.

Reading: At the Intermediate Mid-level, students can independently read short, non-complex texts that convey basic information and contain multiple sentences with the support of images and contextual clues.

Writing: Students can independently write with well-connected sentences on familiar topics that show variation of character usage. The length of writing tasks has a word count of 150-250 characters.

Intermediate High Chinese

Duration: Multi-year Course

Prerequisite: Successful demonstration of the skills of the Intermediate Mid Chinese Course

This multi-year course is designed to enable students to independently converse in Chinese in order to solve problems with complications, engage in extended conversations on a variety of topics, and read and write original text that demonstrate access to an expanding cultural context and set of ideas. Successful completion of this course means that students will be able to demonstrate mastery of the following skills:

Oral language: Intermediate High speakers can maintain a conversation on a variety of topics of daily life and make connections to topics beyond self. He/ she is able to narrate and describe using connected discourse of paragraph length.

Reading: At the Intermediate High level, students can independently read short, non-complex texts that contain prolonged paragraphs with limited support of images and contextual clues.

Writing: Students can independently write in simple paragraphs on a variety of topics with supporting detail that shows variation of sentence structure, logical format, and emerging detail. The length of writing tasks has a word count of 250-350 characters.

Advanced Low Chinese

Duration: Multi-year Course

Prerequisite: Successful demonstration of the skills of the Intermediate High course

The Advanced Low Chinese course is designed to enable students to achieve conversational and literacy proficiency at an academic level over a duration of 1-2 years. Successful completion of this course signifies that students will have mastered the following skills:

Oral language: Students will demonstrate Advanced Low oral proficiency as outlined by Common Core standards. This includes the ability to engage effectively in various collaborative discussions—whether one-on-one, in groups, or in teacher-led settings—with diverse partners on Advanced Low topics, texts, and issues. Students will build on others' ideas while clearly expressing their own.

Reading: Students will be capable of reading and comprehending literary nonfiction and literature, including stories and poems, proficiently within the Common Core Grade 5 and 6 text complexity band.

Writing: Students will be able to write routinely over extended time frames (allowing for research, reflection, and revision) as well as shorter time frames (within a single sitting or over one to two days) for a variety of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences at the Advanced Low level.

Advanced Mid Chinese

Duration: Multi-year Course

Prerequisite: Successful demonstration of the skills of the Advanced Low course

The Advanced Mid Chinese course is designed to enable students to discuss and engage with a wide variety of academic and literary texts over a 1-2 year period. Successful completion of this course signifies that students will have mastered the following skills:

Oral language: Students will demonstrate Advanced Mid oral proficiency according to Common Core standards. This includes the ability to effectively engage in collaborative discussions—whether one-on-one, in groups, or in teacher-led settings—with diverse partners on Advanced Mid topics, texts, and issues. Students will build on others' ideas while clearly articulating their own.

Reading: Students will be capable of reading and comprehending literary nonfiction and literature, including stories and poems, proficiently within the Common Core Grade 6 and 7 text complexity band.

Writing: Students will be capable of writing routinely over extended time frames (allowing for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (within a single sitting or over one to two days) for a variety of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences at the Advanced Mid level.

Advanced High Chinese

Duration: Multi-year Course

Prerequisite: Successful demonstration of the skills of the Advanced Mid course

The Advanced High Chinese course is designed to enable students to engage in literary analysis across a variety of genres over a duration of 1-2 years. Successful completion of this course signifies that students will have mastered the following skills:

Oral language: Students will demonstrate Advanced High oral proficiency according to Common Core standards. This includes the ability to initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions—whether one-on-one, in groups, or in teacher-led settings—with diverse partners on Advanced High topics, texts, and issues. Students will build on others' ideas and express their own clearly and persuasively.

Reading: Students will be capable of reading and comprehending literary nonfiction and literature, including stories, drama, and poems, within the Common Core Grade 7 and 8 text complexity bands proficiently.

Writing: Students will be able to write routinely over extended time frames (allowing for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (within a single sitting or over one to two days) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences at the Advanced High level.

FRENCH

The Middle School French program is designed to develop students' proficiency in the French language while deepening their understanding of Francophone cultures. The curriculum emphasizes interpersonal oral communication, reading, writing, and cultural exploration, fostering students' ability to communicate effectively and confidently in real-world contexts. Students engage with a range of adapted and authentic materials to build their language skills progressively, using French as the primary language of instruction whenever possible.

Throughout the program, students are assessed in five key areas: Interpersonal Oral Communication, Writing, Reading, Skillful Communication, and Active Learning. Each level builds upon the previous one, ensuring continuous growth in vocabulary, grammatical accuracy, and cultural understanding.

Sixth Grade French

Sixth Grade French is a beginner-level, year-long course designed for students with no prior experience in French. Students focus on developing foundational language skills across speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Through interactive activities and exposure to authentic materials, students learn to engage in short conversations about familiar topics such as identity, family, likes and dislikes, and daily routines. Grammar instruction is integrated within each unit to support students in constructing basic sentences accurately. Digital platforms are used to reinforce skills at students' proficiency levels. Active participation is emphasized to encourage curiosity about both the French language and Francophone cultures.

Seventh Grade French

Seventh Grade French is an advanced beginner-level, year-long course designed for students who have foundational knowledge of French and wish to further develop their communication skills. Students expand their ability to express themselves in everyday situations, such as ordering food, asking for directions, and resolving simple problems. The curriculum integrates listening, speaking, reading, and writing tasks, supported by authentic resources that promote cultural understanding. Students apply their learning through practical projects at the conclusion of each unit, demonstrating their ability to use French in context. The course prepares students for the opportunity to travel to France at the end of the academic year, allowing them to apply their skills in real-world settings.

Eighth Grade French

Eighth Grade French is an intermediate-level, year-long course designed for students who have successfully completed prior levels of French. The curriculum focuses on refining students' abilities to comprehend and construct more complex sentences, while expanding vocabulary and grammatical knowledge. Students engage with global themes such as health, environment, gastronomy, historical events, and festivals within the Francophone world. They are expected to express opinions, provide advice, and organize both oral presentations and written assignments with increasing accuracy and fluency. Cultural research projects and collaborative activities deepen students' understanding of the Francophone world. As a culminating experience, students may participate in a trip to France, offering them the opportunity to interact with native speakers and immerse themselves in the culture.

SPANISH

The Middle School Spanish program is designed to build students' proficiency in the Spanish language and foster an understanding of the cultures of Spanish-speaking countries. The curriculum emphasizes communication through the development of four key skills: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Students engage in meaningful, real-world contexts while exploring cultural perspectives, using a variety of activities and digital platforms to enhance language acquisition. Grammar instruction is integrated into each unit to support accurate comprehension and application of the language.

Throughout the program, students participate in project-based learning, collaborative tasks, and authentic communicative experiences, gradually increasing their ability to express themselves confidently and fluently.

Sixth Grade Spanish

Sixth Grade Spanish is a year-long introductory course designed for students with no prior experience in Spanish. Students develop a solid foundation in the four language skills, participating in engaging activities to practice speaking, listening, reading, and writing. They learn to communicate on basic topics, such as greetings, personal identity, family, friends, hobbies, school, weather, and home, using practiced sentences

and short conversations. Grammar instruction focuses on present and immediate future tenses, and each unit incorporates topic-specific vocabulary and culturally relevant contexts. By the end of the course, students are able to describe familiar topics with increasing confidence and accuracy.

Seventh Grade Spanish

Seventh Grade Spanish builds upon the foundational skills introduced in Grade 6, guiding students to communicate about a wider variety of topics, including daily routines, sports and leisure, cultural celebrations, urban life, travel, and dining in Hispano-America. Grammar instruction includes present tense conjugations of regular and irregular verbs, immediate future, conditional, preterite tenses, and the use of direct and indirect object pronouns. Students also learn practical life skills, such as navigating maps, shopping, and giving advice or commands. Communication skills are developed through collaborative projects, presentations, conversations, role-playing, and reading. By the end of the year, students demonstrate the ability to engage in functional conversations, understand key ideas in texts and discussions, and apply both formal and informal language appropriately.

Eighth Grade Spanish

Eighth Grade Spanish is designed for students with at least one year of prior Spanish language study. The course focuses on expanding students' vocabulary and communication skills, allowing them to discuss more complex topics such as global issues, environmental concerns, health, and Latin American cuisine. Students engage in spontaneous conversations, express opinions, and provide advice, while continuing to refine their listening comprehension and reading strategies. Grammar instruction includes a range of time frames, such as present, present continuous, preterite, imperfect, immediate future, and future tenses. Students demonstrate their learning through a variety of formats, including role-plays, debates, informative videos, written paragraphs, and reading authentic texts. By the end of the course, students are able to interact confidently and accurately in a variety of familiar and real-world contexts.

Shanghai American School inspires in all students:

上海美国学校激励并培养所有的学生:

A lifelong passion for learning

终身学习的热情

A commitment to act with integrity and compassion

诚信与仁爱的信念

The courage to live their dreams.

追求梦想的勇气。



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