



**Renaissance  
Academy**  
CHARTER SCHOOL

# -Middle School- COURSE SELECTION GUIDE



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-----**Building Lifelong Learners**-----





# Renaissance Academy Charter School

## **RENAISSANCE ACADEMY**

Founded in 1999, Renaissance Academy began as an Edison Learning Partnership school, located in Phoenixville, Pennsylvania approximately 25 miles from Philadelphia, in the Northeastern part of Chester County. Renaissance draws from 20+ different school districts, creating a diverse student population. The school year is approximately 184 days, with a longer school day that allows more time for dedicated learning and provides the students more access to teachers, staff, and resources. Each of our classes in the Middle School averages about 84 students per grade level. This provides opportunities for students to work in small groups or individually, followed closely by advisors and teachers who know them well. School uniforms are worn, allowing students to focus on academics. Chromebooks are provided to every student through our 1-1 initiative, by completing appropriate paperwork. We are a PIAA school and are a part of the Bicentennial Athletic League. The sports that are offered to grades 6th-8th; include cross-country, baseball, basketball, soccer, volleyball, and softball. We also offer cheerleading, dance and many other clubs.

Renaissance Academy's goal is to develop college-prepared students for acceptance and success in on-going education of their choice. Helping students with college applications, the financial aid process, preparation for the SAT's, PSSA, and Keystone tests are also a few highlights. As they move into high school, students are given more choices in course selection, college-prep courses, Advanced Placement courses, and college courses when the opportunity arises. At Renaissance Academy, leadership training, core subject training, and professional development to support our staff are important components to our program. We are committed to a partnership with each family and enjoy a high level of parent satisfaction.

Our middle school has been known for outstanding achievement on the state tests (PSSAs) as well as engaging unique experiences for the students to participate in. During the middle school years we focus on transitioning students from the nurturing world of elementary school to the rigorous environment of high school. Students are taught a challenging curriculum in the areas of: English language arts, mathematics, science, social science, Spanish, various fine arts, and physical disciplines. Finally in middle school we begin the post graduate process by challenging our students to take the most rigorous courses possible and providing deliberate education in regard to the college going process through our Naviance college and career planning. This program exposes students in middle school to the realities of finding the right college, to the application process, to obtaining financial aid. We feel it is never too early to set these important goals.

## **SCHOOL VISION STATEMENT**

The Renaissance Academy Charter School student makes an active decision to be educated at the school because the student and their family desire an award-winning, college-prepared, liberal arts education. With rapport as a foundation, the school is a safe, respectful, rigorous and goal-oriented environment that is driven by the expectation that all students are able to realize their full potential.

## **SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of the Renaissance Academy is to be a diverse-minded community who prepares a varied cross-section of students for success as scholars, workers, and citizens by providing them with a world-class liberal arts, college-preparatory education. This inclusive environment, where high

standards, technological innovation, growth-mindset, unique experiences, creativity, and accountability are the norm, aims to achieve lasting gains in students' academic performance and includes the development of a strong alumni network.

### **PROFILE OF A MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT**

Students who have successfully completed middle school at Renaissance Academy Charter School, as a result of their education and their unique experiences, will have:

- Explored their potential.
- Participated in an inclusive environment.
- Engaged with our alumni network.
- Investigated career pathways and reflected on continuing education.
- Practiced being a productive member of your school community.
- Understood and demonstrated the core values that will make them attractive to colleges, universities, and future employers.
- Practiced and pushed themselves past their barriers in order to develop a growth mindset.
- Prioritized a diverse-minded environment.
- Incorporated technological innovations throughout learning outcomes.
- Worked with focused groups to identify problems and take action.
- Initiated accountability in their lives.
- Explored how creativity can produce success (thinking outside the box).
- Demonstrated the willingness to engage and build a rapport with an array of people in your life (situational rapport).
- Participated and been successful in an environment that expects high standards.

### **LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

Renaissance Academy is committed to creating and maintaining a positive learning environment that encourages cooperation, fosters creativity, and nurtures students in taking the risks involved in learning. The learning environment is developed and adjusted over time with focus on providing all students with access to a world-class education. Parents and community members play an important role in supporting the learning environment through using common, respectful language that encourages and inspires students, as well as setting limits. Our school has a Code of Conduct which is a succinct expression of the core values and mission of the school. The Code of Conduct governs and guides every student's actions in school.

**Core Values:** The core values embraced by Renaissance Academy are Hope, Respect, Responsibility, Courage, Justice, Compassion, Integrity, and Wisdom.

**Code of Conduct:** I am here to learn. Therefore I will: Respect myself, others and the environment. Cooperate with all school personnel. Do nothing to keep the teacher from teaching, or keep anyone, including myself, from learning.

### **GRADING SYSTEM**

Grades for the Middle School classes are recorded in the form of percentages. Any grade below a 60% is considered a failing grade. Grades are updated weekly on the Skyward gradebook so that parents can be involved in the educational progress of their children. Grades are averaged on a year long basis at which time credits for promotion are awarded. Achieving attendance requirements is necessary in order to receive credit for each class. No student may have more than 15 absences for 5th & 6th grade or 12 absences for 7th & 8th grade in a school year and still advance to the next grade level.

## HONOR ROLL

Students with outstanding academic achievement are recognized by placement on honor rolls. Honor roll averages include all current classes and are calculated on a trimesterly basis.

7/8 High Honor Roll - 3.75 GPA and above

7/8 Honor Roll - 3.0 GPA and above

5/6 High Honor Roll - 90% and above average in all classes

5/6 Honor Roll - 80% and above average in all classes

## TYPICAL COURSE SCHEDULE 5th & 6th

Core academic classes (English language arts, math, and science/social studies) meet every day for 82 minute blocks. Fine art classes meet for 40 minutes and are on a three day cycle. There are two fine art periods each day, giving a student a total of 6 fine arts over a three day cycle. Students move to fine art classes as a homebase cohort.

### 5th Grade

#### Courses:

English Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies.

#### Fine Art Classes:

Health, Art, Physical Education, Technology, Music, and Spanish.

### 6th Grade

#### Courses:

English Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies.

#### Fine Art Classes:

Drama, Art, Physical Education, Technology, Music, and Spanish.

## TYPICAL COURSE SCHEDULE 7th & 8th

Core academic classes (English language arts, math, and science/ social studies) meet every day for 85 minute blocks. Fine art classes meet for 45 minutes and are on a three day cycle. There are two fine art periods each day, giving a student a total of 5 fine arts over a three day cycle. Spanish classes meet twice out of every three days.

### 7th Grade

#### Courses:

English Language Arts 7

Math\* (Math 7 or Algebra)

Geography 7

Science (Life Science 7)

Spanish

Music (General, Band, or Chorus)

Physical Education (PE, Dance, or Yoga/ Pilates)

Fine Arts (Art or Drama)

Computer Science Discoveries w/Digital Citizenship\*\*\*

\* Students are placed into math based on their 6th grade progress for returning students or a placement test for new students

\*\*\*Required elective for grade level

## 8th Grade

### Courses:

English Language Arts 8

Math\* (Math 8, Algebra I, or Geometry)

US History 8

Science (Physical Science 8)

Spanish

Health

Music (General, Band, or Chorus)

Physical Education (PE, Dance, or Yoga/ Pilates)

Fine Arts (Art or Drama)

Health \*\*\*

\* Students are placed into math based on their 7th grade progress for returning students or a placement test for new students.

\*\*\*Required elective for grade level

# Introduction

Renaissance Academy is dedicated to providing students with a high school preparatory experience that they will treasure throughout their lives. The fact that we are a K-12 school provides us with a unique opportunity to develop and foster a learning environment that will better prepare students for the next level. It is with this vertical preparation in mind that we pride ourselves in developing our middle school structure to support the growth of our learners.

## Basic Program Requirements

### Core Classes-

All Renaissance middle school students are required to take a full year of math and English language arts. Social studies and science meet for a full year, but their meeting times are shorter (1/2 a period). Classes are approximately 85 minutes long and nightly homework assignments and study should be expected.

### Fine Arts-

Fine Arts are on a three day cycle and meet for 40/45 minutes each. Spanish is required of all students. In grades 7th & 8th students then must choose one music based class, one physical education class, and one visual or performing art. Choices are as follows:

**Music-** Band, Chorus, General Music

**Physical Education & Health (\*)-** Physical Education, Dance, Ballet, Yoga/Pilates

**Visual/ Performing arts-** Drama, Art

**Practical Arts (\*)-** CS Discoveries

\* 7th grade students will choose 3 Fine Arts classes (at least one from each category). However, all 7th graders are required to take Computer Science Discoveries as one of their Fine Arts.

\* 8th grade students will choose 3 Fine Arts classes (at least one from each category). However, all 8th graders are required to take Health as one of their Fine Arts.

## Course Sequencing

Course sequences in the Renaissance Academy middle school curriculum will vary depending on when students enter our program as well as their academic performance from previous years. Have students had a previous experience in Renaissance's lower school? Will middle school be their first experience with the Renaissance program and school design? These questions, as well as students' skill levels and academic motivation, are taken into account when determining the course placement and sequence that best suits their needs.

Regardless of the starting point, the goal is twofold: 1) to ensure that students have the basic skills and understandings they need to succeed in higher levels of education; and 2) to ensure students take the right combination of courses to prepare for high school and high school graduation requirements. Paths to these goals can and will vary depending on the starting points, but the pursuit of a common core of academic knowledge, skills, and understanding and a well-rounded liberal arts education is consistent for all.

## Class Placements

In 5th & 6th grades, students are placed in “cohorts” (groups of students that traveled together throughout the day and from year to year). In the 7th & 8th grades, students are not in a cohort, but adhere to the following procedure to determine their classes:

1. Students will be scheduled into their respective math course (see math placement information below)
2. Students will then be scheduled into mixed English Language Arts classes. Students who score basic or below basic on their PSSA tests, as well score below grade level on MAP tests may be placed in a section to receive more intensive, skill focused work. Students who are proficient or advanced on the PSSA tests will be grouped together accordingly.
3. The students then will be scheduled into their science and social science class based on the available time block.
4. Fine Arts, and electives will be assigned based on their Spanish placements. Students will take an end of year Spanish exam to determine placements for the upcoming school year. After the Spanish class has been scheduled, students will randomly be placed in the remaining fine arts class based on their requests.

## Math placements

### 5th & 6th grade students:

For 5th & 6th grade students who are high achieving based on their MAP test scores and class grades can be placed in a block which is faster paced if it works in their schedule.

### 7th grade students:

For 7th grade students to be placed into an Algebra I course, they must have successfully completed Math 6 with an 80% average grade or higher in formal assessments, averaged a RIT score of 235 or higher on their 6th grade MAP tests, and finally teacher recommendation. Students who do not meet this criteria will be placed in a Math 7 class in 7th grade.

### 8th grade students:

For 8th grade students to be placed into an Algebra I course, they must have successfully completed Math 7 in 7th grade with an 80% average grade or higher in formal assessments, averaged a RIT score of 235 or higher on their 7th grade MAP tests, and finally teacher recommendation. Students who do not meet this criteria will be placed in a Math 8 class in 8th grade. Students who successfully completed an Algebra I class their 7th grade year will take a geometry course in 8th grade.

## Promotion/ Retention

To be promoted to the next grade level, students must pass all of their core classes for the year. Information regarding student academic standing is relayed throughout the year in the online gradebook and SLC reports and conferences. It is the intention and expectation that all students will succeed in each course; however, if a student fails one or two classes, then they are required to make up those courses in summer school in order to be promoted on to the next grade level. If a student fails more than two core classes, then they will be required to repeat that grade level.

## MAP Testing

Renaissance Academy uses the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) test for local assessments to measure your child’s progress or growth in school. NWEA partners with educational organizations worldwide to provide research-based computerized adaptive assessments, professional development for educators, and research services. As a result of NWEA tests, educators can make informed decisions to promote your child’s academic growth. Testing tools and reports from NWEA provide specific insight into your child’s learning, and wide-ranging information to help every student, classroom, and school succeed.



## Additional Support/Opportunities

Acceleration opportunities to support our advanced learners, as well as remediation support for students who need extra help, is available for our middle school students in a variety of ways. We are proud of the relationships that have developed over the years with various organizations as well as the support opportunities that we offer within the school.

### **National Elementary Honor Society– NEHS**

This club meets twice a month. Students in 5th or 6th grade must have a GPA of 3.3. All five of the following requirements must be considered in the selection process, though the weight that any individual receives is determined by the local Faculty Council:

- Academics
- Co-curricular Activities (teams, clubs, musical groups)
- Leadership Positions
- Service Activities
- Other Community Activities (i.e., Boy or Girl Scouts, religious groups, etc.)

### **National Junior Honor Society– NJHS**

This club meets once every two weeks and is to recognize and advance learners who put forth excellent effort in their academic work. Students must also have an overall average of at least a 3.4 GPA or an equivalent standard of excellence. Candidates shall then be evaluated on the basis of service, leadership and character by the faculty council.

### **Academic Support-**

Renaissance has certified, full-time teachers to support students in ELA and math. Students in 7th or 8th grade are recommended to take math or ELA seminar from the teachers and receive remediation and support on various academic topics. This class takes place during a FA for these students. The school uses criteria based on MAP tests, PSSAs, and assessment scores to determine which students are eligible and who is required to receive support services.

## Homebase (Character Education)

Students in grades 5-8 will start each day in Homebase. In the middle school, this period is approximately 20 minutes long. Homebase is designed to support the Character Education initiative of Renaissance Academy and aligns with our mission to provide a world class education for all students. Students will be expected to be in Homebase every day, listen to the morning announcements, recite the *Code of Conduct* and *Pledge of Allegiance*. The class will engage in group discussions, plan for the week, review grades, and address other logistical needs.

During Homebase, students focus on various academic, team building and character activities. Students are able to check their grades, receive academic guidance and support from their Homebase teacher, and discuss and review upcoming due dates, assessments, etc. Students will review and utilize the Core Values, and engage in various lessons, discussions, and activities designed to develop character.

# ***COURSE DESCRIPTIONS***

## ***Mathematics***

### **Math 5**

The Savvas enVisionmath 2020 Common Core curriculum is used in grades K-5. Topics of study include operations and algebraic thinking, number and operations in base ten, fractions, measurement and data, and geometry. Content is developed with focus, coherence, and rigor. The attention to rigor reflects the balances of conceptual understanding, procedural skill and fluency, and applications in the Common Core Standards for 5th grade mathematics.

**Core Text:** enVisionmath 2020 Grade 5 Savvas © 2020

### **Math 6**

The Savvas enVisionmath 2021 Common Core Middle Grades curriculum is used in grades 6-8. Topics of study include ratios and proportional relationships, the number system, expressions and equations, geometry, and statistics and probability. Content is developed with focus, coherence, and rigor. The attention to rigor reflects the balances of conceptual understanding, procedural skill and fluency, and applications in the PA Common Core Standards for 6th grade mathematics.

**Core Text:** enVisionmath 2021 Middle Grades Grade 6 Savvas © 2021

### **Math 7**

The Savvas enVisionmath2.0 Common Core Middle Grades curriculum is used in grades 6-8. Topics of study include ratios and proportional relationships, the number system, expressions and equations, geometry, and statistics and probability. Content is developed with focus, coherence, and rigor. The attention to rigor reflects the balances of conceptual understanding, procedural skill and fluency, and applications in the PA Common Core Standards for 7th grade mathematics.

**Core Text:** enVisionmath 2.0 Middle Grades Grade 7 Savvas © 2017

### **Math 8**

The Savvas enVisionmath2.0 Common Core Middle Grades curriculum is used in grades 6-8. The grade 8 curriculum builds on concepts learned in Math 7 and prepares students for their more specialized math courses taken at the high school level. Topics include real numbers, scientific notation, and exponential expressions. Students refine techniques for solving multi-step linear equations and are introduced to functions. Data analysis is expanded to include scatter plots and relative frequency tables. Systems of linear equations are introduced with three techniques for solving. Geometric concepts such as transformations, right triangles, and surface area and volume are included. Problem-solving skills with higher level thinking involved are emphasized throughout the year to ready students for Algebra I.

**Core Text:** enVisionmath 2.0 Middle Grades Grade 8 Savvas © 2017

### **Algebra I**

This course concentrates on the fundamentals of algebra starting with solving equations and inequalities. Students create linear equations and are introduced to function notation and use these

concepts to solve real world problems. There is a strong emphasis on quadratic functions and equations, including factoring, multiplying, and solving through various methods. Next students are introduced to expressions and equations followed by rational expressions and functions. Students' prior knowledge of data analysis is expanded and compound probability is introduced. Upon successful completion of this course and a proficiency on the Algebra I Keystone, students will move to geometry.

**Core Text:** enVision Common Core Algebra 1 Savvas © 2018

## Geometry

This course is an introduction to the fundamental concepts of geometry. Units of study include coordinate geometry, measurement formulas, geometric proofs, relationships within geometry, and right-triangle trigonometry. Between units, topics in advanced algebra are introduced to ready students for Honors Algebra II. Many hands-on projects are to be expected throughout the year as well as traditional formal assessments.

**Core Text:** enVision Common Core Geometry Savvas © 2018

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## *English Language Arts*

### English Language Arts 5

This is a year-long course in which students study reading, writing, and grammar in correlation to the Pennsylvania Common Core standards. Emphasis is also placed on speaking and listening and students will participate in various assessments and class activities using these skills. The reading portion of this course focuses on the study of literary elements, devices, and reading strategies. This course consists of short stories, essays, poems, non-fiction, and a novel towards the end of the year. Students will learn to read critically while studying the different genres from a multitude of authors in both fiction and non-fiction text. Grading will take place in the forms of tests, essays, quizzes, writing assignments, projects (group and individual), homework, and presentations. **Primary Program:** for this class is Houghton Mifflin Harcourt's *Into Reading: Grade 5*.

The writing portion of English Language Arts 5 reading and writing in tandem. Students will get an introduction to grammar, usage, punctuation, and spelling as well as writing effective sentences and paragraphs. Students will also take part in writing workshops which can cover informational/research, argumentative, and narrative writing. Students will be formally and informally assessed through tests, quizzes, writing assignments, projects, presentations, and homework assignments.

**Primary Text:** for language is Houghton Mifflin Harcourt's *Into Reading: Grade 5*.

### English Language Arts 6

This is a year-long course in which students study reading, writing, and grammar in correlation to the Pennsylvania Common Core standards. Emphasis is also placed on speaking and listening and students will participate in various assessments and class activities using these skills. The reading

portion of this course focuses on the study of literary elements, devices, and reading strategies. This course consists of short stories, essays, poems, non-fiction, and a novel towards the end of the year. Students will learn to read critically while studying the different genres from a multitude of authors in both fiction and non-fiction text. Grading will take place in the forms of tests, essays, quizzes, writing assignments, projects (group and individual), homework, and presentations.

**Primary Program:** for this class is Houghton Mifflin Harcourt's *Into Literature: Grade 6*.

The writing portion of English Language Arts 6 reading and writing in tandem. Students will get an introduction to grammar, usage, punctuation, and spelling as well as writing effective sentences and paragraphs. Students will also take part in writing workshops which can cover informational/research, argumentative, and narrative writing. Students will be formally and informally assessed through tests, quizzes, writing assignments, projects, presentations, and homework assignments.

**Primary Text:** for language is Houghton Mifflin Harcourt's *Into Literature: Grade 6*.

## English Language Arts 7

This is a year-long course in which students study reading, writing, and grammar in correlation to the Pennsylvania Common Core standards. Emphasis is also placed on speaking and listening and students will participate in various assessments and class activities using these skills. The reading portion of this course focuses on the study of literary elements, devices, and reading strategies. This course consists of short stories, essays, poems, non-fiction, and novels. Students will learn to read critically while studying the different genres from a multitude of authors in both fiction and non-fiction text. Grading will take place in the forms of tests, essays, quizzes, writing assignments, projects (group and individual), homework, and presentations.

**Primary Text:** for this class is Houghton Mifflin Harcourt's *Into Literature: Grade 7*.

The writing portion of English Language Arts 7 consists of two major components. Students will get an in depth introduction to grammar, usage, punctuation, as well as writing effective sentences and paragraphs. Students will also take part in several writing workshops which will cover informational/research, argumentative, and narrative writing. At least one writing assignment will be a multi-step research project in accordance with MLA style. Students will be formally and informally assessed through tests, quizzes, writing assignments, projects, presentations, and homework assignments.

**Primary Text:** for language is Houghton Mifflin Harcourt's *Into Literature: Grade 7*.

## English Language Arts 8

This is a year-long course in which students study reading, writing, and grammar in correlation to the Pennsylvania Common Core standards. Emphasis is also placed on speaking and listening and students will participate in various assessments and class activities using these skills. The reading portion of this course focuses on the study of literary elements, devices, and reading strategies. This course consists of short stories, essays, poems, non-fiction, and novels. Students will learn to read critically while studying the different genres from a multitude of authors in both fiction and non-fiction text. Grading will take place in the forms of tests, essays, quizzes, writing assignments, projects (group and individual), homework, and presentations.

**Primary Text:** for this class is Houghton Mifflin Harcourt's *Into Literature: Grade 8*.

The writing portion of English Language Arts 8 consists of two major components. Students will study the second course of grammar, usage, punctuation, as well as writing effective sentences and

paragraphs. Students will also take part in several writing workshops which will cover informational/research, argumentative, and narrative writing. At least one writing assignment will be a multi-step research project in accordance with MLA style. Students will be formally and informally assessed through tests, quizzes, writing assignments, projects, presentations, and homework assignments.

**Primary Text:** for language is Houghton Mifflin Harcourt's *Into Literature: Grade 8*.

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## ***Social Science***

### **Social Science 5**

In this course you will learn about the history of the United States. We will begin our journey by examining the geography and regions of America. From there, we will discover the Native American cultures who inhabited this land before the European Exploration. Next, we will look at the formation of the United States by “walking in the shoes” of the Founding Fathers during the Revolution. After that, we will venture West with Lewis & Clark during the Westward Expansion before the spark of the Civil War and the disputes between the Northern and Southern States. Finally, we will turn the page to the 20th century and cover topics such as Women’s Suffrage, World War I, the Great Depression, World War II, and Civil Rights. We will be covering roughly 600 years in 180 school days...so buckle up!

### **Social Science 6**

In this course, you will learn about the history of the Ancient World. We will begin our journey by examining the geography and climate of numerous environments around the world. From there, we will look at how humans survived the Ice Ages. Next, we will discover various advanced civilizations throughout the world. These civilizations include Mesopotamia, Egypt, India, China, Olmecs & Mayans, Greece, Rome, African Kingdoms, and so many more. Along the way, we will make stops in parts of the world to focus on archeology, languages, and religions. Then, we will continue with our journey in Europe with the Middle Ages, the Renaissance & Reformation, Enlightenment, and the Industrial Revolution. Finally, we will examine the different types of ideologies such as Imperialism, Nationalism, and Communism, and their impact on the modern world.

### **World Geography 7**

Students will develop critical thinking and problem solving skills as they investigate the physical and political geography, economy, culture, political systems and demographics of major regions of the world (the Americas, Western and Eastern Europe, the Middle East, North Africa and Asia). Major local, national and world events will be emphasized throughout the year by utilizing the Junior Scholastic current events magazine. Students will also complete a cross-curricular research project presentation for Black History Month. The 21st century skills of critical thinking, problem solving, communication, collaboration, and cross-cultural understanding will be emphasized throughout the course.

### **US History 8**

This course aims to foster an understanding of the development of our country by examining the

past in order to prepare each student for the future as an active participant in a democratic society. Students will examine political, economic, technological, and social developments of the United States from the creation of the Constitution through the World Wars. Students will frequently analyze primary source documents to view events through the lens of those that experienced them. Current national and world events will also be emphasized throughout the year. The development of critical thinking and writing skills will be a major focus on assignments and assessments.

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## ***Science***

### **Science 5**

This is an introductory course to multiple fields of science including but not limited to the scientific method, properties of matter, technology, space/planet exploration, and ecosystems. Students will be able to explore these various fields and determine which interest them most, allowing them to focus on certain areas as they move forward in school. Multiple approaches to learning will be used including lab activities and technology content in correlation to the Elevate Science curriculum. This course uses the technological platform Saavas and includes an online textbook, interactive lab activities, videos and quizzes.

### **Science 6**

This course focuses on Earth science. Topics covered include Earth's layers, tectonic plates, earthquakes, volcanoes, geology and weather and climate. Content is heavily focused on the composition of planet Earth and how everything works together to keep our planet thriving with life. Multiple approaches to learning will be used including lab activities and technology content in correlation to the Elevate Science curriculum. This course uses the technological platform Saavas and includes an online textbook, interactive lab activities, videos and quizzes.

### **Science 7**

Grade 7 focuses on the Life Sciences. Students will explore cell structure and organelles, DNA/genetics, and systems within the human body. Topics such as ecosystems and adaptations will also be revisited. Students will have the opportunity to be very hands on, by completing mini labs for almost every lesson. 3D printing technology will also be introduced and utilized in class. Multiple approaches to learning will be used including lab activities and technology content in correlation to the Elevate Science curriculum. This course uses the technological platform Saavas and includes an online textbook, interactive lab activities, videos and quizzes.

### **Science 8**

Grade 8 focuses on Physical Science and an introduction to chemistry. Students will take an in depth look at The Periodic Table, different types of energy and reactions, force/motion, and also electrical circuits. Students will also be able to design 3D prints. Labs will also be utilized throughout each lesson and chapter, providing students with hands-on experiences dealing with physics and chemical reactions. Multiple approaches to learning will be used including lab activities and technology content in correlation to the Elevate Science curriculum. This course uses the technological platform Saavas and includes an online textbook, interactive lab activities, videos and

quizzes.

## ***Fine Arts***

### ***World Language***

#### **5th grade Spanish**

In this course students practice the four language skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing. The topics studied are designed to be relevant to the student's life so they can practice what they learn in and out of the classroom. The main focus is exposure to the Spanish language and culture while building a personal lexicon and creating sentences to communicate in Spanish about themselves at a basic level.

#### **6th grade Spanish**

A continuation of 5th grade Spanish, students in this course will continue to develop and refine the four language skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing. The topics studied are tailored to be relevant to the life of a sixth grade student, which will facilitate their ability to practice what they learn within the confines of the classroom as well as in real-world applications. Exposure to Spanish language and culture prior to embarking on upper-level courses is the primary objective of the course, while basic communication skills are developed in the meantime.

#### **7th/8th Beginners/On-Level Spanish**

This course introduces the essential concepts of the Spanish language by using a gentle approach to reading, writing, listening and speaking so that students prepare for high school Spanish 1, a core class. Lesson topics center on basic vocabulary, grammar and culture so that students can build confidence to use the Spanish language outside the classroom.

Students will have the ability to greet others in specific social settings, carry basic conversations, talk about the weather and seasons, describe themselves/others, express how they feel, identify family members, describe the foods they like to eat, tell where they like to go with friends.

#### **7th/8th Advanced Spanish**

This course integrates the essential Spanish language skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking so that students prepare for high school Spanish II, as a core class. Topics include a variety of vocabulary, grammar, and culture for students to have a functional level of proficiency at the beginner level to use Spanish in the classroom and in the real world.

Students will be able to apply appropriate greetings, have basic conversations, describe themselves/others, tell what they and others like (to do), talk about their school schedules, tell time, discuss food and nutrition, identify family members, describe clothes and shopping, and talk about different places they like to go in a town/city.

## ***Music***

### **General Music 5-6 grade**

This course is for 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders who are interested in learning a variety of musical styles and skills. You will develop your ability to read, play, and analyze, and appreciate music. Throughout the year there are units on world music, jazz, rock, technology, ukulele, composition, and percussion. This is a performance based class. Students will be evaluated heavily based on their class participation and demonstration of skills. Students will have some assessments which will be given in class or online.

### **Chorus**

This course is open to any 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> graders interested in singing. If you are interested in gaining more confidence with your voice and making music with others, come and join our Chorus! You will develop your singing voice and expand your range while singing a wide variety of styles including jazz, Broadway, classical, folk, and pop. This is a performance based class. Students are required to perform in one winter and one spring evening concert. There are also opportunities to sing in mini-concerts at malls, senior centers, and elementary schools. There will also be avenues for solo singing. This class is for singers of all ability levels, so come and have fun! Students in chorus are required to participate in the winter and spring concerts.

### **7/8 Junior Academy Band**

The instrumental music program at Renaissance Academy Charter School is a performance based program. This course is not for beginners. The membership for this ensemble is any student with prior study/lesson on a concert band instrument in grades 7 & 8. The daily activities in the classroom culminate in a public performance of the literature being studied. Public performances may take the form of school assemblies, concerts, festivals, etc. Even though the majority of the time in the classroom will be spent preparing for a public performance, continual cultivation of basic musicianship, basic elements of music, theory, history and other topics will be discussed. 7/8 Junior Academy Band Students will also receive a sectional lesson once a cycle to help with understanding the above information. **Prerequisite:** Prior musical study on a Band instrument.

### **General Music**

This course is for any 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grader who is interested in learning a variety of musical styles and skills. You will develop your ability to read, play, and analyze music. Throughout the year there are units on music careers, jazz, rock, technology, ukulele, composition, and percussion. This is a performance based class. Students will be evaluated heavily based on their class participation and demonstration of skills. Students will have some writing assessments which will be given in class.

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## ***Visual/ Performing Arts***

### **6th Grade Drama**

6th grade drama is a continuation of 4th grade drama. Students will study improvisation, scripted acting, playwriting, and do a final class production at the end of the year. Student performances will be assessed using an acting rubric, and they will be given the opportunity to earn participation and project points each trimester. Participation plays a great "role" in grading.

### **7th/8th Grade Drama**

7th/8th grade drama class is an exciting exploration into the world of acting. Whether a student is an experienced actor or new to the stage, this class will allow all participants to develop basic to intermediate theatrical skills such as creative characterization, vocal projection, listening, improvisation, character analysis, stage movement, and script writing. Students will be required to perform in front of the class several times throughout the year. Student performances will be assessed using an acting rubric, and they will be given the opportunity to earn participation and project points each trimester. Participation plays a great "role" in grading. A positive attitude, willingness to take risks, and a high level of energy is essential for this class.

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## **Art**

### **5th Grade Art**

In art class, the 5th grade students will explore the works of various artists while continuing to work to improve their artistic skills and techniques. We begin the year with a symmetry design and end with some painting and clay work. Students will learn to value their studio time while planning, learning and creating and reflecting on their artistic process. The year will culminate with an art show where the students will be able to showcase a sampling of their work.

### **6th Grade Art**

In art class, the 6th grade students will focus on the entire artistic process. From the initial stages of inspiration, through development, creation, and finally reflection the students will stretch and grow their own personal voice and creativity. Students will learn a variety of techniques and media as well as exploring the lives and art of past and present artists. Both 2 dimensional and 3rd dimensional projects will be available for the students to work with. The year will culminate with an art show where the students will be able to showcase a sampling of their work.

### **7th/8th Grade Art**

7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup>-grade art is an elective class that students may choose to take. Students will be exposed to a variety of mediums as well as different art styles and artists. A strong emphasis will be placed on learning and applying the elements and principles of design. Students will learn how to navigate the creative process of beginning with a sketch to producing a final work of art, all while improving upon their problem-solving skills and vocabulary. The class will run on a two-year rotation so that students are not asked to complete the same project two years in a row. The year will culminate with an art show where the students will be able to showcase a sampling of their work.

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## ***Practical Arts***

### **5th/6th Grade Technology and Computer Science Fundamentals**

This course is designed to blend online and unplugged activities to teach students computational thinking, problem solving, programming concepts and digital citizenship. The overall goal is to foster creativity, teach critical thinking skills, gain an understanding of technology and how to use it appropriately. 5th and 6th grade students are introduced to basic block coding. Students complete projects using various apps in the Google Suite and work through a self-paced typing program.

### **7th CS Discoveries with Digital Citizenship**

Through our 1:1 technology initiative, this course is designed to empower students to engage with computer science as a medium for creativity, communication, problem solving, and fun. The overall goal of this class is to educate and empower young people to harness the power of the Internet and digital technology for learning, and for them to become safe, respectful, and responsible digital citizens. Students learn introductory coding and the social implications of digital media. They will reflect on the role of the Internet in their lives, learn how to identify and prevent cyberbullying, and utilize credible website content for academic coursework. Students will gain understanding and build skills to navigate social media safely, responsibly, and intelligently. Concepts in copyright protections will be explored as well as basic skills in completing online research through the school's various library databases. The Internet is a public space, and students will develop skills and digital etiquette to protect their own privacy and respect the privacy of others.

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## ***Health & Physical Education***

### **5th Grade Health**

This course is a beginner/ intermediate introduction to "The Health Triangle" which focuses on Physical health, Mental/Emotional health and Social health. All three of these areas are discussed within each of the four units taught during the school year.

The four units that are taught are Unit 1: Introduction to the Health Triangle, Unit 2: Drugs, Alcohol, and Tobacco, Unit 3: The Body Systems, and Unit 4: Nutrition. In addition, a lesson on hygiene and growing up is taught towards the end of the school year. This is an age appropriate discussion which covers developmentally appropriate material.

### **8th Grade Health**

This course explores topics in health for today's teenagers. Topics include physical, emotional and social health, tobacco, alcohol, substance abuse and nutrition. There is also a unit on sexually transmitted diseases, pregnancy and childbirth. Students will be graded based on in-class assignments, projects, quizzes and tests, as well as class participation.

### **5th/6th Physical Education**

This course will concentrate on developing fundamental manipulative, movement, fitness, and sports skills. Each lesson consists of six components: entrance procedures and learning objectives,

warm-up, fitness routines, skills focus, gaming, and closure activities. Students will work towards improving their own personal fitness levels by concentrating on cardiovascular endurance, muscular strength and endurance, and flexibility. These skills will help promote lifelong fitness. Students can earn ten points for participation and citizenship/sportsmanship each class.

## **7th/8th Physical Education**

This course is designed to teach students the fundamental skills for many sports. Students will work towards improving their fitness components of cardio, strength, and flexibility each class, along with developing sportsmanship. These skills will help promote lifelong fitness. The units for this course will consist of: soccer, football, frisbee, volleyball, badminton, basketball, floor hockey, handball, and a variety of other activities. The students will be assessed during each unit in a variety of ways; skill testing, mini-quizzes, and daily participation points. Each class students can earn 5 points for being prepared and ten points for participation and citizenship/sportsmanship.

## **Dance**

This course lets the students explore and experience a variety of types of dance. Students are required to look at the atheism of dance and must be open to a variety of dance forms (we will focus on several dance forms). Throughout the course, students discover how the body can move and what it can do for choreography. Students will also look into what other "jobs" the choreographer gets involved in. (i.e., costumes, set design, music and lighting) Written work is required in this course. Students will understand and study the history of all genres in dance. Dance Focus: Will include but, not limited to, Warm Up/Stretch, Across the floor progressions, choreography phrases, and a taste of all dance forms. Students enrolled in dance are expected to participate in the spring dance concert. Contemporary and Jazz shoes are preferred for this class and a PE uniform is required.

## **7th/8th Ballet**

This course is a beginner/intermediate introduction to Ballet. Instruction will cover basic positions, barre work, center work, progressions and choreography. Students will also understand and study the history of ballet. Focusing on historical ballet pioneers and the well-known ballets. Choreography will be presented in the spring dance concert, as well as students enrolled are expected to participate in the concert. Ballet shoes and PE uniform are required for this course.

## **7th/8th Pilates and Yoga**

This course is an introduction to Pilates and yoga. Students will be doing a variety of exercises each day and assessed on improvements in their technique, flexibility, and core strength. The course focuses on core strength and relaxation techniques. Bare feet or socks, Yoga mat, and PE uniform are required for this course.