

GARDEN CITY MIDDLE SCHOOL

2023-2024 ELECTIVE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY:

- **Exploring Computer Science:** *Have you ever wanted to see how video games are made? Do you want to learn how to build websites? Do you have an interest in digital animation?* Then Exploring Computer Science is the elective for you. In this course, you will continue to explore and build on your computer science skills in creative, fun, and collaborative ways. Building your own website, animations, games, and physical computing systems are only a few exciting projects that you will engage in. At the end of this course, you will be able to create program images, animations, interactive art, and games as well as your own web page. You will also strengthen your problem-solving skills through puzzles, challenges, and real-world scenarios. Come join us and experience the magic of computer science.
- **Google Applications Keyboarding: (8th Grade Only)** *So, you can text and tweet without looking, but how are you with typing notes, emails and research papers?* This course begins by teaching students the touch method of typing at a rate of 30 WPM or faster. After completing the Keyboarding portion of the class, students will receive hands-on instruction in the Google software applications including advanced formatting of documents (Google Docs), developing and delivering multimedia presentations (Google Slides), and basic spreadsheet functions and formatting (Google Sheets). This course will enhance your ability to create dynamic presentations, work collaboratively on projects, classwork, or homework, and develop your organizational skills through the use of technology.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS:

- **Creative Writing:** Calling all writers! Are you looking for a way to express yourself? This course will allow students to write and publish short stories, narrative persuasive and expository essays, as well as poetry, music, screenplays, and more! This course will complement the writing in the regular English classroom. Mini lessons will also focus on punctuation and style. When possible, students will be given an opportunity to publish writing and enter contests.
- **Film and Theatre:** This class is designed to enhance your understanding and appreciation of film, television, and theater. You will explore the basic elements of film/television, and theater such as characters, plot, cinematography, music, sound, etc. In this class you will view a wide range of award-winning films/television programs, and Broadway productions in which you will critically analyze each medium in a variety of ways, including but not limited to, writing, digital presentations and oral presentations. By taking this elective, you will be able to further strengthen your own theater and film experiences.
- **Journalism:** In this course, students will learn the basics of journalism, including interviewing skills, copyediting, proofreading, sports reporting, writing lead paragraphs, and journalistic writing styles. The students will produce a personal portfolio of written material and a semester newspaper.
- **Mystery Fiction in Print and Film:** Reading mysteries is an interest that can last a lifetime. Students will read, view, and analyze mystery fiction by Edgar Allan Poe, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Agatha Christie, and others. Small groups will write and perform a radio show or television script. Students will explore some of life's other mysteries, including The Loch Ness monster, the Yeti, and the lost continent of Atlantis. Learning to solve cryptograms, anagrams, and other puzzles will enhance thinking skills and add to the fun.

- **Mythology:** In this course, students will become familiar with several different types of mythology; including Classic Greek and Roman, Norse, Native American and African American. Students will recognize the significance of mythology in modern day literature, music, psychology, etymology and traditions. Students will be able to connect the importance of mythology across multiple subject areas.

MATHEMATICS:

- **Problem Solving in Math:** If you love to use your brain, discover connections, think outside the box, and solve math word problems this is the class for you! Those of you with Math Olympiad experience already know what this class will be like. We are enrolled in several organized contests (Nassau County, Long Island, NY State, and U.S.) Most of our time will spent gearing up for these contests by doing practice problems, discussing solutions, and learning many valuable strategies.

MUSIC:

- **Introduction to Acoustic Guitar (Grade 8 only):** This introductory course is for students who wish to learn the acoustic (non-electronic) guitar. It is a full year course that meets every other day.
- **Band:** This is the recommended sequence for students in the band program and is required for continued studies at the high school. It is a full year course that meets every other day.
- **Chorus:** This course is for students who enjoy singing and want a vocal performance experience. It is a full year course that meets every other day. This course is the recommended sequence for students in the choral program.
- **Orchestra:** This is the recommended sequence for students in the string program. It is a full year course and meets every other day. Orchestra is required for continued studies at the high school.
- **Music In Our Lives:** Music in Our Lives is an elective course that meets every other day for the full year. This class is for students who wish to learn more about music in a classroom setting rather than or in addition to a performance group. Students are involved in listening, analyzing, and composing their own music.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION:

- **ADVANCED PHYSICAL EDUCATION: – (Grade 8):**
“There is no better time than the present to get your kids active and enjoying the lifelong benefits of fitness.”
 The students will take part in a program that uses a combination of workouts and games designed to help promote the benefits of physical activity and prepare them for everyday life. These workouts will be fun and enjoyable allowing them to climb, lift, jump, effectively and safely regardless of whether or not they play athletics. They will learn how to perform movements in weightlifting, plyometrics and body weight exercises in an environment that is always familiar and fun.
- **DAILY PHYSICAL EDUCATION COURSE:** - As our schools are called upon to meet the increasing challenges of youth obesity and poor fitness, the purpose of this course is to help initiate the development and continuance of lifelong fitness.
COUSE OBJECTIVE: The students will be able to:
 - Demonstrate an understanding of how exercise and lifestyle choices directly impact their health and fitness condition.
 - Design a personal fitness program that meets their individual needs and interests.
 - Develop an understanding on the benefits of good nutrition and physical activity.
 - Understand the relationship between healthy living and self-esteem.
 - Demonstrate an understanding of possible health risks associated with a non-active lifestyle.

- **DANCE:** – (Grade 8):

Dance! Dance! Dance! Students will learn how to express themselves through dance. They will be encouraged to choreograph their own dance program and they will perform an in-house showcase in the spring.

SCIENCE:

- **Science Research:** - In this course, students will learn the fundamentals of scientific research through the implementation of the scientific method. The emphasis of the course will focus on 'hands on' projects and experimentation. Participation in competitions will take place throughout the course.
- **Exploring Pseudoscience and the Supernatural:** Students will learn to use the methods of science to explore the claims of the supernatural and pseudoscience. In doing so, they will develop critical thinking skills, and learn to be curious, open-minded and skeptical.

SOCIAL STUDIES:

- **History and Hollywood:** This course will supplement the social studies curriculum by having students experience how history is represented in the movies. For example, the Civil War will be explored through viewing portions *Glory* and *Gone with the Wind*, while the Great Depression will be explored through *The Grapes of Wrath*. The course will include research and writing components.
- **Introduction to Law and Criminal Justice:** This course will focus on the criminal justice and legal systems. Students will be introduced to our legal system with a focus on the Bill of Rights, the Supreme Court and the Federal Court systems. Through analysis of primary and secondary source readings and documentary videos, students will also study topics such as: Juvenile Law, Forensic Science, Law Enforcement Agencies, different types of crime and their consequences. Students will participate in hands-on projects to investigate each topic studied.
- **Speech and Debate:** Speech and Debate will incorporate reading, writing, research and public speaking. Students will study, evaluate, write and present various speeches. Debates will be researched based, and students will use their research to support and present their arguments in an organized and logical manner.
- **Sports and History:** Students will learn the history of the United States through the development of sports and their impact on society over the past one hundred years. The class will also focus on the role of women, political environment, civil rights and desegregation.