



University Liggett School

Each middle school student has the opportunity to explore individual areas of interest in visual art, music and theater, public speaking, and innovation and design. Middle school students may choose to pursue two areas during each school year.

FOUNDATIONS: 6th GRADE

All students will elect one music ensemble which meets for the entire year.

Art

An introduction to middle- and upper-level art-making for 6th grade students with a focus on building artistic thinking skills and habits and fostering artistic independence. Artists will explore a variety of projects and art-making approaches in stations or small groups. After they have tried each option, they will create their own capstone work, carrying this independent project through from design to completion.

Band I

This course is open to students choosing to begin music instruction on a woodwind, brass, or percussion instrument. Students will meaningfully create, perform, and respond to music from a variety of time periods and cultures while developing instrumental technique and skill. Choice of instrument includes flute, clarinet, oboe, saxophone, bassoon, French horn, trumpet, trombone, baritone horn, tuba, or percussion. MS Band performs at community events and concerts outside of class.

Choir

Choir is offered to students interested in singing. They will learn the basics of music theory, and work daily on sight-singing and vocal performance techniques. Choir students will also participate and perform in a hand bell ensemble. Choir students will sing in at least two public performances per school year. Seventh and Eighth grade choir students are eligible to participate in the MSVMA Solo and Ensemble Festival.

ELECTIVES: 6th Grade

Electives are taken as trimester classes and all students will rotate through each of the art, drama, and innovation and design programs.

Drama 6: Foundations in Theater

Drama students in the 6th Grade study the historical development from early cultures to the European Renaissance. Activities include improvisation and memorized speeches from classic plays of the period.

Orchestra I

MS Orchestra I develops skills gained in LS Orchestra and is open to continuing students on the violin, viola, cello, and for continuing students transitioning to the upright string bass. Students will grow into independent musicians by executing proper playing technique; exploring music from different genres, time periods, and countries; and furthering creativity and musicianship through composing, analytical listening, and performing at community events and concerts outside of class.

Innovation & Design

Innovation with Digital and Design is a class focused on identifying and solving problems using digital tools. Using digital tools like Minecraft and Adobe's Creative Suite, students will explore pressing issues in our local and global community and try to create solutions using digital media. Students will reimagine public spaces and create entire digital communities as they learn about basic design principles. This class will have guest speakers who will share their knowledge of design and the design thinking and engineering design process can solve a wide variety of problems.

7/8th GRADE

Each middle school student has the opportunity to explore individual areas of interest in visual art, music and theater, public speaking, innovation and design. Middle school students may choose to pursue two areas during each school year.

FOUNDATIONS: 7/8th GRADE

Each student should select one choice from the foundations menu.

Art Studio

A multi-level studio course modeled after the upper school program. Students engage in an in-depth exploration of a particular theme (which changes from year-to-year) by creating a variety of works that respond to and explore the ideas discussed. Returning students will complete more challenging versions of each project and be provided opportunities to develop an individualized portfolio.

Band II

This course is open to students continuing previous music instruction on a woodwind, brass, or percussion instrument. Students will continue to meaningfully create, perform, and respond to music from a variety of time periods and cultures while developing instrumental technique and skill. MS Band performs at community events and concerts outside of class.

Choir

Choir is offered to students interested in singing. They will learn basics of music theory, and work daily on sight-singing and vocal performance techniques. Choir students will also participate and perform in a hand bell ensemble. Choir students will sing in at least two public performances per school year. Seventh and Eighth grade choir students are eligible to participate in the MSVMA Solo and Ensemble Festival.

Orchestra II

This course is open to continuing students on the violin, viola, cello, and bass. MS Orchestra II strives to expand and extend skills already introduced. Students will grow into independent musicians by executing proper playing technique; exploring music from different genres, time periods, and countries; and furthering creativity and musicianship through composing, analytical listening, and performing at community events and concerts outside of class.

Theater Production

Offered full year in 7th and 8th grade to students interested in participating in theater production work. The focus will be the creation of one act plays and musical theater performances from start to finish. Students will

engage script writing, story improvisation, and playbuilding before launching into design projects. The final outcome will be decided by the group and may yield a full staged production.

ELECTIVES: 7/8th GRADE

Each student must select an elective for each trimester.

Art History Remixed

Course covers a variety of works, artists, and movements pulled from historical and contemporary practices around the world. Students learn by doing: reimagining and reinterpreting the works of master artists with their own creative vision. The goal is for students to develop a personal “library” of artistic influences that they can draw upon and a broad-brush understanding of art history that allows them to contextualize their own work.

Beginning Intro to Orchestra

Intro to Orchestra is open to any new students wishing to start from scratch on violin, viola, cello, or string bass. In one trimester students will get a crash course in basic skills needed to join MS Orchestra I. Basic playing technique, instrument care, and reading music notation are critical elements.

Bucket Drumline

Calling all future drummers! Students in this course will learn basic drumstick rudiments, improvise rhythm patterns, and perform as a group ensemble using buckets. This group will perform at community events throughout the trimester.

Craft Aesthetics

A materials- and technique-focused course exploring a variety of craft mediums including textiles/fibers, wood, ceramics, found objects, metal, and glass. Students will create work that is decorative, well-designed, and often useful/wearable.

DJ Academy

This hands-on course will have students creating music using digital platforms, compiling playlists to evoke different moods, and discussing artist intent behind contemporary music. Students will explore and implement concepts such as emceeing, event coordination and flow, music business, and media advertisement. There will be an emphasis on the musical genres of hip-hop, R&B, techno, EDM, and rap.

Drawing

An intensive drawing exploration focused on learning how to see/observe and record the world around us (and the world inside our minds) both accurately and expressively. Students will work in a variety of mediums and styles, including digital drawing using Procreate on iPad. Building a personal sketchbook practice will be an important part of students’ learning.

Film Making

Students will engage in the process of making short films that employ digital media techniques and software. The course will use a foundation of design thinking to develop and implement 3 to 5 short film projects.

Innovation with Digital Design

Innovation with Digital and Design is a class focused on identifying and solving problems using digital tools. Using digital tools like Minecraft and Adobe’s Creative Suite, students will explore pressing issues in our local and global community and try to create solutions using digital media. Students will reimagine public spaces

and create entire digital communities as they learn about basic design principles. This class will have guest speakers who will share their knowledge of design and the design thinking and engineering design process can solve a wide variety of problems.

Movie Music

For many movies, the soundtrack is the most transportive part and is essential to the storytelling of the whole film. *Movie Music Through the Ages* will expose students to the history of film scores, starting with the live music that accompanied silent pictures, “talkies”, and the first movie with music (1927’s *The Jazz Singer*). Unit projects include westerns, musicals, song anthology scores, John Williams, orchestration and instrumentation, and the psychology behind film music.

Music of Detroit

Since the beginning of the 20th century, Detroit has produced a staggering number of world-renowned musicians including Stevie Wonder, Madonna, Eminem, and Sufjan Stevens to name just a few. It has also been the birthplace of entire musical genres including Motown, Techno, and even Punk Rock while also being home to great blues, jazz, rock, hip-hop. This class will open avenues for students to sample the rich multicultural musical fabric of Detroit.

Piano Lab

This course is designed for students who desire to develop basic piano skills, or for those who wish to expand their existing piano skills. Students will spend time playing independently and receive individualized instruction with the instructor. Students will perform a piano recital at the conclusion of course.

Public Speaking

Students will build a core understanding of the critical skills necessary to present effectively in public speaking situations. The course will engage students in informative, persuasive, and informal public speaking situation.

Rock The Stage: An exploration of Pop/Rock Music on Broadway

In this class we will study the history of popular music beginning with the mid 1950’s through 2000’s contemporary commercial music. We will explore how these various styles of music have been incorporated into musical theater of the past and present. **Each unit** will include genre specific voice, dance and movement study culminating in a short performance of a 16 bar cut.

Stage Combat

Effective and safe practices in special effects blocking are critical to many theater productions. Students will explore basic skills in stage tumbling, hand to hand movement, as well as foundations in weapon use (wooden swords).

Ukulele Studio

This course is open to students interested in learning, performing, and creating songs with the ukulele. Focus skills include singing while playing an instrument, performing as a member of an ensemble, performing as a soloist, songwriting, and maintaining a recorded portfolio on a mainstream media platform. Students will become familiar with fundamentals such as interpreting chord charts and tablature, reading lead sheets, and recognizing aural patterns in pop music. Completion of this course will equip students with skills that transfer to other harmonizing instruments such as guitar, keyboard, or autoharp.

World of Music & Dance

Students will take a journey exploring the music, dance, and traditions of different cultures around the world. Regions to explore include Africa, the Middle East, India, China, Japan, Indonesia, Australia, Europe, Latin

America, and Native America, among others. Through this journey, students will look to their own ancestry and its significance and relationship to their explorations. Students will listen, see, and participate in a variety of experiences outside of their own musical styles and preferences, while learning about the cultural and social contexts of others around the world.