



NORTHRIDGE PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Activity Period Options for 2020-21

Monday, Wednesday, Friday

Computer Coding	<i>Mr. Joel Sacris</i>
Civil War	<i>Mr. Matt Marsland</i>
Film Club	<i>Mr. Michael Burns</i>
Resource Class	<i>Mr. Matt Filip</i>
Strategy Games	<i>Mr. Alex Hadley</i>
Theater & Choir	<i>Mr. Shane Ayers</i>
Spanish	<i>Mr. Doug Klatt</i>

Tuesday & Thursday

Band	<i>Mr. John Riccobono Mr. Doug Klatt</i>
Speech & Debate	<i>Mr. Matt Marsland</i>
Newspaper	<i>Mr. Michael Burns</i>
Science Club	<i>Mr. Russell Fernandes</i>
Strategy Games	<i>Mr. Matt Filip</i>
Woodworking	<i>Mr. Patrick Harrington, Mr. Shane Ayers,</i>
Bugs & Botany	<i>Mr. Ben Foster</i>

Band

Tue/Thur

Mr. John Riccobono, Mr. Doug Klatt

Elective Description

Northridge Middle School Band meets three times a week. Middle School Band is **primarily for 7th and 8th graders** with an exception for 6th graders who are advanced enough in their instrument. Students will also attend a sectional rehearsal with their instrument group during extended lunch and other activity period sessions.

Events & Topics

Middle School Band performs in two major school concerts each year in the fall and spring. In addition, our Middle School Band has been invited to play at other schools. The band plays pieces such as "Lord of the Rings," "The Lion King," Tchaikovsky's "1812 Overture," "Pictures at an Exhibition," "Pink Panther," "Theme from Rocky," and "Star Wars."

Additional Resources

Music lessons offered before and after school.

Additional Requirements

We highly recommend that middle school band members attend a weekly lesson before or after school to continue improving their own playing and the overall sound of the band.

Bugs & Botany

Tue/Thurs

Mr. Ben Foster

Elective Description

"Every realm of nature is marvelous...so we should venture on the study of every kind of animal without distaste; for each and all will reveal to us something natural and something beautiful."

- Aristotle, *Parts of Animals*.

Students in Bugs and Botany have a natural curiosity about the living world around them. Having studied the world of plants at the graduate level, Mr. Foster has the experience to turn this curiosity into knowledge. All who marvel at the delicate shape of a fern frond or the intricate complexity of a wood thrush's song should join.

Events & Topics

There will be opportunities for field trips to nearby natural areas, where birds, reptiles, amphibians, mammals, as well as plants and insects can be explored.

Skills & Benefits

In this club, members will learn how to identify insect and plant species common to this part of Illinois. They will also become familiar with major orders of insects and families of plants, enabling them to give an organism a name no matter where they are in the world. This will occur through hands-on learning, outdoor expeditions, dissecting microscopes, and field guides. Students will also have the chance to experience and care for insects and plants in the classroom. Ultimately, students will help build a physical record, in the form of plant and insect specimens, that documents Northridge's world of life.

Elective Description

The Civil War was an epic conflict that shaped the History of the United States. Mr. Marsland is a History enthusiast who is excited to bring his love of history to the students.

Events & Topics

Mr. Marsland will explain how leaders reacted to the incredible pressures of combat. The importance of leadership, courage, and other virtues will be the underlying theme of the class. Many classes will focus on how men lived or failed to live heroic virtue. About one-third of the class will focus on the Battle of Gettysburg. The club will also watch movies (ex. Gettysburg) and selected documentaries about the Civil War, including parts of Ken Burns's Civil War. We will not only cover different battles, but also dive into how the lives of men changed before and after this great conflict that shaped our country. The students will also do some reenactments using Nerf guns.

Additional Requirements

The club will only meet during activity period. There is no outside work required other than suggested recommended readings.

Elective Description

Looking to become a better public speaker and discuss fascinating topics with your classmates? Sign up for Debate and learn how to both judge and participate in a public debate! Public speaking is an essential, lifelong skill that will help to make you a more confident and compelling speaker.

Events & Topics

Debate Topics: Range from the downright silly (mustard vs. ketchup) to serious (politics and culture).

Debate Styles: Participate in both "shotgun" (on the fly) and prepared/researched debates.

Competition: Hone your skills for the third annual Northridge spring debate tournament, and compete for a spectacular prize.

Additional Requirements

Basic outside research will be required for some research-based debates, but most work will be

done during the activity period itself. Opportunities to participate in multi-school debate competitions outside of school hours may arise, and you will be encouraged to sign up! Last year's participants returned to Northridge with a slew of prizes and represented The Knights in grand fashion.

Film Club

Mon/Wed/Fri

Mr. Michael Burns

Elective Description

Do you like watching movies? Do you enjoy discussing the plot, themes, characters, and structure of movies? Are you interested in film critique or filmmaking? Then join the Northridge Middle School film club where you will be able to learn how to go beyond the surface of the classical movies that you like and discuss your opinions with your peers. Students will watch a series of classical movies and engage in discussions, expanding their minds. We will discuss relevant and important themes like love, family, sacrifice, chivalry, and much more. If you want to relax and have a good time while enhancing your analytic skills, film club is for you.

Events & Topics

Topics included are: happiness and joy, pain and suffering, chivalry and honor, respect and maturity, love and sacrifice, the power of forgiveness, and much more.

Events *may* include outings to shows and movies. (*This depends on the availability of good movies/shows throughout the school year.*)

Skills & Benefits

Students will learn how to analyze movies in-depth, which will help students in their analysis of books. Students will also grow in their ability to factually critique books through the discussion of universal themes and motifs.

Additional Requirements

Students must be willing to occasionally write small essays or paragraphs about the movies in order to create an educated discussion in the club. Students should bring a pen and notebook or folder with loose-leaf paper.

Elective Description

The Middle School Newspaper, *De Scalibus*, reports on Northridge news, local news and world news. A major goal of the club is for students to write in a format that is freer than a class assignment. Another goal is for students to learn how to grab the interest of a reader. Interesting aspects of the newspaper include the "fact-is-stranger-than-fiction" stories that come from the students' research, the student camaraderie, and the indirect learning of writing skills.

Skills & Benefits

Students grow their writing abilities while also building their team leadership skills.

Additional Requirements

Club members are required to produce two print pieces per quarter. There will be no meetings outside of class, however students should be prepared to devote two to three hours per quarter beyond the normal Activity Period hours in order to complete papers.

Elective Description

Students will work on learning organizational techniques and study skills designed to fit the individual. Students will be expected to develop a routine that helps them to succeed in the classroom. Parents will need to work in cooperation with the student and the teacher to ensure student progress and growth.

Events & Topics

Students will learn by doing tasks such as organizing their locker, taking good class notes, and developing strategies to become a better test-taker. Students will develop a process of checking in with the teacher and their parents to show continued growth.

Additional Resources

Each student will need to bring his assignment notebook to class every class and have each teacher sign that all homework is written down each day. Parents will check that homework is done. Teachers will check on student's progress in his classes and meet with other teachers to guide the student on the correct path.

Additional Requirements

Students and parents will work closely with each other and maintain regular communication with the teacher.

Science Club

Tue/Thur

Mr. Russell Fernandes

Elective Description

Science Club is for students who are curious about the nature of things. Science is the study of the way things are. In this activity, students will learn how to apply the scientific method to experiment on observations they make. Science Club will be a hands-on activity for students who are enthusiastic about science.

Events & Topics

Students will meet to develop deeper insights through investigation and reading scientific literature in topics including physics, chemistry, genetics, microbiology, anatomy, ecology, geology, astronomy, computer science, mechanical engineering and technology. They will develop projects of their own, focusing on experimental design, conducting hands-on research, analyzing data, and presenting final work. Throughout the year, students will be guided in synthesizing ideas, developing key questions, and participating in the collaborative process of research.

Strategy Games

Mon/Wed/Fri or Tue/Thur

Mr. Alex Hadley or Mr. Matt Filip

Elective Description

Do you enjoy playing games involving strategy and complex reasoning? Mr. Hadley & Mr. Matt Filip will moderate this fun, analytical, competitive activity. Strategy Games and Chess offers a friendly atmosphere of competition while students play exciting board games such as Stratego, Risk, Axis & Allies, Othello, Monopoly, Pandemic, Settlers of Catan, Dominion, and Chess. Have fun while exercising your mind and improving your problem solving techniques!

Theater & Choir

Mon/Wed/Fri

Mr. Shane Ayers

Elective Description

Theatre and Choir are perfect for students who enjoy being in the spotlight and love to be challenged. In this elective, students will learn the basics of acting through improv exercises, skits, and scripted plays. Additionally, they will learn how to sing by focusing on vocal control, projection, and intonation.

Events & Topics

Students will be working towards a concert in the Winter as well as a musical in the Spring. Leading up to these performances, students will be studying acting and singing through a variety of methods such as improv, skits, and acapella.

Skills & Benefits

Students will improve their ability to think on their feet, speak in front of others, and sing in the correct pitch.

Woodworking

Tue/Thur

Mr. Patrick Harrington, Mr. Shane Ayers

Elective Description

This course is offered for the student interested in learning lifelong skills in the area of basic construction and manufacturing.

Events & Topics

Students will have a variety of focus areas, including design and carpentry. During this activity, students will continue to build on their knowledge in planning a project to produce a finished product. This includes the selection and use of tools and materials. Emphasis will be on safety and quality of workmanship.

Students will be assigned small projects that target mastery of specific skills. Members of the club will also collaborate together on larger group projects. This activity will be exciting not only during club time but also during the student's free time. Making a project starts with an idea. Students will learn how to visualize a project in their head and be equipped with ways to create it. As students build different skills they will formulate more and more ideas. Some Computer-Aided Design (CAD) skills will be taught as well.

Skills & Benefits

Students will receive guidance on how to use tools safely. Tools are an extension of the human's innate capabilities and allow us to work faster, better and more precisely. Machines do not create items on their own. Individuals tell the machines what to do. This club will guide students to problem solve and navigate through obstacles that may be impeding them from finishing a project.

Upon successful completion of this activity, students will have problem solving skills that will be useful in all aspects of their life. An added benefit is that they will have a better understanding of the construction process!

Elective Description & Additional Requirements

The computer coding elective is a great introduction to software engineering. This is a graded elective that will meet 3 times a week. Unlike most other activities, this course will have homework assignments and assessments integrated into the course. It will be challenging but rewarding!

Events & Topics

Students will learn the fundamentals of computer programming using Python. Topics covered will include methods/functions, Boolean logic, classes, and elementary control structures. Students will also spend time constructing animations and some simple game design.

Skills & Benefits

Not only will students be introduced to a valuable skill, but they will also be learning how to think through problems and how to solve them. Students will develop the habits of working through complex problems by breaking them down step-by-step. They will also be introduced to some basic computer skills such as excel.

Elective Description & Additional Requirements

This Spanish elective is for students who enjoy linguistics and would like even more exposure to different languages. It is a graded elective that will meet 3 times a week, with associated coursework and assessments.

Events & Topics

Students will learn the fundamental elements necessary to function in a Spanish-speaking environment. The major topics covered will be basic grammar, speech, and culture.

Skills & Benefits

In the modern world, being bilingual is a great attribute. However, learning another language has great benefits other than communication. It helps students internalize grammar rules in their native language and opens up another dimension of culture knowledge.