

The Lab School of Washington

2026-2027

Middle School

DREAM

Design, Robotics & Engineering, Arts & Movement

6th-8th Grade Course Catalog

We have an incredible number of course opportunities that allow our students to put their creativity and curiosity to work as they DREAM big next year! Your goal in reviewing the catalog is to identify classes that highlight your interests, passions, or areas you would like to explore. We will use the information you share with us to create a schedule for next year, doing our best to schedule a class you are interested in. Sometimes course offerings need to change over the summer; we appreciate your flexibility in these circumstances.

Please note that **6th grade** courses are **paired semester classes**, which allow students to explore two different DREAM classes - one during the 1st semester and one during the 2nd semester; in these instances, **students are *not* able to mix and match between pairings**. **7th and 8th graders** will have the option to take **semester-length or year-long classes**.

- 6th-8th Graders: select whether you are interested in Dance or PE as your movement class
- Rising 6th Graders: select and rank your top **4** paired semester classes
- Rising 7th & 8th Graders: select and rank your top **6** classes - either paired semester classes or year-long classes

Movement Classes

Full Year

Dance

This course is designed to introduce the **art of dance**, expand knowledge of movement and choreography, its history, and terms. Basic movement and movement concepts from Ballet, Jazz, Modern, Contemporary, Urban, Global and other styles will be explored. Students will continue building **dance technique**, **choreography** and tools to help them express themselves as well as discover their own artistic voice and display creativity. Conditioning, Stretching, and Anatomy, are a few other topics that will be covered. In dance class you will work together, in small and large groups, and individually.



Please note that students in this class will all participate in at least one after-school performance.

Physical Education

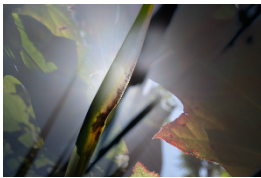
Physical Education encourages students to build confidence, teamwork, sportsmanship, and lifelong wellness habits through movement and active participation. Students engage in a variety of **sports, games, and fitness activities** designed to strengthen coordination, endurance, cooperation, and healthy decision-making in both competitive and collaborative settings. Through teamwork, goal setting, and positive participation, students build leadership skills,



resilience, and an appreciation for staying active as part of a supportive community.

Semester Paired Classes

Intro to Digital Art & Media



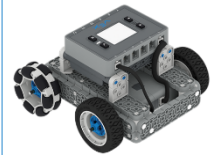
Digital art is about using technology to create design, media, and stories that matter. That

could mean editing photos, designing graphics, making digital illustrations, creating short videos, or even trying animation.

You'll be introduced to **Adobe Creative Suite** tools, practice design thinking and digital/image literacy, while also exploring how AI is changing the way images are made, shared, and understood.

Intro to Robotics

Students **design, build and program** VEX IQ classroom robots to



solve progressively more complex challenges and compete in in-class competitions. Using the **Scratch** programming platform, students code robots to use sensor and logic commands that parallel **Python** programming commands. Students connect Scratch programming to Python programming via a visual screen.

Modern Band

Ever dreamed of being part of a rock band?



This course will introduce the skills necessary to perform on

Rhymes & Lines: Experiments in Poetry

Welcome to the poetry uniVERSE! Try your hand at **rhyme, rhythm, poetry comics,** and **spoken word.** Invent your own form! We



guitar, bass, ukulele, keyboard, drums, percussion, vocals and technology. With an emphasis on the music styles of the last 100 years, many of these will be discussed, and performed by YOU! Students will also be introduced to the art of Composition and Improvisation. Get ready to sing and play!

will write through our senses and play with images and sound as we draw inspiration from art, nature and the things that are important to each of us.

Come have tea and write poetry!

Be the next Shakespeare or Shel Silverstein.

Drawing

Come build drawing skills while developing their own artistic voice!



We will explore **still life**, **landscapes**, **portraits** of all kinds, **anime**, and **abstract art**, using a variety of materials and techniques. Students will engage in both instructor-led assignments and independent studio projects, allowing them to apply what they have learned while exploring their own creative ideas.

Expression Lab

Create. Connect. Discover.

Unleash your **imagination**

through exciting projects

like designing masks,

crafting personal story

cloths, and collaborating on group murals

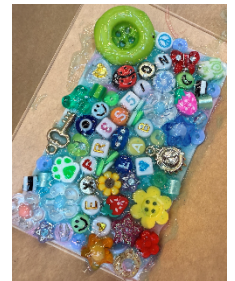
or sculptures. Each class offers a chance to

create personal art, collaborate with others,

learn artistic tools for mindfulness and

emotional expression, and **explore**

self-identity and community through art.



Design Lab: Workshop

Students will focus on the **art of wood manipulation**, exploring a variety of techniques and tools to bring their unique artistic visions to life. Participants will learn essential woodworking skills while experimenting with different styles and methods,



Intro to Engineering

Students apply the engineering design process through hands-on projects while exploring aerospace,



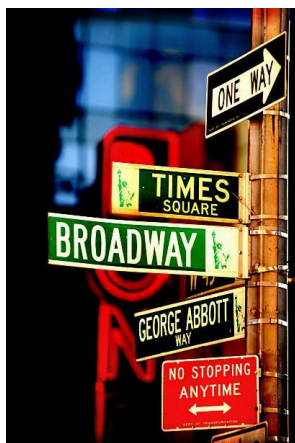
including **carving, shaping, and assembling.**

mechanical, structural, electrical, and environmental engineering.

Students use **CAD software** along with **3-D printers and laser cutters** to design and build original creations. They also take on the role of **entrepreneurs** by developing prototypes, presenting design pitches, and participating in mock funding challenges.

Theatre Foundations

Studio Art Foundations



Develop and build skills in **improv, character development, script writing, directing and performing!** Through collaborative projects and group exercises, students will have the

opportunity to work together, building confidence and teamwork skills while bringing stories to life on stage.



Ready to roll up your sleeves and make some art? In this class, you'll get the chance to work with a **variety of**

materials and techniques, building your skills and discovering what you enjoy most. Along the way, you'll explore ideas, styles, and creative challenges from different cultures and artists—and learn how to take risks, express your own voice, and approach your work with confidence and curiosity.

Musical Theatre

Dance

Theatre Jobs



In this class, students will explore the history of Musical Theatre while learning about who they are as performers. This course is designed for all levels of

performance experience and our ensemble will work together to develop **singing, acting** and **dancing** skills in a safe supportive environment. Students will have the opportunity to perform as soloists, small ensembles, and large groups. Together we will create a **musical theatre showcase** centered around a theme that will be decided by our group.

Get ready to move, groove, and have tons of fun in our Middle School Dance Class! You'll learn awesome **dance moves**, make new friends, and show off your skills. No experience needed — just bring your energy and let's dance!



Videography (LAB TV)

1st Semester; 7th and 8th Grade Only

Media

2nd Semester; 7th and 8th Grade Only



In Videography (LABTV) students **explore the world of video production**

from the first stage of planning and scriptwriting (pre production), to effective camera angles (production), to the final stage of editing video intended for a particular audience (post production). Set within the framework of a newsroom, students will write/research, film & produce not only news segments, but video productions within the episode, such as, a short film, music video,

Just hitting “post” is only a small part of telling a story—thoughtful planning, design, and audience awareness are what bring media to life!

In Media, students step into the role of storytellers and content creators for our school community. From planning and curating social media “takeovers” to designing dynamic slideshows and producing special 8th grade promotion projects, students learn how to communicate a message with purpose, creativity, and care.

short documentary etc. Each episode will be catered to a variety of audiences.

We use state of the art cameras and learn about essential camera angles and emotions that are attached to each, as well as how to shoot multi-camera scenes. Students will also assist with school wide theatre productions by running cameras throughout the theatre and editing multi camera sequences. Students will edit with Adobe Premier and learn the art of creating a visual story through music, strategic editing and sequencing while exploring their own individual artistic expression through video production.

Students will consider how images, text, music, and pacing work together to create compelling content, while developing a strong sense of digital citizenship and voice.

Throughout the course, students collaborate, problem-solve, and refine their work to produce polished, meaningful media that celebrates our community and captures important moments.



Year-Long Course Options

Language & Creative Writing

Intro to ASL



Learn about the **language** and **culture** of the **American Deaf community!** Students will develop basic ASL skills, including fingerspelling, vocabulary, and sentence structure, as well as facial grammatical markers, use of space, the ASL visual

timeline, and more. Students will also learn about the history and culture of the Deaf community in America.

Authors & Illustrators

Come be a writer in the QWERTYUIOP Cafe! Use your imagination. Create new worlds. Write stories, poems, and comics. Play with words. Make handmade books. Maybe even write your first novel! **Be an author, illustrator, and publisher!** All welcome!



Performing Arts

Theatre

This class is for performers who are looking to **deepen their understanding of acting** and add to their **toolbox of skills**. Students will have opportunities throughout the year to showcase their growth as performers. Students are required to participate in all scheduled performances.



Modern Band



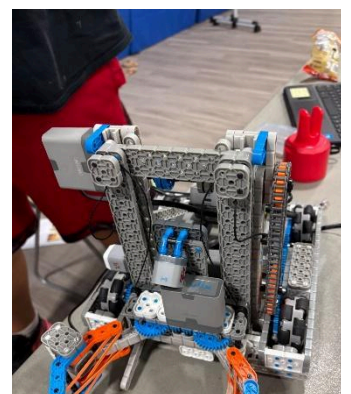
Continue your dreams of being in a rock band by building on previously learned skills in Modern Band 1. **Expand your instrumental technique** on the guitar, bass, keyboard, drums, vocals, and technology. Students will build upon their listening skills and understanding of music history.

Prerequisite: Modern Band 1 and/or live/video audition video and teacher recommendation.

Robotics & Engineering

Robotics & Engineering Competition Teams

This advanced course combines engineering, robotics, coding, and competitive design challenges in a collaborative team environment. Students **design, prototype, build, code, and refine** original robots while exploring engineering concepts through hands-on projects and challenges. Using **CAD software, fabrication tools, VEX robotics**



systems, and **drone technology**, students strengthen creativity, critical thinking, teamwork, and problem-solving skills.

During the 26-27 school year, we may have in-house and/or local teams.

In-House Teams: Students design, build and program VEX IQ classroom robots to solve progressively more complex challenges. Using the Scratch programming platform, students code robots to use sensor and logic commands that parallel Python programming commands. Students connect Scratch programming to Python programming via a visual screen. Students engage in exploratory design and builds to create novel drivetrains using gears and sprocket and to design and build novel intake devices, such as claws, arms, spinners and lifts.

Local Teams: Students design, build , code and drive original robots using VEX competition kits. Students complete in local VEX IQ competitions in Virginia and DC and at the DC State Championship. These competitions are on Saturdays from November to March. Teams complete in 4-6 competitions. Each year VEX IQ releases a new game and students figure out the best robot to build to score the most points in three events, teams skills, driving, and autonomous.

Visual Arts

Digital Arts, Media & Photography

This course builds on your creative tech experience and introduces you to more powerful Adobe programs like **Photoshop**, **Lightroom**, **Fresco**,



Illustrator, and Premiere Rush. You'll create digital photos, layouts, graphics, illustrations, and short videos.

This class is about growing your creative voice, building real design and tech skills, and using digital media to express yourself, connect with others, and make something meaningful.

It's a great fit for students who enjoy creative challenges, want more independence, and are starting to think about **portfolio-level work or future opportunities**. Students may submit their work in real-world exhibitions and challenges, while building the creative skills and frameworks to launch their own ideas and opportunities.

Whether you're drawn to visual storytelling or love solving problems through design and digital tools, this class helps you use your creativity to communicate, collaborate, and create work that matters.

Studio Art



Explore **drawing, painting, sculpture, mixed media**, and more while building your artistic skills and confidence! You'll experiment with a variety of materials, techniques, styles, and artistic influences while learning about both historical and contemporary artists. Through hands-on projects and creative challenges, you'll strengthen your creativity, problem solving, and personal artistic voice in a collaborative studio environment that welcomes artists of all experience levels.

As the year progresses, you'll take on more advanced techniques, longer-term projects, and opportunities for independent creative work. You'll learn how to give and receive critique, collaborate as part of a studio community, and take creative risks with confidence and curiosity. Students interested in advanced work will also have opportunities to develop **portfolio-quality pieces** that express their art achievement and illustrates their growth, exploration, and style.

Ceramics

Learn to work with **clay**! In the fall we will create cups, bowls, plates and other dinnerware that you can eat and drink from. We will start with **hand building techniques** before

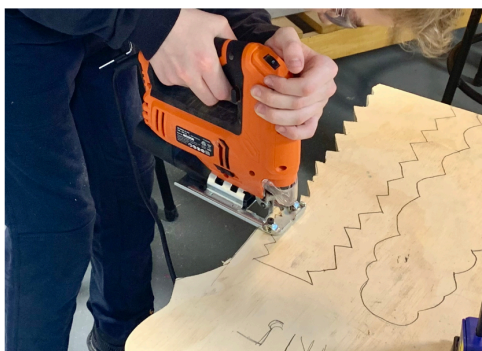
transitioning onto the **wheel**. In the spring we will create sculptures big and small. You will also learn how to give and receive critique, encourage your fellow artists, and share responsibilities in a community studio setting. Your art projects will be beautifully featured in displays throughout the school year.



Design Lab

Students will focus on the art of **wood manipulation**, exploring a variety of techniques and tools to bring their unique artistic visions to life. Participants will learn essential woodworking skills while experimenting with different styles and methods, including **carving, shaping, and assembling**.

Students who have already been in Design Lab will have the option for new projects.



Expression Lab



Create. Connect. Discover. Unleash your imagination through exciting projects like designing masks, crafting personal story cloths, and collaborating on group murals or sculptures. Each class offers a chance to **create personal art**, collaborate with others, learn artistic tools for **mindfulness and emotional expression**, and explore self-identity and community through art.

Yearbook

Yearbook students work together to capture and celebrate the stories, experiences, and memories of the school year through photography, writing, design, and creative



storytelling. Students strengthen collaboration, leadership, and communication skills while gaining hands-on experience in **digital photography, layout design, interviewing, and publication production**. Through the creative process, students help create a lasting record of the Lab community.

Point of Contact

For questions and clarifications, please reach out to Melissa Wood or Angie Cave.

Name

Melissa Wood, Head of MS
Angie Cave, Assoc Head of MS

Email

melissa.wood@labschool.org
angela.cave@labschool.org

