Middle School Overview

The Middle School is a special community within the larger community of The Northwest School. It embraces the unique and dramatic transition from childhood to young adulthood by providing a safe and supportive environment and a challenging program. Teachers encourage students to take risks in order to develop a sure sense of who they are and what they can accomplish. The academic program is rich, well structured, and interdisciplinary when appropriate. Students are always involved in two stimulating arts classes and have regular physical activity periods. The advisory program ensures that there is strong, open communication between students and teachers, as well as between teachers and parents. Periodically, Middle Schoolers take trips into the larger community to gain balance with classroom experiences and exposure to real community needs. After three years in the Middle School, our students are ready to take on the more demanding personal and academic challenges found in the Upper School.
Humanities
6 Humanities — Julie Kim, Erikk Hood
7 Humanities, including Washington State History — Tamara Bunnell, Erikk Hood
8 Humanities — Jeff Blair, Heather Hall

Math
6 Math — Jennifer Ford
7 Math — Frances Tee
8 Algebra — Math Faculty

Science
6 General Science — Erica Bergamini
7 Life Science — Nathan Franck
8 Earth Science — Herb Bergamini

Languages
6 Spanish — Clarke Reid
7 Spanish — Azucena Ledezma
8 Spanish — Michelle Kowals

Arts
Two classes at all times. (Most classes are one trimester long.) Students are required to complete at least one class from each Arts discipline (Dance, Music, Visual Art, and Theatre) during the middle school years.

Physical Education
One class each trimester, with a required variety of physical education, and health and wellness activities during the year.

Environment
Three times a week, students and faculty work in mixed-grade teams to care for the school and immediate surrounding areas. The Environment Program aims to ground our wider environmental sustainability ethic in direct attention to our immediate surroundings, facilitate leadership development, and build community.
The 6th Grade curriculum is designed to facilitate each student’s integration into the Northwest School community and to engage them fully in the process of learning. Our goal is to provide a supportive environment that challenges students to grow, both socially and academically. We focus on providing appropriate levels of support while guiding students to become independent, self-aware learners and community members.

A weekly study hall staffed by 6th Grade advisors helps ease the transition from elementary school to middle school, offering 6th graders opportunities to seek assistance and check in with teachers while also managing their own workload. Additional help is available to students during teachers’ office hours (from 2:45-3:30 pm, on Wednesdays). Students meet weekly in advisory groups, during which they explore a variety of topics associated with our social, academic, and community goals. Student advisors meet weekly, focusing on issues such as individual student growth and development, interpersonal group dynamics within the class, integration of curriculum, and facilitation of our service learning, digital citizenship, and diversity, equity, and inclusion work.

### Humanities

**Humanities 6 — Julie Kim and Erikk Hood**

This course provides an integrated exploration of literature, writing, history, and geography, focusing on aspects of human culture throughout history. Each term, we take on a new topic of study, and students work both individually and cooperatively in small groups to explore and master new material. Students use technology throughout the year for research, word processing, and projects. We conclude each term with a culminating project that incorporates students’ knowledge, creativity, and presentation skills.

*Specific skills and topics include:*

- Map Skills
- Elements of Society
- Social Justice
- Social Identifiers
- Expository Writing
- Group Work
- World History and Geography
- The Writing Process
- Creative Writing
- Note-taking and Research Skills
- Literary Analysis
- Writing Mechanics and Grammar
- Personal Narrative
- Science Fiction and Fantasy
- Presentation Skills
- Poetry
- Vocabulary

### Science

**General Science 6 — Erica Bergamini**

This course introduces students to the myriad opportunities for scientific study through thematic units that revolve around the theme of ENERGY. Emphasis is placed on scientific inquiry, hands-on activities, independent and group projects, and creative problem solving. Students learn research and reporting skills, as well as laboratory inquiry and safety skills, and are challenged to design experiments and/or equipment in order to answer their questions about how things work.

*Sample Units:*

- Physical Science Topics
- Designing, Conducting, and Reporting on a Scientific Experiment
- Engineering Topics
- Computer Coding Topics
- Science & Math History/Biographies
- Energy Forms and Sources
- Electricity, Circuits
- Chemistry Topics: Periodic Table, Reactions, Investigations, and Laboratory Skills
Mathematics

Math 6 — Jennifer Ford
6th Grade Math at The Northwest School is the beginning of a Pre-Algebra, Pre-Geometry course. There are three aspects to the program:

1. **Units of Study** during the first year include:
   - Data Organization/Graphing/Data Analysis
   - Measurement
   - Rational Numbers and Relationships
   - Algebraic Expressions and Equations
   - Ratios, Proportions, Percent, and Similarity
   - Probability
   - Geometry Topics

2. **Problem Solving** – Students practice the following:
   - Problem solving strategies
   - Communicating mathematical thinking
   - Presenting work in an organized way

3. **Individualized Basic Skills Review, Practice, and/or Enrichment**
   - Decimal and Fraction Operations
   - Place Value and Powers of 10
   - Concepts and Application of Fractions, Decimals, and Percent

Modern Languages

Spanish 6 — Clarke Reid
6th Grade Spanish is a beginner course that introduces students to the Spanish-speaking world and teaches them to communicate about simple topics in Spanish. The course focuses on the 5C goal areas of the ACTFL guidelines: Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities. The class is taught primarily in Spanish. Activities include watching and responding to short authentic videos of Spanish-speaking students presenting their families; meeting and communicating with class visitors and students from Chile, Spain, Mexico, and Nicaragua; and completing individual and group projects such as a family sit-com intro video. The class teaches basic skills and communication about the following topics:

- Introductions and Simple Personal Questions
- Numbers and the Alphabet
- The Weather
- Hobbies and Activities
- School Classes and Activities
- Diversity of People and Cultures in Latin America
- Present Tense Verb Conjugations
- Food Preferences and Ordering in a Restaurant
- Families
7th Grade Curriculum

Humanities

**Humanities 7 and Washington State History** — Tamara Bunnell, Erik Hood
7th Grade Humanities focuses on the continued development of reading and writing skills. Students work on both creative, non-fiction, and reflective writing while receiving guidance and practice in grammar, vocabulary, and revision skills. Concurrently, students work on reading skills as they explore a variety of texts, most of which are chosen for their connection to our larger curriculum. The Social Studies component of 7th Grade Humanities focuses on the history of the Pacific Northwest. This includes a study of different cultures, explorations, and migrations to and within the Northwest. We examine what happens when different groups inhabit the same space, and we develop a better understanding of these relationships by exploring a variety of perspectives over the centuries. Research skills are also a significant part of the 7th Grade Humanities curriculum. Students learn and practice a variety of research skills each term, including reading for information, synthesizing information from a variety of sources, using databases, and properly citing sources.

Mathematics

**Math 7** — Frances Tee
7th Grade Math completes the second year of the Pre-Algebra, Pre-Geometry course begun in 6th Grade. The program circles back to reinforce 6th Grade units as well as add additional units of study to prepare students for Algebra in 8th Grade:

Units of Study include:
• Patterns and Generalizing Patterns Using a Variable
• Spreadsheets (Excel)
• Signed Numbers (positives and negatives)
• Simplifying Algebraic Expressions
• Introduction to Exponents
• Visualizing (Bar Method) Problems and Representation in Tables and Graphs
• Translating Word Problems into Algebraic Equations
• Ratios, Proportions, Percents in Relation to Algebraic Equations
• More on Angle Measurement and Geometric Properties Involving Angles and Polygons
• Geometric Properties of Lines and Triangles (including an introduction to Radicals)
• Introduction to Computer Science (including programming a mobile app)
Science

**Life Science 7 — Nathan Franck**
This course explores biological sciences. Topics include microbiology, genetics, evolution, and the major systems of the human body, as well as related systems in plants and other organisms when applicable. Environmental and health-related topics are included as appropriate. Students are guided by the scientific method as they practice safe laboratory techniques and hone their research and reporting skills. In addition, students work on several group and individual inquiry projects throughout the year.

Modern Languages

**Spanish 7 — Azucena Ledezma**
This course, which is taught in Spanish, is designed to follow the introduction to Spanish that students began in 6th Grade. Students continue their study of basic grammatical, lexical, and cultural Spanish material. Each class period is comprised of listening, speaking, reading, and writing activities. Students engage in themed activities that allow them to be creative and use the language in meaningful ways. Units of study often culminate in individual or group projects. Some of the topics covered are descriptions of personalities and physical traits, family relationships, shopping at the mall, and free-time activities. Lessons are intertwined with cultural themes, grammatical structures, and vocabulary development.
Humanities

Humanities 8 — Jeff Blair, Heather Hall
8th Grade Humanities integrates world geography, history, and literature, and the course focuses on the development of core Humanities skills, such as critical reading, research, and writing. Students learn and practice these skills through units that focus on the history, culture, literature, and geography of different regions of the world, such as Central America and the Caribbean, South Asia, and the African continent. Each unit incorporates historical study, cultural analysis, diverse readings, writing exercises, and research assignments, and the content integration is designed so that the different topics and assignments add depth and perspective to each other. We encourage active learning through participation in discussions and other activities, as well as through both self-directed and group projects. The year closes with a study of the influence of the mass media on American culture and society, with particular attention to new technological developments and how these are transforming the media landscape, consumer culture, and our individual participation therein.

Mathematics

Math 8/Algebra I — Math Faculty

Math 8
In Math 8 students begin their study of algebraic functions, with an emphasis on understanding and analyzing proportional and non-proportional linear relationships. Students use linear relationships to model real-life situations, including situations that lead to systems of linear equations. Students use multiple representations to reason about linear functions and learn to solve systems of linear equations by inspection, graphing, and using algebraic strategies. All students practice communicating their mathematical reasoning both verbally and in writing. Students cultivate a large set of problem-solving strategies throughout the year.

Algebra I
In Algebra students use a variety of linear and non-linear equations and inequalities to model real-life situations. Students use multiple representations to reason about linear and non-linear functions and learn to solve systems of linear and non-linear equations and inequalities by inspection, graphing, and using algebraic strategies. All students practice communicating their mathematical reasoning both verbally and in writing, and cultivate a large set of problem-solving strategies throughout the year.
Science

Science 8 — Herb Bergamini
The goal of this course is for students to gain a basic understanding of Planet Earth’s systems and characteristics as we understand them today. Topics covered include the history of science, oceanography, the atmosphere, erosion and soil development, and plate tectonics. Class discussions focus on the interaction between humans and these systems. Emphasis is placed on hands-on activities, cooperating on group projects, development of lab skills, and using the scientific method. The text is Earth, What’s Inside (published by Cengage Learning), in addition to references from past and current periodicals and various other texts.

Modern Languages

Spanish 8 — Annette Galindo
8th Grade Spanish is a continuation of the 7th Grade Spanish curriculum. Lessons balance the four major skill areas: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Throughout each trimester, students engage in themed units of study and benefit from the opportunity to use the language in creative and meaningful ways. Topics include personal presentations, how to be successful in school, home and neighborhood, artistic and sports pursuits, and food and its connection to culture. By the end of 8th Grade, students have a solid understanding of grammar and structures to express themselves in past and future tenses. Using authentic materials, students also study and experience cultures from a variety of Spanish-speaking countries.
The goal of our school library program is to ensure that students and faculty efficiently find and effectively use information, from both print and online sources, and become life-long readers. To that end, the Middle School Library Instructional Program is completely curriculum-based. In addition, the Librarians collaborate regularly with the Middle School Humanities faculty to develop independently chosen reading projects. The Librarians sponsor all-school Drop Everything and Read events and a Middle School Book Club for students.

The Librarians collaborate with Middle School teachers to develop and assess assignments and, along with the Educational Technology Coordinators, work closely to integrate information literacy skills, and digital citizenship awareness into the curriculum. Beginning in 6th Grade, and continuing through 8th Grade, students develop skills in identifying and interpreting information, organizing data, producing research projects, and evaluating their process and final products. Using a wide variety of print and electronic resources, students conduct research in all disciplines: Humanities, Sciences, Languages, and the Arts.

**Technology Integration**

The focus of our integration of technology is to help students use computers with ease and confidence and recognize when specific technology can enhance their learning. Thus, students acquire computer skills in the context of our content-based curriculum. The Educational Technology Coordinators, Librarians, and Middle School teachers coordinate lessons and projects for the students. New technologies are incorporated into the curriculum when appropriate. Our Educational Technology Coordinators also support two student interest groups: Lego Robotics and Arduino for Beginners.

**By the end of Middle School, our students know how to:**

- Store, share, and access work at school and at home.
- Employ multiple methods of sharing their work online and understand how to use permissions to limit the audience of any work.
- Conduct research using digital resources, including databases and other credible online sources.
- Use online note taking and citation tools to enhance the research process.
- Identify bias, fake news, and misinformation.
- Use productivity software (Microsoft Office) to interpret data, create presentations, and support the interpretation of research and ideas.
- Use a variety of multimedia tools (video, graphics, etc.) in the production and presentation of projects.
- Use computers independently and cooperatively.
- Understand and follow intellectual property rights, procedures for validating information, and computer ethics and etiquette.
- Discuss the core concepts of digital citizenship in our advisory curriculum: professionalism, privacy, permission, and personal information.
Dance

**Contemporary Jazz** — Maya Soto
Jazz dance includes influences from African and Latin styles as well as Swing and even Ballet. This class is focused on creating and learning Contemporary and Jazz-style dances. Students dive into these styles and explore quick sharp isolations and syncopated rhythms, create long lines and crisp shapes with their bodies, and experience leaps, jumps, and turns. Jazz dance is often associated with show business and pop culture. In this class, students learn technique, improvisation, and choreography for performance. *Offered in the 6/7/8 art block during Trimester 1.*

**Dances for Musical Theater** — Maya Soto
The dance scenes in a play or movie advance the plot, bring a time-period to life, or reveal a character. In this class, students learn dances from different musicals that serve each of these purposes, as well as create choreography and perform for the community. Excellent training for actors. *No prerequisite. Offered in the 6/7/8 art block during Trimester 2.*

**Jump Into Dance** — Ellie Sandstrom
This class offers a creative and cultural approach to the world of dance through a variety of styles. Improvisational games and choreography exercises help students embody dance concepts such as space, time, energy, and force. Students learn steps that are basic to many kinds of dance, and learn to put them together in a variety of dances from around the world. This is an introductory class for all 6th graders. *All 6th Grade students are placed in this class in either the 6th Grade art block and the 6/7/8 art block, depending on their music choice.*

**Intro to Breakdancing** — Maya Soto
This class is a beginner’s approach to breakdancing. Students discover their inner B-boy/B-girl while learning the history and elements of this athletic and acrobatic dance form. Class includes warm up, skills practice, free-styling, and more. Among the skills learned are top rocks, footwork, power moves, and freezes. Students also have the opportunity to learn from guest artists, including local Seattle B-girls and B-boys. *Offered in the 6/7/8 art block during Trimester 3.*

**Middle School Advanced Dance Ensemble** — Ellie Sandstrom
This is an intensive, year-long course, designed to strengthen each participant’s dance and movement technique, as well as their choreographic skills and artistry, while building a strong ensemble that performs throughout the year. This class explores contemporary movement forms, including modern dance, hip hop styles and more, in a non-competitive environment. Strong commitment and dedication to the creative process, as well as cooperative collaboration skills are essential for this class. Students wishing to be a part of this ensemble are asked to audition in a group class, where they learn movement, as well as create it. *Offered in the 7/8 grade art block. Dance experience and audition required.*
Music

**Middle School Choir** — **TBD**
This course focuses on singing in a collaborative group context. Teamwork, engaged participation, and positive attitude are emphasized over vocal ability. The choir sings songs in 2-4 parts from a wide variety of styles, eras, and cultures (including a few songs that class members choose themselves). The choir performs one or two times per trimester. Singers of all ability levels are welcome and encouraged to join us in chorus! **Offered as separate classes in the 6/7/8 arts block during Trimesters 1 and 3.**

**Advanced Middle School Band (7th and 8th Grade)** — **Freddy Gonzalez**
Students in this course continue the study of a band instrument with three main goals: to improve their ability to simultaneously read and play music; to play together within their section of the band; and play together as a full ensemble while following a conductor. Students are encouraged by how their required practice at home and ensemble playing at school combine for fun and successful performances. The band performs each trimester in required concerts.

Auditions are required only for new members of this ensemble. Current members and musicians who have completed the Intro to Band class do not need to audition. For your audition, please prepare a scale (of your choice) and up to two minutes of any piece. This can be a solo or something from your current ensemble. An easy sight-reading example is also part of your audition. Auditions take place in Standifer. **This is a year-long course. Offered in the 7/8 art block in Trimester 1, 2, and 3.**

**Digital Music in Media** — **TBD**
This class explores the use of music in media and the effect it has on mood, emotions, and storytelling, both in radio and on big and small screens. Students use Garage Band in the Mac Lab to create their own music, and finish the course with a flash drive portfolio of their work. This course is recommended for students who wish to fulfill their music requirement in a non-performing music class. **Offered in the 7/8 art block during Trimester 1.**

**Introduction to Band Instruments** — **Freddy Gonzalez**
This course is open to 6th, 7th, and 8th Grade students new to a band instrument. In this class, students learn the essential elements of music through the hands-on experience of playing their choice of wind instrument. They may choose to learn flute, clarinet, trumpet, or trombone (other instruments may be available by permission of the teacher). Also, students learn note and rhythm reading and gain listening skills vital to playing in an ensemble. **This is a year-long class. Offered in the 6/7/8 art block in Trimesters 1, 2, and 3.**

**Introduction to String Instruments (6th Grade)** — **Jo Nardolillo**
In this class, students dive into the power of music through hands-on experience playing stringed instruments. In addition to gaining basic proficiency on an instrument and learning to read the written language of music, students develop the unique teamwork found in performing with an ensemble. **This is a year-long class. Offered in the 6th Grade art block in Trimesters 1, 2, and 3.**

**Middle School Orchestra** — **Jo Nardolillo**
Open to musicians playing orchestral instruments, the Middle School Orchestra combines experienced musicians with graduates of the Intro to Strings class. Our work focuses on advancing technique, increasing music reading skills, and developing independence within the ensemble. Repertoire is chosen to fit the players, and includes classical, chamber, and popular music. This course includes a unit on conducting, and each student has a chance to direct the ensemble. **This is a year-long course. Offered during the 6/7/8 art block in Trimesters 1, 2, and 3.**

**Audition required:** New members are asked to play two minutes from any piece of your choosing, any major scale, and easy music reading provided at the audition. Your prepared piece may be any solo or excerpts from previously learned orchestra music. **Information about audition appointments is available at registration.**
Theatre Arts

Advanced Middle School Orchestra – Jo Nardolillo
In this class, intermediate and advanced string musicians play repertoire spanning all genres, from baroque and classical to pop tunes and movie scores. Concert orchestra is open to violin, viola, cello, and double players who have achieved proficiency on their instrument and can read music. Pianists, harpists, woodwind and brass players, and classical guitar players are also welcome to inquire about enrolling in this class. Practice outside of class time is essential and private lessons are highly recommended. Performances include community outreach and evening events such as Winter Concert, ArtsFest, and Spring Concert. Offered in the 7/8 arts block Trimesters 1, 2, and 3. This is a year-long course.

Audition required: New members are asked to play two minutes from any piece of your choosing, any major scale, and easy music reading provided at the audition. Your prepared piece may be any solo or excerpts from previously learned orchestra music. Information about audition appointments is available at registration.

Broadway Singers Ensemble – TBD
This course is available to any student who wants to sing and perform songs from Broadway Musicals in a vocal group setting. Students who love to participate, have a positive attitude, and possess teamwork skills are encouraged to join! You don’t need prior musical experience and singers of all abilities are welcome. Offered in the 6/7/8 art block in Trimester 2.

Theatre Arts

6th Grade Drama – Solomon Davis
This class explores foundations of the art of theatre through creative drama, improvisation, and other interdisciplinary arts activities. Students learn to use their “theatre voice” to express ideas about their identities and their community. All 6th Grade students are placed in this class in either the 6th Grade art block or the 6/7/8 art block, depending on their music choice.

Advanced Theatre – Laura Ferri
This is an intensive, year-long course, designed to strengthen each student’s acting technique while building an ensemble that performs twice a year. Strong concentration and cooperation skills are essential for this class. Stage managers are needed for this class. Students wishing to be in this class must audition in the spring. Audition required. This is a year-long course. Offered in the 7/8 art block Trimesters 1, 2, and 3.

Acting Intensive – Ellen Graham
This is a two-trimester course for 7th and 8th Grade students only. This class is designed for serious acting students who want to improve their acting skills. Students select short scripts or scenes through which they dig deep into character work. The class emphasizes advanced vocal and physical work, as well as how to use subtext, keep focused on stage, complete a character history, stage a scene, use props, and effectively enter and exit a scene. By using long scenes, students learn how to be the center of a scene as well as contribute to group scenes. These scripts are shared with an audience. Audition required. Offered in the 6/7/8 art block in Trimesters 1 and 2.

Come Play! – Ellen Graham
This class is for students who wish to tell a story or want to see their story on the stage. Students work with scripts by known playwrights as well as others written by students. To bring scripts to life, students work on character development, improvisation, movement, and theater games. Be prepared to play! Offered in the 6/7/8 art block in Trimester 3.
**Improv Theater — Solomon Davis**
This class focuses on developing spontaneous storytelling, collaboration, creative problem solving, and character development skills. Students participate in fun, warm-up exercises and performance games. There is a final presentation at the end of the term. *Offered in the 6/7/8 art block in Trimester 2 and 3, and in the 7/8 art block Trimester 3.*

**Sketch Comedy — Solomon Davis**
In this course, students get the chance to create and perform original, classical, and contemporary comedy sketches. There are opportunities to design and produce costumes, set pieces, and lighting. The course culminates with a sketch comedy show at the end of the term. *Offered in the 7/8 art block in Trimester 2.*

### Visual Arts

**Introduction to Visual Art — Julia Freeman**
This course offers 6th Grade students the opportunity to explore the meaning, purpose, and practice of visual art. Students are introduced to a variety of techniques and materials to make works of art. Teachers initiate dialogue and provide demonstrations so that students may continue to build skills, strategies, and habits of mind in drawing, painting, graphic art, and sculpture. An understanding of the Elements and Principles of Design, Art History, and Art Appreciation are integrated into lessons as a framework of the curriculum. Through making art, discussing, and writing, students are encouraged to think critically and participate in a meaningful conversation about their own work and the greater world of art. *All 6th Grade students are placed in this class in either the 6th Grade art block or the 6/7/8 art block, depending on their music choice.*

**Ceramics — Randy Silver**
This is a beginning ceramics course that is exciting and challenging. It provides a strong foundation for future ceramics, and explores all modes of creating with clay. Students learn all of the basic hand-building techniques, and even take the potter’s wheel for a spin. They embark on completely new and different projects that encourage independence and self-direction. They experiment with both “ceramic sculpture” and “functional” (useful) pottery. Additional creativity, innovation, and imagination are encouraged. There are opportunities to integrate new materials, including a bit of metal, wire, and melted glass. Students stay mostly clean (our clay won’t stain, and easily washes off of clothes), get to keep what they make, and participate in a dynamic class that is always changing and fun. *Offered in the 6/7/8 art block in Trimesters 1, 2, and 3, and the 7/8 art block in Trimester 1.*

**Painting, On and Off the Canvas — Jeanne Ferraro**
In this course, students explore and investigate painting techniques of the past, present, and future. Using traditional methods, students begin by painting on canvas and using easels. Then, as students progress, they use different materials and explore the use of computer layouts. They also work with acrylic paint on canvas, as well as several computer apps for design. The class studies the work of both past and contemporary artists. *Offered in the 7/8 art block in Trimester 2.*

**Digital Art Exploration — Jeanne Ferraro**
This class is an exploration of Digital Arts in which students learn Photoshop, iMovie, and how to use several computer apps. They explore combining these apps to create projects that effectively communicate their ideas. In this exploratory course, students learn the elements and principles of design, as well as foundational concepts of visual communication. While surveying a variety of media and art, students gain skills in image editing, animation, and digital drawing. *Offered in the 6/7/8 art block in Trimester 1.*
**Drawing of Themes — Nathalie Hall**
Using both traditional and unconventional drawing materials, students engage in drawing projects based upon several unique topics that are developed as a class. While looking to artists for inspiration, students learn to push boundaries and seek creative solutions in their work, in the studio, and at home. Drawing progresses from idea to sketch; sketch to sustained drawing; individual drawing to work in a series. Formal, material, and conceptual experimentation is encouraged and necessary. Students use sketchbooks daily! Offered in the 7/8 art block in Trimester 1.

**Printmaking: 101 — Nathalie Hall**
Students in this class learn how to do a linoleum print using carving tools and a printmaking press, make monoprints using plexiglass and a handpress, and silkscreen and put their designs on paper, fabric, wood, etc. Using sketches, collages, and photos, students make one-of-a kind or multiple original prints. During the trimester, they research printmakers from the past and visit a professional printmaker’s studio. Offered in the 7/8 art block in Trimester 3.

**Tell Me a Story: Bookmaking — Nathalie Hall**
Students in this class create handmade books using different bookbinding techniques such as pamphlet stitch, accordion stitch, and Japanese stab. They use needle, thread, awl, bone folder, and other tools as well as a variety of different papers and materials, and they experiment with digital photography and other image-making processes. For content, students write their own stories, or use famous authors’ stories, poetry, or essays. This class ends with a final exhibition in The Northwest School Library. Offered in the 7/8 art block in Trimester 2.

**The Art of Faces — Sandy Nelson**
In this class students explore different ways to make a portrait. They learn techniques for both drawing and painting images of human faces as well as using wire work, paper cutting, collage, painting, and sculpture. Students study techniques for drawing realistic and abstract faces, and then move beyond human faces to create a pet portrait. Students are encouraged and assisted in developing creative, individual ideas for all of their projects. Offered in the 7/8 art block in Trimester 1.

**Calligraphy — Sandy Nelson**
This class explores creating art with writing and letters. Students learn to write with the traditional Celtic and Gothic scripts using a calligraphy pen. Other projects include a decorative “illuminated” letter, a letter sculpture, and a geometric pattern sculpture created with letters. Students also learn how to draw letters using one point perspective. Among the materials and tools students can choose from are water color, acrylic paints, wire, cardboard, calligraphy pens, markers, and pastels. For inspiration, students look at examples of both modern and traditional calligraphic art from around the world. Offered in the 6/7/8 art block in Trimester 1.

**Programmable Art — Sandy Nelson**
This class explores some of the various ways to connect the digital and analog worlds. Students program microcontrollers to create moving sculptures and interactive visual displays, use the laser cutter to create 3D works of art, and then present their creative work to the community. Students learn how to use programmed art to illustrate real-world issues such as quantifying homelessness in Seattle, displaying climate change, or showing the flow of traffic during the commute to school. Some of the many tools students learn to use are Keyestudio Uno Microcontroller, LEDs, Photoresistors, Temperature Sensors, Potentiometers, Laser Cutter, and Traditional Mixed Art Media. Offered in the 7/8 art block in Trimester 2.
**Design A City** — Sandy Nelson
What makes a good city? Is it schools? Parks? Shopping? Interesting architecture? Recycling? Students study all of these possibilities as they create art projects inspired by these questions. Projects may include maps, designs, sculptures of buildings, a sculpture of a transit center, or a collaborative sculptural city model. Materials include charcoal, acrylic and water-color paints, markers, cardboard, wire, printmaking inks, paper mache, and clay. *Offered in the 6/7/8 art block in Trimester 2.*

**Tree Art** — Sandy Nelson
Students in this class focus on trees as the inspiration for creating art work. Some examples of possible projects include drawing a line of trees using one point perspective; making a portrait of life based on drawing tree rings; needle-felting a tree sculpture; designing a tree house and building a model sculpture with paper mache; studying the beautiful tree paintings of British Columbia artist Emily Carr; and finding inspiration in ink drawings of trees created in China 600 years ago. Students work with a variety of materials, including colored wool, water color paint, acrylic paint, paper mache, cardboard, colored pencils, and oil pastels. *Offered in the 7/8 art block in Trimester 3.*

**Egyptian Art** — Sandy Nelson
In this class, students study Egyptian art in the time of the Pharaohs, 3,000 years ago. Projects include writing words using hieroglyphs (the letter-symbols of the Pharaohs); making a papier-mâché sculpture of one’s personal schwabti (a servant in the afterlife); and creating a painting inspired by tomb paintings of the food eaten by Pharaohs. Students learn about the ancient Goddess of Cats, study examples of paintings, sculptures, architecture, and writing from the time of the Pharaohs, and practice techniques for using a variety of materials, including acrylic paint, paper mache, fibers, colored pencils, and oil pastels. *Offered in the 6/7/8 art block in Trimester 3.*
Physical Education Curriculum

The P.E. program in Middle School offers a wide variety of individual and team sports and activities. Some activities are offered multiple trimesters but most are seasonal, lasting for only part of the year. Interscholastic sports practice during the school day; games are played outside the school day, usually right after school. Teams may play on any day of the week. All classes emphasize participation. In addition to skill learning and development, students work on building self-confidence, developing health and wellness tools, preventing injury, and cooperating with classmates and teammates. Course offerings are planned as listed below, but are subject to change, due to facility availability and staffing needs.

Student Requirements

- Students take physical education all three trimesters during 6th, 7th, and 8th Grades.
- To facilitate our goal of engaging all new students in a fun, supportive "team" experience, all 6th Grade students have a choice to be enrolled in either cross country or soccer during the fall season. If they are not comfortable playing in games or running in meets, students are allowed to be "practice players." Starting in the winter season of their 6th Grade year and continuing until the end of 8th Grade, all students signed up for teams are expected to play in games.
- Students take only one class at a time so they can participate in either a team sports class or one of our other classes, but not both simultaneously.

6th Grade Fundamentals

Over the course of the 6th Grade year, all students are introduced to the core fundamentals of our physical, health and wellness program. As part of their participation in team sports or the variety classes, students learn about the basics of aerobic and strength training, nutrition and hydration, injury prevention, flexibility/mobility and balance. They also practice the skills of sportspersonship and teamwork. In a separate six-week class (taken by all students during the winter) students learn mindfulness practices, stress management and emotional regulation tools, and begin to build stronger interpersonal relationship and consent skills.

Interscholastic Teams/Sports Class Offerings

The Northwest School competes with other schools and teams in soccer, basketball, ultimate, cross-country, volleyball, and track & field. Students have practices and/or games during their scheduled physical education class times. Depending on the sport, games generally take place after school.

Soccer Teams

One does not have to be a seasoned and skilled soccer player to join a team here. Beginners and club players are both welcome and encouraged. Soccer shoes, shin guards, and shorts are needed. Home games take place during the week and after school. Teams may be divided into squads by skill and are set up to meet the needs of beginners and highly experienced players alike. Offered in the fall season.

Cross Country Team

There are four great reasons to run cross country: to get in great shape; visit beautiful places (as students run in multiple places around Seattle); participate in some exciting competitions (one or two 1.5 mile races each week); and be part of a fun team with lots of camaraderie. No previous experience necessary and the team is filled with runners at every speed level. Offered in the fall season.

Basketball Teams

Our teams play games on weekday afternoons in the Crosstown Middle School League. 7th and 8th Grade teams are divided by ability and commitment levels. Home games take place in our 401 E Pike gymnasium. Basketball shoes, shorts, and water bottle are needed. Offered in the winter season.
Track and Field
Students learn and practice the wide range of track and field events: sprinting, distance, jumping, throwing, relays, and more. The team participates in four to five meets, which are scheduled on both afternoons and Saturdays. Offered in the spring season.

Ultimate Frisbee Teams
Discover why this game has become a Northwest obsession and, at the same time, join a tradition of school excellence in the quality of play and spirit of the game. No previous disc or ultimate experience is required – just a lot of energy and enthusiasm. Tons of running is involved, so be ready. Class times are used for skills practice and scrimmages. Games are played against other teams on weekdays. Students compete in both single-gender and mixed-gender teams. Offered in the spring season.

Volleyball Teams
Learn the skills of this fun, exciting sport! Teams practice in our 401 E Pike gymnasium and play games on weekdays. At this time, the Cross Town Middle School League (CTMSL) is a girls’ volleyball league. Offered at D1 level I in the fall and D2 and 6th Grade level in the spring.

Additional Middle School P.E. Course Offerings
Each year we offer an interesting array of classes that are not team-sports-based. The specific classes we offer in any given year are determined by a combination of student interest, teacher interest and experience, and facility availability. Final details for 2019-2020 are in process, but the following courses are likely offerings:

Lifetime Sports and Movement
A combined 7/8 variety class that engages students in a number of athletic activities and promotes accessible fitness to a wide range of ability and experience. These activities may include racquet sports (such as pickle ball and/or tennis), boxing, and bowling. Offered in the fall and winter.

Indoor Bouldering/Rock Climbing Class
Students have an opportunity to challenge themselves within the safe confines of the Seattle Bouldering Project. This class focuses on climbing efficiency and technique. Students work on strength, flexibility, balance, and other aspects of physical fitness that are essential for climbing. There may be an option to participate in a climbing competition. No previous experience required. Offered in the winter and, possibly, spring seasons.

Urban Hiking
In this class, we explore anywhere we can get to by foot. Some days, that is places of nature, other days, more urban places and playgrounds. We meet people and pets, go up stairs and across bridges, see art and architecture, and sometimes eat tasty food. All that is required is an open mind, a generous spirit with classmates, and a readiness to put one foot in front of the other in pursuit of adventure. Offered in the winter season (and possibly other times of year if enough interest).