

Capital Day School

Middle School Core Curriculum, 2011-2012

Core curriculum classes last for the year and are taught four to six periods each week. With the exception of Transition Math and sixth/seventh grade English classes, students take classes at their grade level. Core curriculum course descriptions follow:

Math

All classes meet five days a week.

- Transition Math – Students currently in grades six and seven meet in one of two mixed-grade classes to learn content that has been sequenced to provide a smooth transition from arithmetic to algebra and geometry. As seventh grade students, current sixth graders may take either pre-algebra or algebra, depending on their readiness, and then take algebra or geometry as eighth graders
- Algebra – This first course of algebra is for current eighth grade students. Students study an integration of geometry, probability, and statistics, and pure and applied mathematics, along with algebra.

Science

Students meet five days per week, plus four times a week for a lab period during the twelve-week rotation.

- Sixth Grade General Science – Students use critical thinking skills and science process skills to acquire knowledge of general science content that includes weather, earth science, astronomy, chemistry, and beginning physics.
- Seventh Grade Life Science – This course is designed to teach biological processes and characteristics of living things.
- Eighth Grade Physical Science – Eighth grade students mainly focus on the physics component of physical science as they study different aspects of energy, including motion, force, gravity, heat, electricity, light, etc.

Social Studies

All classes meet five days per week.

- Sixth Grade World Geography – Students learn the basic tools and concepts of geography and then use these tools and concepts to study different geographic areas of the world. For each area, students learn the physical geography, historical influences, cultural development, and current characteristics.
- Seventh Grade Civics – Students study citizenship, government, economics, and politics.
- Eighth Grade U.S. History – This course covers United States history from the Civil War to the present.

Language Arts

Reading classes meet four times a week and English classes meet five times per week.

- Reading – All reading classes incorporate a mixture of independent and classroom reading and vocabulary development.
- English – Sixth and seventh grade students are combined into two English classes; eighth grade students meet in an English class of their own grade. Students apply grammar lessons to independent and classroom writing activities as they learn to communicate articulately in writing.

World Language

French classes meet four times per week throughout the school year.

- French – Students in grades six through eight continue to learn French language and culture through the incorporation of vocabulary and grammar concepts.
- Spanish – Students in grades one through five receive regular instruction in Spanish, but as Middle School students finish out their course in French, Spanish is only offered as an elective.

Middle School Rotation Period, 2011-2012

Students in grades six through eight take computer lab, health class, and science lab four days per week during a twelve-week rotation period.

Computer Lab

- Students develop skills learned in the lower grades, including computer basics, keyboarding, and general word processing and Internet applications. Further, they study in depth Microsoft Office programs such as PowerPoint, Excel, Publisher, and FrontPage.
- Eighth grade students are exposed to basic programming and logic skills using Lego Mindstorms kits.

Health

- Health classes cover basics of health and wellness including nutrition, mental health, and social health. Classes also participate in yoga exercises; students are required to bring a yoga mat for these activities.

Science Lab

- These periods do not necessarily mean that a lab will take place on a particular day, rather, science lab periods are added to the Middle School schedule to provide ample time for laboratory activities and hands-on science projects without sacrificing content. Students must be enrolled in the science class for their grade level to participate. There is no additional fee to participate in science lab when students are enrolled in science class.