

**Little Falls Township Public Schools**

# **Middle School**

## **Electives**

**2019-2020**



## Grades 5 & 6

### Cycle Courses

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

- *GRADE 5: Health, Spanish, Art, Music, and Study Skills*
- *GRADE 6: Health, Personal Finance, Art, and Music*

### Elective Courses

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

## Grades 7 & 8

### Elective Courses

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

## Placement Readiness Courses

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

- *English Language Arts / Mathematics Lab*

## **Accelerated Courses at Passaic Valley High School**

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

- *Italian I*
- *STEM I Explorations*
- *Computer Science*

## **Activities and Club Opportunities**

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

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

## Entrepreneurial and Leadership Studies

### Public Speaking: Grades 7 & 8

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

### Peer Group Connections: Grade 8 Must be Selected

*8<sup>th</sup> grade students supporting 5<sup>th</sup> grade students in their transition into Middle School. Peer Group Connection (PGC) taps into the power of 8<sup>th</sup> graders to create a safe and supportive environment for new 5<sup>th</sup> grade students. Once per week, pairs of select 8<sup>th</sup> graders meet with groups of 5<sup>th</sup> grade students to help them be successful in their first year of middle school. The focus of the class is on activities and scenarios that allow them to practice academic, social, and emotional skills such as decision-making, time management, teamwork, and communication.*

*Be a leader... Be a mentor... Be a role model... Make a difference in your school*

## Independent Study Center

*This is a period where students can work independently and collaboratively in order to assist them with the challenges of time management. This class will offer an environment that enables students to work on assignments, projects, and research in order to effectively meet and enhance their academic responsibilities.*

## Fine and Performing Arts

### **Instrumental Music: Grades 5 & 6, 7 & 8**

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

### **Chorus: Grades 5 & 6, 7 & 8**

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

### **Advanced Instrumental Methods Grades 7 & 8**

Instrumental Methods is designed to guide 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade instrumentalists to a higher performance level. In this course, students will be expanding their musical thoughts and applying them to a more advanced set of performance expectations. Along with band and lessons, this course will help to expand the skill level of students wishing to move into the next phase of instrumental musicianship, preparation for performances, and high school musical careers.

## **Advanced Vocal Music Methods: Grades 7 & 8**

Vocal Music Methods is designed to guide 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade vocalists to a higher performance level. In this course, students will be expanding their musical thoughts and applying them to a more advanced set of performance expectations. Along with chorus, this course will help to expand the skill level of students wishing to move into the next phase of vocal music, preparation for performances and high school musical careers.

## **Music Appreciation: Grades 7 & 8**

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

## **Studio Art: Grades 7 & 8**

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

## **Photography: Grade 8**

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

# Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics

## **Sports Math: Grades 7 & 8**

*Explore the world of mathematics through the use of sports and statistics. Learn how data is used to analyze various aspects of sports through graphs and charts. Learn to write about the formulas and equations that are used to determine a player's ERA, Batting Average, On Base Percentage, or WAR ranking. Learn about budgeting and salary cap to make the ultimate fantasy football team or the cost of creating a new franchise. Sports math is the class to take for anyone wanting to know more about math and its important impact on today's sports world.*

## **Brain Teaser Bonanza: Grades 5 & 6**

*Do you like math challenges? Is your brain ready to be "teased"? Are you a math "thinker" or do you want to become one? This elective will offer students the opportunity to develop and apply math skills such as adding, subtracting, multiplying, dividing, and logical reasoning through fun activities and contests. Students will also be developing math activities to share with the class to further challenge their classmates. There will be individual challenges as well as group challenges that will help students build their math stamina, teamwork skills, and overall math confidence*

## **Scratch 3.0: Grades 5 & 6**

*Scratch 3.0 launched on January 1, 2019. If you already like Scratch then check out what's new (interactive video). You can use the Scratch block programming language to program your own interactive stories, create games, and make animations. Scratch is an introductory level coding experience for students with numerous areas to explore and experiment. Scratch combines the world of technology with the world of creativity.*

## **Coding / Maker Space: Grades 7 & 8**

*Students will be exploring computer programming and learning programming principles. Students will be applying principles of coding to create games and designs using the 5-step design process.*

## **Digital World: Grades 5 & 6**

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

## **STEAM: Grade 7 & 8**

*Teamwork and hands on learning in which real world problems and challenges will be explored. We will find solutions while using Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math. Get ready to imagine, plan, build, and create.*

## **Social Studies**

### **Film Study: Grades 7 & 8**

*Are you a visual learner? The goal of this class is to gain knowledge of classic and historic events through movies you may have seen or heard about. Film Study will explore the nature of the motion picture, the actors, and directors who have made significant effect on America both past and present. All movies viewed will be age appropriate and be focused on significant cultural and historic events that have shaped our society.*

### **Current Topics and History: Grades 7 & 8**

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



## **Financial Literacy: Grades 7 & 8**

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

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

## **Mock Trial: Grade 7 & 8**

*Mock Trial will work to develop students' ability to articulate and debate their opinions supported by facts. Students will be exposed to components of the legal system as it pertains to the criminal and civil courts as well as the legislature.*

# **World Language**

## **Spanish: Grade 6**

*Students will expand their listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in Spanish. The purpose of this course is to prepare students to be on an accelerated track when entering High School. As per the State Standards, the curriculum will focus on the three modes of communication: Interpretive, Interpersonal, and Presentational.*

## **Spanish: Grades 7 & 8**

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

# Communications

## **Book Club: Grades 5 & 6**

*Do you love to read books? Do you love to finish a great book and discuss that book with friends? If so, this is the elective for you! In the Book Club elective, you will read amazing books and talk about those books with your classmates. As a School No 1 Book Club, we will learn more about the authors, find common themes in the books we read, and stage our own battles. The winning teams from the class will go on to the county Battle of the Books competition to compete against other schools who have read the same books. In this elective, you will also gain knowledge and enjoyment from reading good books, sharing them with friends, and - if you qualify - a fun day of competition in the "Battle of the Books".*

## **Creative Writing: Grades 5 & 6, 7 & 8**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **Journalism: Grades 5 & 6, 7 & 8**

*Journalism is a course designed for students interested in newspaper journalism and developing their skills as a writer. The course explores the contemporary media and the ethical responsibility issues inherent in press today. Students will learn the fundamentals of news, feature, editorial and sports writing. Copy reading, news style and editing will be stressed. Students will create numerous original stories using varied structures and writing techniques. Students will also learn to create computer generated layouts and graphics in preparing for publication of the School No.1 Student Newspaper.*

## **Physical Fitness**

### **Fitness For Life: Grades 5 & 6**

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

### **Yoga & Mindfulness: Grades 5 & 6**

*A class designed for a Brain Break. This is a class where we practice yoga and mindfulness. This class will boost your mental and physical health as well as help you with concentration and focus in your other classes. You will improve your physical strength and balance with yoga and be able to de-stress and refocus through mindfulness practices.*

### **Healthful Living: Grades 7 & 8**

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