



PROGRAM OF STUDY

Upper School | 2020-21





OUR MISSION

The New Community School empowers bright, talented students who are challenged by dyslexia and related learning differences. The innovative and research-based college preparatory curriculum uses a customized educational approach to build skills in language and math to foster academic and personal strengths - igniting the passions and gifts of unique minds.

OUR VISION

The New Community School launches students with the knowledge, skills, and resilience to pursue their passions, navigate the opportunities and challenges of their world, and live their lives with courage, compassion, and purpose.

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CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

The students who come to The New Community School enter with specific language skill deficits. These deficits impact their ability to acquire knowledge and their ability to demonstrate what they know. Standardized testing often reveals deficits in reading, spelling, and math computation skills. Deficits in written expression, organizational skills, and study skills are more difficult to quantify, but are no less crucial for academic success at the secondary level. All the academic departments have built-in structures and strategies that are designed not only to help our students compensate for their skill deficits, but to help them develop reliable and effective organizational and study techniques. As students develop the skills needed to succeed in future educational settings, supports and structures are gradually adjusted and students are expected to exercise greater independence.

UPPER SCHOOL

A typical upper school student's schedule includes daily classes in English, math, history, science, and Language Fundamentals. Academic and Language Fundamentals classes carry one unit of credit per year. Upper school students have the opportunity to explore a variety of elective offerings including health and wellness, practical arts and fine arts, and technology.

Each full-credit academic course meets for approximately 140 clock hours and requires a significant amount of out-of-class preparation. The average class size in upper school academic classes is approximately eight students. Elective and physical education classes may be somewhat larger. Language Fundamentals classes in the upper school typically have two to four students. Upper school students are required to bring a Mac computer to class each day.

EXTRA HELP & STUDY HALL

A thirty-minute non-credit study hall (Extra Help) is provided for all students each day. During the Extra Help period, students may see teachers for help, begin assignments due the next day, or complete tests. Middle school students and some upper school students have the option of an additional study hall during the school day, in place of one of their classes.

All academic departments employ similar organizational structures and study skills strategies to help students develop these necessary skills. Teachers of all academic classes distribute weekly assignment sheets so that students know what their assignments are and can plan their study time. Each assignment sheet is also posted on Schoology, so that students who have misplaced a sheet can obtain their assignments. Additionally, a system of color-coded binders and folders keeps materials organized for each subject separate. Each subject's notebook has its own organizational system, since the disciplines do not always lend themselves to identical organizational patterns.

TECHNOLOGY VISION STATEMENT

Technology is a tool that provides added value to teaching and learning. Technology enriches the materials, methods, and assessments our teachers use to inspire young minds, making learning more interactive and engaging. Technology also allows for a more individualized educational experience for each learner.

Furthermore, The New Community School addresses the specific language-related learning differences of its students by selecting technological tools that help students communicate ideas effectively and access materials and information that would be otherwise inaccessible. Technology levels the playing field in communication and helps students overcome the barriers they face in learning and content production. The New Community School provides direct instruction, when necessary, in these technologies and encourages students to see technology, including assistive technology, as a lifelong learning and communication tool.

In order to maximize the value technology adds to teaching and learning, professional development at TNCS promotes and enables successful technology integration. Every teacher is constantly growing in their technological expertise through school-endorsed professional development. Through constant learning and sharing, the faculty at The New Community School is knowledgeable about new technologies, including assistive technology, even as the technology landscape constantly changes.

GRADES & ASSESSMENT

The New Community School subscribes to a standards-based learning model. Under this model, a course grade reflects a student's mastery of the stated course objectives as measured on summative assessments. Rubrics or learning scales are utilized to communicate outcomes, guide instruction, and provide feedback. Learning scales demonstrate a continuum of learning. Reassessment at times is necessary, especially when student performance is below proficient, or the teacher believes the original assessment did not accurately match what the student knows and can do. Students who wish to reassess are encouraged to work with their course teacher.

Student progress reports are issued four times a year, at the end of each quarter. Letter grades are given for all courses in grades 9-12 except Language Fundamentals.

Although assessment practices may differ slightly among departments and across grade levels, all teachers share certain beliefs. A brief description of grades as interpreted by our teachers is as follows:

A	3.5 - 4.0	= Excelling - demonstrates in-depth inferences and applications beyond what was taught in class.
B+	3.2 - 3.4	= Advanced Proficient - applies the concepts, vocabulary, and skills independently
B	2.7 - 3.1	= Proficient - demonstrates understanding of the concepts, vocabulary, and skills consistently and independently
C+	2.3 - 2.6	= Approaching Proficient - some minor inconsistencies and gaps exist
C	1.7 - 2.2	= Developing - demonstrates basic understanding; omissions, errors, and misconceptions exist
D+	1.3 - 1.6	= Emerging - ability to identify concepts and skills, needs support to make connections or to use skills
D	.06 - 1.2	= Beginning - demonstrates limited understanding of the learning outcome, needs instructor assistance in order to complete work
F	0.5 & below	= Minimal - demonstrates slight progress on the learning outcome assessed

Letter grades are given for all courses in grades 9-12 except LF classes. Grade point average (GPA) is cumulative beginning with ninth grade. The grade point average is the average of grades in all attempted courses. It includes courses taken at other schools, high school level courses (i.e. Algebra I) taken in middle school, as well as dual enrollment courses. A failed course is included in a student's GPA. However, if a student repeats a course only the higher of the two grades is counted. Because most colleges seem to prefer a GPA that is expressed on a four-point scale, we translate our letter grades to a four-point scale.

ONLINE CLASSES

TNCS students often wish to supplement their course of study through online coursework. Prior to enrolling in an online course, students must get approval from the Director of the Upper School and the Director of Teaching, Learning, and Research.

POST-GRADUATION PLANNING

During the upper high school years (grades 10-12), the school works with students and their families to help make post-graduation plans. Annual meetings for parents of sophomores, juniors, and seniors provide them with information about the college search process and the programs that have been effective for our graduates.

Juniors take the PSAT each October and take the SAT at least once. Seniors may take the SAT during any of the national testing periods. The school administers College Board tests each year following the guidelines established by the Services for Students with Disabilities program, which allows students with documented learning disabilities to take the SAT with individualized accommodations approved by the College Board. In order to qualify for College Board accommodations, students must have up-to-date psychoeducational testing. We recommend that this testing is completed after the student turns 16. The college counselor works with families and teachers to gather the documentation needed to submit the request.

Occasionally, students opt to take the ACT in addition to the SAT. The ACT has a separate accommodation process. Students and parents are encouraged to work closely with the College & Career Counselor in order to make sure they can complete this process in time for the testing date they prefer.

While most (85-90%) graduates go on to college or other post-secondary instruction, some graduates choose to enter the work force directly from high school. Although TNCS does not provide specific vocational training, we do work with non-college bound seniors to identify career interests, personal strengths, and ways to obtain information about their options. Several of the activities in the Senior Seminar course are particularly helpful in this regard: the job shadowing activity, development of a resume, and mock job interviews.



NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY

In July 2005, the TNCS Chapter of The National Honor Society received its first charter from NHS. The object of the chapter is to create an enthusiasm for scholarship, to stimulate a desire to render service, to promote worthy leadership, and to encourage the development of character in students at TNCS.

The criteria for membership are:

- status as a junior or senior,
- attendance at TNCS for at least one semester,
- a cumulative GPA of 3.15 or higher,
- involvement in at least two current extra-curricular activities, and
- exemplary character and citizenship.

During the fourth quarter each year, sophomores and juniors who meet the grade point average requirement as described will be invited to apply and describe their extra-curricular activities. Qualifying activities include clubs, athletic teams, and other significant activities at school, such as the Student Advisory Board, as well as community-based activities like Scouts, youth groups, choir, or outside classes. For purposes of NHS membership, “current” is defined as during the current school year. A member of the chapter shall be expected to serve as an example to others by his or her attitude, cooperative spirit, and reliability. Serious disciplinary infractions or frequent after school study hall assignments would be examples of failing to set a good example.

Members are selected by a five-person Faculty Council, named by the Director of Teaching, Learning, and Research. The Faculty Council meets during the fourth quarter to discuss academically eligible candidates to determine their eligibility as to service, character, and leadership. All sophomores with a cumulative GPA of 3.15 or higher and juniors whose cumulative GPA is at least 3.15 are eligible for consideration. Other members of the faculty may also be consulted as part of this discussion.

Members are expected to maintain a grade point average of at least 3.0 or better and to continue their record of character, service, and leadership. Members who fail to do so may be given a warning or, in the case of flagrant violations, may be dismissed. In lieu of dismissal, the Faculty Council may impose disciplinary sanctions upon a member as deemed appropriate. Violators of the school’s rules of conduct or the Honor Code will receive notification in the form of a written warning, except that in the case of flagrant violations of school rules, expulsion, or violation of the law a warning does not have to be given. If a warning is given then a conference may be requested by either party (Faculty Council or student/parent). If a member continues in violation, the member may be dismissed. Decisions of the Faculty Council may be appealed to the Head of School.

The chapter meets weekly and conducts one or more service projects each year. All chapter members are expected to participate. These projects have the following characteristics: they fulfill a need within the school or community, have the support of the school administration and the faculty, are appropriate and educationally defensible, and are well planned, organized, and executed. A faculty advisor, who is appointed by the Head of School, works with the members of the chapter.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

• English	4 credits
• Mathematics	3 credits (to include Algebra I and two additional math classes)
• History and Social Studies	3 credits
• Science	3 credits
• Health and Wellness*	2 credits (to include 1 semester of health)
• Fine Arts / Electives	1 credit
Total Needed for Graduation	24 credits

Seniors must also take and pass the Senior Skills Seminar, which includes a required Community Service component, a job shadowing requirement, and a Senior Speech.

*Students in the Class of 2021 – 2023 are required to have 1.75 credits of Health and Wellness. The Class of 2024 and beyond are required to have two credits for graduation.

Modifications of these specific course requirements may be made by the Head of the School. These modifications may impact a student's college options.

Diplomas are awarded once each year in June. Seniors who fail to meet diploma requirements by graduation day may, at the discretion of the Head of School, participate in the graduation ceremony. Typically, should the student complete their required work by July 1, they will receive their diploma at that time. A student who completes diploma requirements after July 1 would receive a diploma the following June and would be included on the roll of alumni as a member of the class for the year in which the diploma was awarded. Once a student has completed diploma requirements the school will confirm that fact in writing for colleges or employers. Only seniors who are enrolled at the school for the entire senior year may participate in the graduation ceremony. Students must take part in the June Commencement ceremony in order to be awarded a diploma, unless permission is given by the Head of School.

Upper school students typically carry a course load of 6 to 7 credits per year.

Students are classified according to the following standard:

- In order to be classified as a sophomore, a student must have at least 4.8 credits.
- In order to be classified as a junior, a student must have at least 10.8 credits.
- In order to be classified as a senior, a student must have at least 17.5 credits.

Credits earned at The New Community School are accepted for transfer by both public and independent schools.

TNCS IS ACCREDITED BY

Southern Association of Independent Schools
Virginia Association of Independent Schools
Virginia Council for Private Education

AND IS A MEMBER OF

The Dyslexia Foundation
International Dyslexia Association
National Association of Independent Schools
Southern Association of Independent Schools
Virginia Association of Independent Schools

ENGLISH

ENGLISH 9

The ninth grade English curriculum focuses on structures of academic composition and analysis of literature. Literature study includes units on short stories and two novels. Students study standard literary vocabulary to analyze and evaluate these texts. The composition component includes the review of basic parts of speech and sentence structures and emphasizes the use of increasingly complex sentences in writing. Students use a multi-step writing process, as well as a model for task analysis and self-evaluation of written expression. Students develop their academic writing skills with a collaborative English/history research paper. Instructional strategies include structured notes, daily review and practice, and regular use of manipulatives to reinforce concepts. Small group discussion, role-playing, kinesthetic learning activities, and audio-visual resources stimulate and enhance learning.

ENGLISH 10

Tenth grade English provides a review of students' composition skills and skills of literary analysis and then builds greater sophistication. The course begins with an intensive unit of grammar to review simple and compound sentences and narrative writing before focusing on new, increasingly complex sentences and academic paragraph skills. Students also build on more effective use of the writing process, as well as task analysis and self-evaluation, and then move toward competent composition of the multi-paragraph essay. Instructional strategies include structured note-taking, daily practice, color-coding, and regular use of manipulatives to reinforce and review content. The tenth-grade literature is multicultural and includes poetry, a drama, a graphic novel, and a memoir. The literature curriculum focuses on analyzing the authors' use of characterization techniques, settings, and universal themes in a variety of genres. Students examine the experience of characters from different cultures through the lens of our common humanity. Small group discourse, role-playing, kinesthetic learning activities, and audio-visual resources stimulate and enhance learning.

ENGLISH 11

The eleventh grade English curriculum develops students' composition proficiency, critical thinking, literary analysis, research skills, and oral communication in a seminar setting. In the literature curriculum, students read non-fiction, poetry, novels, and modern dramas by American authors. Students are encouraged to use audio versions of the literature as they follow along in their texts. Students also employ a discipline-specific vocabulary to analyze and evaluate these texts. In composition, students follow a structured writing process to complete all lengthy assignments including a research paper and their college essay. Additionally, they practice self-evaluation of writing tasks. Throughout the year, students demonstrate increased independence in writing, research, digital communication, and studying. Students will be introduced to the more rigorous demands they are likely to encounter as they pursue their education beyond high school.

ENGLISH 12

The twelfth grade English curriculum strengthens students' composition proficiency, critical thinking, literary analysis, research skills, and oral communication in a seminar setting. In the literature curriculum, students read non-fiction, novels, and dramas. Selections include *Never Let Me Go*, *Kindred*, *Hamlet*, and selected short stories and essays. Students also employ a discipline-specific vocabulary to analyze and evaluate these texts. In composition, students develop skills preparatory for first-year college writing courses. Students develop an individually effective writing process. Major writing assignments, including the research paper, are self-directed. They refine their ability to self-evaluate their written work. Throughout the year, students practice independence in reading assigned texts and studying. Students are expected to use audio support as needed. In final preparation for college English composition classes, students will learn to transfer their composition skills and understanding into the more rigorous demands they are likely to encounter as they pursue their education beyond high school.

ENGLISH 111: COLLEGE COMPOSITION I

Dual Enrollment College Composition I introduces students to critical thinking and the fundamentals of academic writing. Through the writing process, students refine topics; develop and support ideas; investigate, evaluate, and incorporate appropriate resources; edit for effective style and usage; and determine appropriate approaches for a variety of contexts, audiences, and purposes. Writing activities will include exposition and argumentation with at least one researched essay. English 111 has been designated as a "writing intensive" course. Students will produce texts that reflect critical thinking and knowledge of writing processes, rhetoric, and digital technologies.

MATHEMATICS

ALGEBRA I: PART A

The Algebra I: Part A curriculum offers an opportunity to work on algebraic concepts while continuing to review and improve basic computational skills. The ultimate goal of the course is to solve equations with rational numbers. As the students demonstrate improved computational skills with whole numbers, fractions, decimals, percentages, and integers, they apply these skills when solving equations and word problems.

ALGEBRA I

The primary focus in Algebra I is instruction on graphing linear equations and problem-solving techniques of various types of equations. Additional topics include operations with integers, systems of equations, operations with polynomials, and factoring. The students will discover how patterns and relationships are incorporated into the real number system.

GEOMETRY

During this course of study, students have the opportunity to explore and experience the concepts of geometry. Students use inductive reasoning to develop theorems about parallel lines, congruent triangles, quadrilaterals, and similar figures. Deductive reasoning skills are developed through solving practical problems and through exercises which require drawing conclusions based only on clues given. There is more opportunity in this course than in traditional Geometry courses for students to work with concrete models and drawings and prove to themselves that certain concepts and theorems are true. These skills are developed further through problems requiring informal proof-writing. Throughout the year, students analyze figures and use their understanding of that type of figure to apply appropriate formulas. This requires a thorough understanding of the vocabulary of geometry.

ALGEBRA II

Topics from Algebra I are expanded and built upon in Algebra II. Topics include solving and graphing linear equations and inequalities, determining equations of lines, matrices, and polynomials. In the second semester, students focus on the study factoring polynomials, rational expressions, radicals, the quadratic formula, and parabolas. Throughout the year, students develop and practice problem solving skills.

PRE-CALCULUS

Pre-calculus is offered to students who have successfully completed Algebra I, Algebra II, and Geometry. This course prepares students for calculus by using methods emphasizing technology, real-world applications, and student discovery. Topics include a thorough study of elementary functions including polynomial, exponential, logarithmic, and trigonometric. Trigonometry will be a major focus of this course. The instruction in this course constantly calls on previous math knowledge and often leads to observations of patterns and relationships in math that the students have not noticed before. These observations are enhanced and expanded through the use of technology, including graphing calculators and computer applications.

STATISTICS

Statistics is offered to students who have successfully completed Algebra I. The course is designed to allow students to gain a mastery of statistical concepts through the year-long exploration of global issues and the gradual composition of a summative product. Students will learn how to collect, display, and analyze data in several different ways. They will study measures of center and variation, as well as regression and correlation. They will develop an understanding of probability theory, the Binomial Distribution, and the Normal Distribution. The students will study how information about samples relates to information about populations and, by using sample estimates, use sample data to draw conclusions about populations. Throughout the course, students will view their work, and the works of others, through a critical lens as they identify sources of error and bias and take strategic measures to minimize their impact.

CALCULUS

Calculus is offered to students who have successfully completed Algebra 1, Algebra 2, Geometry, and Pre-Calculus, or by permission of department. The major topics of this course are limits, derivatives, integrals, and the Fundamental Theorem of Calculus. Students investigate and analyze course topics using equations, graphs, tables, and words. Students will be stretched to give explanations both verbally and in writing. Precise vocabulary and mathematical symbols will be an important aspect of communicating mathematically.

HISTORY & SOCIAL STUDIES

WORLD HISTORY 9

In ninth-grade World History, students explore the emergence of the modern world from the Renaissance through early 20th century. Students examine the European Renaissance, the Protestant Reformation, and the explorations that connected Europe with civilizations in other parts of the world. Second semester begins with a study of the Scientific Revolution and the Enlightenment in Europe and how these changes and discoveries led to the Age of Revolutions. Students also examine how industrialism and nationalism around the world set the stage for the 20th century. The course utilizes a variety of multi-sensory instructional techniques and a wide range of materials. In order to improve research and writing skills, students complete at least one research project about a topic or person studied over the course of the year.

AMERICAN HISTORY 1

American History 1 is a year-long survey course in American history from Jamestown through the dawn of the twentieth century. Students view American History in terms of our pursuit of five key ideals articulated in the Declaration of Independence: equality, rights, liberty, opportunity, and democracy. During the spring semester students write a formal research paper. During presidential election years students also spend some time studying campaign issues and the positions the candidates have taken on those issues. Learning strategies include a variety of engaging, multisensory classroom activities. The primary objective of the course is to acquaint students with the major issues and events in American history so that they may develop their own well-reasoned, well-informed opinions and exercise capably their responsibilities as citizens.

AMERICAN HISTORY 2

American History 2 provides students with the opportunity to explore the history of the twentieth century. It also provides students with the opportunity to develop several key skills necessary for success in college-level courses: note taking, essay writing, and research. During the fall semester, students work as individuals or in groups to prepare National History Day projects. These projects allow students to research a topic related to the annual theme and then present the results of that research in a documentary video, website, paper, or an original performance. Students are encouraged to make wide use of primary source materials in preparing their projects. In order to prepare students for the type of instruction they will encounter in college, students regularly take notes from a lecture-style lesson. Class activities also include group work and a variety of multi-sensory activities.

GOVERNMENT AND ECONOMICS

Government and Economics focuses on basic principles of government and economics in America. Students explore how our political system works and why it works the way it does. They explore both the workings of the three branches of government and the role individual citizens play in the political process. Students also gain an understanding of basic economic principles. In preparation for future education they refine academic skills, including taking notes from lecture and writing a formal research paper. Most importantly, they prepare themselves to take on the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a democracy. Class activities emphasize multi-sensory, interactive strategies and rely heavily on student involvement and initiative.

DUAL ENROLLMENT UNITED STATES HISTORY I

US History 1 surveys the United States history from the beginning through the Civil War and Reconstruction. Major topics include the Formative Years, Birth of the Republic and the Federalist Era, The Age of Jefferson and Jackson, The House Divided, and the Civil War and Reconstruction.

SCIENCE

STEM - DESIGN THINKING

Integrated Science combines concepts from chemistry, biology, physics, earth and environmental science, engineering, cosmology, technology, history, and modern-day infrastructures. Students will engage in real-life applications of science concepts and how they connect through multiple branches of study. Topics include engineering challenges, space exploration and rocket technology, Wi-Fi and fiber optics, cell phone engineering, speakers, where our electricity comes from, how cars work, the future of electric cars, the formation of our solar system, characteristics of life, differences in life cycles (by kingdoms), and the nature of scientific inquiry and sharing of ideas. Throughout the course, students will be asked to make real world connections and understand how science concepts can crossover and integrate between traditional branches of study. Students will engage in hands-on activities that encourage problem solving, creativity, communication, collaboration, critical thinking, resilience, metacognition, and analysis.

CHEMISTRY

Prerequisite: Students currently enrolled in or who have previously taken Algebra II.

Chemistry is the study of how substances act and interact in the presence of various forms of energy, such as heat or electricity. The purpose of chemistry is to help students realize the role of chemistry in their personal lives; use chemical principles to think more intelligently about current issues that involve science and technology (thus developing decision-making skills); and develop a lifelong awareness of the potential and limitations of science and technology. Each unit in the course centers on a technological issue now confronting our society. The topic serves as a foundation for studying the chemistry needed to understand and analyze the issue. Each unit culminates in an activity designed to help students apply their chemical knowledge in investigating a problem, proposing solutions to the problem, and analyzing the effects of their solutions. This course is designed to help students understand basic chemical principles and master problem-solving skills. Chemical topics covered in the course include basic science concepts, measurements, atomic theory, bonding, stoichiometry, states of matter, solutions, acids and bases, and organic and nuclear chemistry.

BIOLOGY

Prerequisite: Students must have successfully completed Chemistry.

Biology introduces students to increasing levels of complexity in living systems. The course covers the structure and function of organisms and the interdependence of organisms in an ecosystem. Students learn the place of humans in relation to other living things. Specific areas of emphasis include the growth and development of organisms, the cycling of energy and matter in ecosystems, interactions of biotic and abiotic factors in an ecosystem, heredity, and biological evolution. Much of the information covered in class is supplemented with hands-on activities to strengthen understanding of the concepts presented. Lab participation is an integral part of this course and students will develop lab skills throughout the course.

PHYSICS

Prerequisite: Students must have successfully completed Chemistry.

Topics covered in Physics include forces and interactions, energy, and waves and electromagnetic radiation. While studying forces and interactions, students develop their understanding of Newton's Laws of Motion and the gravitational and electrostatic forces between objects. While studying energy, students learn that all energy can be traced to motions of particles or energy associated with the relative positions of particles. Students learn that wave properties and the interactions of electromagnetic radiation with matter can transfer information across long distances, store information, and be used to investigate nature on many scales. Models of electromagnetic radiation as either a wave of changing electric and magnetic fields or as particles are developed and used. Physics focuses on a more complex understanding of experimentation, the analysis of data, and the use of reasoning and logic to evaluate scientific evidence.

ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE

Environmental science is the study of patterns and processes in the natural world and their modification by human activity. This course will focus on teaching the students to think like an environmental scientist, understand how natural systems are affected by people, and give them an appreciation of their impact on the environment. This course will give students the skills necessary to address the environmental issues we are facing today by examining scientific principles and the application of those principles to natural systems. We will especially focus on the James River and the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. We will participate in activities that will have a positive impact on the environment and focus on how to be good stewards of our environment to sustain it for future generations.

LANGUAGE FUNDAMENTALS

The broad goals for Upper School Language Fundamental classes are to increase each student's skills for understanding text, thinking critically, and communicating effectively. Classes range from remediating basic language skills, with a focus on improving decoding and encoding words, to teaching advanced reading comprehension and writing strategies. Students build on their academic strengths, improve on and compensate for weaknesses, and develop confidence, resilience, and a growth mindset. To maximize the potential for close relationships, students are placed in small groups or pairs. In this context of trust, partnership, and support, obstacles to achievement are often mitigated or resolved. Based on annual standardized and informal assessments, LF teachers write instructional plans that outline goals and objectives for growth in language and learning skills. We use a diagnostic-prescriptive approach to instruction and structured, systematic, and multi-sensory methods to build skill proficiency. As students grow in knowledge, skill, and independence, they are empowered to be effective self-advocates.

LANGUAGE FUNDAMENTALS

The goal of the LF class is to raise language skills to levels commensurate with the student's intellectual functioning. Remediation takes place in a class of 2 to 4 students to provide individual attention when learning the structure of the English language. The LF teacher determines and evaluates progress toward annual goals through a diagnostic and prescriptive approach and writes an educational plan that outlines individual objectives for improvement in reading accuracy, fluency, comprehension, vocabulary, and spelling. In collaboration with academic teachers, the LF teacher supports the transfer of skills to the student's classwork, promoting academic competence and independence.

READING AND WRITING SKILLS

This class is designed to help students develop the reading, writing, and metacognitive skills for success in their classes. Students build on their knowledge of previously learned language skills and acquire new strategies for understanding text, broadening vocabulary knowledge, and developing written expression. Direct teaching of comprehension skills focuses on text structures, paragraph patterns, sentence relationships, and strategies for interpreting implied meanings and making inferences. Writing instruction aims to develop clarity, organization, voice, and technical skill in written expression. The class may be tailored to student interests and strengths to provide opportunity to apply skills to research, presentations, and projects.

READING AND WRITING THROUGH THE LENS OF EXECUTIVE FUNCTION

Researchers generally characterize executive functions as a specific set of attention and regulation skills involved in conscious goal-directed problem solving. This class is designed for students to improve their study and organizational skills and to provide a process for them to be successful regardless of attentional difficulties. Using class requirements and knowledge of current brain research, each student develops personal strategies to improve academic performance. Students acquire and refine reading and writing skills while developing the knowledge of how they learn and an increasing awareness of their individual challenges.

SENIOR SKILLS SEMINAR

Senior Skills Seminar is a class designed for seniors to continue to develop the academic skills, mindsets, and self-awareness to make a successful transition to college, other post-secondary education, or a career. It makes evident the TNCS vision for students to graduate with the knowledge and skills to pursue their interests and passions and the LF program goals to read strategically, write effectively, and think critically. While completing academic requirements and all components of the college application process, students grow in their understanding of the key characteristics for success in college, the workplace, and beyond.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

The Physical Education program at TNCS provides all students the access to standards-based instruction that promotes health literacy and the motivation to engage in health-enhancing physical activity needed to achieve and maintain a balanced, healthy life. Upper School Physical Education recognizes the continuing dramatic changes in physical and social growth. The program focuses on the students' cooperation, open-mindedness, willingness, and self-expression in many activities such as basketball, volleyball, team handball, ultimate frisbee, and soccer.

Emphasis is placed on the understanding of rules of play, proper playing form, and game strategy. Sportsmanship and leadership are also fostered in each activity. In addition, emphasis is placed on acquiring an appreciation for the mastery of each sport/activity at various levels. The course also emphasizes stimulating exposure to other recreational and life sports, such as frisbee golf and yoga. Students develop a respect for healthy physical activity and recognize it as a necessary part of a healthy lifestyle.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Health and Wellness for 9th and 10th grade students continues to build on life-enhancing skills and behaviors covered in Health and Wellness 1 and 2. As students continue into adolescence, it becomes even more critical to provide tools that promote health, positive decision making, and self-management. Focusing on the physical, central nervous, and immune systems, we learn how each of these react to forces in the world around us and work to protect us in our daily lives. We will consider strategies to help us create and maintain lifelong habits that positively impact our mental, social, and emotional well-being.

In an ever-changing world, topics covered in Health and Wellness are flexible to address relevant needs, interests, concerns, and experiences of the individual, the school community, and the community at large. The heart of enhancing our student's health and wellness continues to be strengthening their ability to:

- Access and assess valid information
- Communicate effectively and appropriately
- Evaluate, analyze, and apply knowledge for self-management



ADVANCED PE / FITNESS CONCEPTS

This course is designed to give students the opportunity to learn fitness concepts and conditioning techniques used for obtaining optimal physical fitness. Students will benefit from comprehensive weight training and cardiorespiratory endurance activities. Students will learn the fundamentals of strength training, aerobic training, and overall fitness training and conditioning. The course format includes both lecture and activity sessions.

ADVANCED PE / STRENGTH TRAINING

This course is a continuation of the Be an 11! program presented by Bigger Faster Stronger, Inc. Students will work to achieve personal greatness by setting goals, tracking progress, and coaching each other to reach new heights. Students will learn specialized skills and concepts that lead to confidence and competency in a variety of training movements. Physical activity will include strength training, plyometrics, agility training, and mobility practice.

ELECTIVES

PERSONAL FINANCE

Personal Finance is a quarter-long required course for sophomores designed to improve students' financial literacy. Centered around the theme of understanding the basics of personal finances, it focuses on gaining a better understanding of banking basics, saving and investing, earning income and paying taxes, and the benefits and process of preparing a budget. Students will be educated and motivated to adopt responsible financial habits.

CAREER EXPLORATION

Career Exploration is a quarter-long required course for sophomores. This class is exploratory in nature with the goal of increasing students' self-knowledge, career awareness, and career preparation. Students will develop personal learning plans/career learning plans utilizing current career resources, and hands-on activities.

JUNIOR SEMINAR

The Junior Seminar is a semester-long required course for juniors. Centered around the theme of preparing for post-secondary education, it focuses on SAT preparation and exploration of college and career options. Students work on strategies to improve their performance on the SAT. Students practice questions in the math and evidence-based reading and writing subtests to become familiar with the directions, format, and types of questions. They work with the college counselor to explore college programs and services.



UPPER SCHOOL MOVEMENT 101

In this class, students will gain a thorough understanding on the basics of Michael Chekhov techniques while also being able to express and challenge themselves through the art of theatre. Students practice the importance of everyday stretching, characterization, and different movement techniques, which will prepare them for their final project. In this movement course, the class will start every day with a series of warmups for each student to connect with and get into their artistic beings. Throughout this course, students will play fun theatre games, regularly self-evaluate, and stretch performance abilities to new norms. *This class is for students who have never taken theatre AND for those who have taken it before.

UPPER SCHOOL THEATRE EXPLORATORY: FALL

In this class, students will get a small intro into the basics of drama while also being able to express and challenge themselves through the art of theatre. Students will strengthen their acting and technical abilities by learning about improv, and all technical elements. Since this is an exploratory course, every day starts with a series of warmups for each student to connect with and get into their artistic beings. Throughout this course, students will regularly self-evaluate and stretch their performance abilities to new norms. This course will get students warmed up and prepared for the Upper School Theatre Performance/Tech Class offered in the spring. *This class is for students who have never taken theatre AND for those who have taken it before.

UPPER SCHOOL THEATRE PERFORMANCE / TECH: SPRING

In this class, students will get a crash course on the basics of drama while also being able to express and challenge themselves through the art of theatre. Students will gain an understanding of theatre directions, playwrighting, and characterization to help get them prepared for their final production. Students participate through hands-on projects and activities centered around costuming, lighting, time management, and picturization/set building. To tie everything together, students will learn fun theatre games, memorization techniques, show publicity, audition prep, and the art of selling yourself to theatre employers. *This class is for students who have never taken theatre AND for those who have taken it before.

MUSIC RECORDING STUDIO

Students will learn the fundamentals of music production and recording. Starting with pre-production, the course will focus on studio design, equipment setup, microphone use, and creating basic demos. Moving into the production phase, students will focus on recording techniques, how to use GarageBand software, applying effects, organizing and arranging tracks, time management, and developing critical listening skills. In the post-production phase, students will learn basic mixing and mastering techniques. In addition, at the heart of any great recording is a great song. Song writing will play a big part in this course. Students must have decent musical ability and be self-directed.

INTRODUCTION TO GUITAR

Introduction to Guitar is a beginner's course of fundamental guitar instruction. Students receive individual and group instruction in tuning, notes, scales, chords, tablature and strum charts, basic song structure, and small group performance. Students can progress at their own rates and are encouraged to focus on music and songs they find most appealing. The emphasis is on contemporary guitar music, not classical guitar nor standard notation. In addition, students have opportunities to try other instruments such as keyboard, percussion, banjo, and bass guitar. Students with more experience or skill can also take the course but will be more self-guided.

DRAWING AND PAINTING

Drawing and Painting is a semester-long course that is broken into two distinct quarters. Students will spend the first quarter in an introductory drawing workshop. They will develop their skill to see in order to draw. Students will primarily use graphite and create art works from direct observation. They will maintain a sketchbook that will continually track their growth with exercises and assignments specifically designed to engage right brain thinking. The second quarter will focus on painting with an emphasis on acrylic techniques. Students will complete works from direct observation, imagination, and photographic reproduction. Color theory, aesthetics, and famous painters will be discussed in order to guide students towards independent and purposeful creative behaviors.

CERAMICS

Ceramics is a year-long course that will teach students how to manipulate clay in order to create functional and sculptural works of art. Students will learn essential skills required to make functional and attractive works. The course will primarily focus on hand building methods, plaster molds used for form, and surface design techniques. Students will have the opportunity to try the basics of wheel throwing or grow their existing skills in this area. This course will teach the artistic behaviors necessary to plan and sequence a successful art project.

DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY 9-12

Students will learn first-hand how to operate a DSLR camera and will be introduced to the fundamentals of photography composition and design elements. We will train our eyes to see the world through a viewfinder and archive fleeting moments of life. Students will understand functions that can alter the meaning and create artistic expression in a photograph. Students will organize and manage a library of photographs and be able to edit their photographs to enhance the quality and be ready to print. Students will be introduced to and use a variety of editing programs.

CREATIVE WRITING

Creative Writing gives students the opportunity to develop their own writing identities. Through a workshop setting, students will experiment with a variety of forms and creative strategies and communicate with peers to strengthen pieces. Workshops will be supplemented with discussion about writers' craft in a variety of model texts. Students will leave the course with tactics to find inspiration for writing in the world, media, and imagination—and to continue to evolve as writers.

YEARBOOK

The yearbook elective course is designed to instruct students in the fundamentals of graphic design and the processes associated with print production with the ultimate aim of producing *Dimensions*, the TNCS yearbook. Students will take and edit photographs, write headlines and captions, learn the elements of eye-catching design, and fit text and photos into layouts using the yearbook program.

MODEL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

This class will explore Virginia's socio-economic and political concerns within the regions of Virginia and how the Commonwealth interacts with the federal government as well as the other states. Students will prepare to attend the Model General Assembly (MGA), sponsored by the Virginia YMCA, usually in March or April. The purpose of the MGA is to give students from all over Virginia a chance to simulate the legislative process by trying to get their legislation passed. The MGA class will come up with their own bill that will be presented to the MGA and hopefully signed by the Youth Governor in the spring. Topics may include media bias, gun control, climate change and global warming, terrorism, tariffs, etc., with a heavy emphasis on communication, writing, and mapping skills. This is a one semester class.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

In Entrepreneurship, students will develop their own business idea and present it at a Founder's Fair. Students learn essential skills and personal qualities needed to succeed as an entrepreneur. The course will primarily focus on an online program called the Junior Founder's Club. Students will have the opportunity to design, launch, and grow their own business through this program. The course will culminate in a Founder's Fair where students present their ideas to the community and their peers.

INDEPENDENT STUDY

An Independent Study elective course is offered to motivated well-organized sophomores, juniors, and seniors. Students' pursuits must be academic in nature and may include research, writing, reading, intensive study in a performing or visual art, and other similar endeavors. Independent studies are semester-long, .5 credit courses conducted during the school year and are reflected on a student's transcript with the course title "Independent Study" followed by the department sponsoring the study (e.g., "Independent Study: History"). Students must apply for independent study, with approval by the end of the semester that precedes the one for which the study is proposed. The TNCS Leadership Team, along with department chairs, will consider the proposal and will approve or deny the student's enrollment in the study.

An independent study proposal must contain the following elements:

- A timeline that specifies when student-faculty sponsor meetings will occur and how they will be used.
- A description of the skills that the study will cultivate.
- A description of the product that the student will create.

At the conclusion of the semester in which the independent study takes place, the student must make a final presentation in which s/he

- presents the final product,
- explains the methods used in creating the product,
- reflects upon how the study cultivated the skills that the student identified in the proposal, and
- presents a final list of scholarly sources used while engaged in the study.

TECHNOLOGY COURSES

ROBOTICS 9-12

The VEX Robotics elective course provides students opportunities to develop skills in engineering, coding, programming, innovation, and collaboration, with the aim of competing in regional VEX robotics demonstrations and tournaments. Students work as a team to design, build, program, and operate a robot. The course emphasizes use of the engineering design process. Students first identify the important characteristics of the robot to be designed. Then, they ideate, implement, and test ideas to develop the best possible robot design. Some students may choose to “specialize” in robot design, competitive strategy, or coding and programming, however, all students in the class will be expected to participate in all aspects of the program and develop basic skills in designing, building, and programming the robot.

ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING

In this course, students learn about the basics of electricity and electrical components. They also learn the practical skill of soldering safely and effectively. Students then apply their knowledge and skills to a project of their choice. This class encourages collaboration, problem solving, and creativity.

BIOTECHNOLOGY

This course will take an exploratory look into various fields of science and the careers involved in them. There will be hands-on science activities and experiments, as well as a few visits to laboratories, corporations, and businesses involved in scientific fields.

INTRODUCTION TO APP DEVELOPMENT

The Introduction to App Development course introduces students to the world of app development and the basics of Swift and Xcode. Students will get practical experience with the tools, techniques, and concepts needed to build a basic iOS app from scratch. At the end of the course, students will build one of two basic iOS apps.

APP DEVELOPMENT 1

App Development 1 is designed for students who want to expand their coding skills. Students will build on their knowledge of Swift and UIKit through hands-on labs and guided projects. By the end of the course they'll be able to build a fully functioning app of their own design. Computer Programming, Introduction to App Development, or teacher approval is required to take this course.

APP DEVELOPMENT 2

This course is designed for students with working knowledge of Swift and Xcode to expand their skill set and apply advanced techniques to student-designed projects. Students utilize problem-solving techniques and participate in hands-on activities to learn how to build layouts, create effective user interfaces, and utilize the storage/retrieval process for data. Students will also understand the ethics issues of intellectual property as it relates to mobile application development. By the end of the course, students will effectively create, debug, and test applications for mobile devices and develop a portfolio of student-designed work to share with potential colleges or employers. App Development 1 and teacher approval is required to take this course.

ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY PROJECTS

Advanced Technology Projects is for students who want to plan, create, and display digital projects. Students will learn to plan and execute digital projects that utilize a variety of tools and software. The teacher will serve as a facilitator and provide support for students as they execute projects. Student products will be displayed digitally. This course is open to students who demonstrate a high level of interest in computers.