

ENCORE

Greenland Central School Middle School Unified Arts Program

WHAT IS ENCORE?

In middle school, Encore classes will take the place of the K-5 Unified Arts specials. The offerings are vast and span the range of unified arts subjects. Examples from years past include Chorus, Ceramics, Woodworking, GCS Weekly News Video, Strength and Conditioning, Rocketry, and more! Students are enrolled in Encore classes based on their preferences and interests.

We are thrilled to be able to continue to offer these special classes to our students. Research shows that middle school students reach higher levels of academic engagement and success when given choice and agency. By encouraging students to make choices in areas of interest, you enhance their cognitive ability to take control, increase motivation, and take initiative. We have found that students are more engaged when exploring subjects that interest them. When they are passionate about what they are learning, it benefits the whole class. In addition, we have found that passion is contagious and in many cases even students who did not initially prefer a particular class end up having a fabulous experience.

HOW WILL ENCORE BE DIFFERENT FROM THEIR PAST UNIFIED ART CLASSES?

Students will have two Encore classes per trimester. The classes meet on alternating days (Green days and White days). Most Encore classes are trimester-long, with a few exceptions: Chorus and Band are year-long classes. Because Encore classes meet more frequently than K-5 specials, our teachers can design projects that are more robust, allowing students to go deeper into the curriculum.

SAMPLE ENCORE SCHEDULES

Student 1

Green Days	White Days
T1: Chorus* T2: Chorus* T3: Chorus*	T1: Ceramics T2: Robotics T3: Weekly News

*Year-long class

Student 2

Green Days	White Days
T1: Painting T2: Yoga T3: Ukulele	T1: Weekly News T2: Drama T3: Coding

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WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS?

Students will need to take one class that satisfies musical arts and visual arts. This is an important factor to keep in mind when selecting preferred classes. PE and Health requirements are met during Wellness class. Digital Literacy standards will be embedded into core and Wellness classes. GCS can work with students choosing to take 2 full year classes on an individual basis to ensure that the requirements are met.

ENCORE ENROLLMENT TIMELINE

Monday February 10: Students currently in grades 5-7 take a preliminary INTEREST SURVEY to let us know which classes they would be interested in. We use that information to finalize which courses we will offer next year.

February: GCS Unified Arts teachers explain the available Encore classes in more detail to students currently in grades 5-7.

Monday March 3: The Encore Preference Form will be emailed to parents of 5th - 7th grade students. It is a Google form. The expectation is that students and families will review the offerings and identify the students' preferred Encore classes.

Thursday March 6: Completed Encore Preference Form (including a digital parent signature) is due. GCS will utilize these forms to create class placements for next year.

Mid-August (exact date TBD): Students will be able to view their 25-26 schedule in PowerSchool and find out which Encore classes they've been enrolled in.

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Will students get into all of their preferred classes?

- We do our best to enroll students into as many of their preferred classes as possible. However, there are many additional factors that are considered when enrolling students in Encore classes including class sizes, availability (sometimes two or more preferred classes meet at the same time), music and art requirements, and creating balanced classes. In addition, because not every class is offered every trimester, there may be occasions when a student's preferred class is not available. In that case, GCS picks a class for the student by giving consideration to the factors described above.

Can students request to change their Encore class enrollments?

- Due to the complexity of this type of enrollment process, we are not able to accept requests for a change in Encore classes.
- In addition, GCS will not accept teacher assignment requests for classroom or encore block teachers.

Are 6th, 7th, and 8th graders all together?

- On Green Days, 6th, 7th, and 8th graders are all together in encore classes. On White days, due to numbers in each grade, we anticipate that there will be separate 8th grade Encore grade classes and 6th/7th grade Encore classes.

Can students take the same Encore class year after year?

- Teachers will offer differentiated instruction and expectations for students, as they do already for various learners in a classroom. Students may be able to take the same class two years in a row with differentiated instruction.