

February 17, 2026

Dear Students, Parents, and Guardians:

Welcome to the da Vinci Elective Course Forecasting guide!

The DMS Elective Course Guide is designed to help families plan for their student's preferred art future path and to support **one** 8th grade Capstone (aka culminating project). DMS offers a strong core and diverse art based elective opportunities for all students. We are committed to developing partnership with students, to nurture an environment where all students can learn and grow. When making your Elective selections, you should always have a back up plan, so include many alternates that express your educational interests. Remember, too, that your counselor can be of great assistance in guiding your course selections.

The Three Big Take Aways:

- **Teacher Requests:** We are unable to honor requests for specific teachers in order to keep scheduling fair for all students. We have many caring and talented educators and look forward to helping you reach your potential.
- **Elective Selection:** Our goal is to create an art pathway: Dance, Drama, Visual Arts: textiles, ceramics, creative writing or Music. We will do our best to enroll you into your preferred elective, but it is helpful to give ***us a variety of options when making your selections***, in case you don't get your top choices. ***Electives you select are not guaranteed, but we will do our best to honor what you have shared with us.*** Eighth graders have first priority, then seventh, then sixth graders. All courses are subject to change due to funding/staffing and student interest. ***We work VERY hard to ensure the best possible schedule for all students***, including honoring student choice and preference; we also know that it is beneficial for students to have the chance to try new things that they may not yet know are of interest.
- **Staffing allocations:** We do our best to create an elective offering program that meets our staffing realities with student preferences. We are not able to make changes to student schedules after the master schedule has been built except in case of an error (duplicate class, wrong grade level class, student doesn't have prerequisites for advanced class). **Please note that classes are subject to change and cancellations may occur, typically due to budgeting constraints and staffing.**

We are thrilled to have you be part of the da Vinci community and look forward to working with you to create an atmosphere of learning that supports your student's individual goals and aspirations.

Sincerely,

Ms Wilson and Mr. Roosevelt
Assistant Principal and Principal





STEP 1: Feb 17th-Feb 20th: Read this overview of instructions and course descriptions.

STEP 2: Friday, February 20th: Students complete the forecasting paper form, parents sign and students return to their Social Studies teacher **by Friday, February 20th.**

STEP 3: Feb 24th: Login to StudentVue in SS class. Click on Course Requests, choose based on your paper forecasting sheet.

STEP 4: FINAL selection of courses due Feb 20, 2026

Classes Overview:

- There are 7 class periods at da Vinci.
- 5 class periods will be chosen for all students: 1 yr Math, 1 yr Science, 1 yr Language Arts, 1 yr Social Science, $\frac{3}{4}$ year of PE/Dance and $\frac{1}{4}$ of Health. Core classes are grade level only.
- Special Education students will take 1 yr as mandated on their IEP by law in place of a choice elective.
- Students can choose up to a combination of classes to equate to 2 periods of classes for the year.

ELECTIVE CHOICE CLASSES: Quarter = $\frac{1}{4}$ year and Semester = $\frac{1}{2}$ year

I. Dance Pathway

Course Title	Length	Grade	Prerequisite
Dance Beginning	Semester	6-8	None
Counts Towards Dance CapStone May be repeated: Yes	Is a semester-long introductory course in which students will learn foundations of movement, coordination, rhythm and music. In class, students will learn beginning-level techniques, concepts and traditional movements of Jazz/Modern Dance and Tap, as well as choreography and composition. This class is designed to enhance body conditioning, strength, control, flexibility and to develop an awareness of basic alignment/principles of safe and effective movement. Dancers will develop individual and group performing skills appropriate to the skill level. Skill tests are given to ensure progress. Classroom activities will incorporate historical perspectives on dance and also prepare students for the benchmarks in the arts. Participation in the Winter Dance Showcase (semester 1) or Spring Dance Concert (semester 2) is mandatory.		

Course Title	Length	Grade	Prerequisite
Dance Intermediate	Semester	7-8	Dance Beginning
Counts Towards Dance CapStone May be repeated: Yes	(Instructor Approval) This is a year-long intermediate course which builds on existing foundations of knowledge, technique, coordination, rhythm and musicality. In class, students will learn advanced-beginning/intermediate techniques, concepts and movement sequences of Jazz/Modern Dance and Tap, as well as choreography and composition. This class is designed to enhance body conditioning, strength, control, flexibility and to develop an awareness of basic alignment/principles of safe and effective movement. Dancers will develop individual and group performing skills appropriate to the skill level. Skill tests are given to ensure progress. Classroom activities will incorporate historical perspectives on dance and also prepare students		



	for the benchmarks in the arts. Participation in both the Winter Dance Showcase and the Spring Dance Concert is mandatory.
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Course Title	Length	Grade	Prerequisite
Dance Advanced	Year	7-8	Dance Beginning and Intermediate
Counts Towards Dance CapStone May be repeated: Yes	(Instructor Approval) An intermediate and advanced course which builds on existing foundations of knowledge, technique, coordination, rhythm and musicality. In class, students will learn intermediate to advanced techniques, concepts and movement sequences of Jazz/Modern Dance and Tap, as well as choreography and composition. This class is designed to enhance body conditioning, strength, control, flexibility and to develop an awareness of basic alignment/principles of safe and effective movement. Dancers will develop individual and group performing skills appropriate to the skill level. Skill tests are given to ensure progress. Classroom activities will incorporate historical perspectives on dance and also prepare students for the benchmarks in the arts. Participation in both the Winter Dance Showcase and the Spring Dance Concert is mandatory. *Year-long and semester classes build on successively higher technical skill levels and emphasize proper technique. Styles include Tap, Jazz, and Modern Dance. Participation in semi-annual dance showcases is required. This entails several after school rehearsals and 3 - 4 weekend performances. For these performances the class works together like a dance company and the presence of every member is essential.		

II. Drama Pathway

Course Title	Length	Grade	Prerequisite
Beginning Theatre	Quarter	6-8	None
Counts Towards Drama CapStone May be repeated: Yes	Delve into development as a theater performer. Students will focus on the fundamentals of acting such as voice, movement, character building, and text analysis. In addition to these skills, we will also explore ensemble building, playwriting, improvisation, directing, theater history, and creating devised theater.		

Course Title	Length	Grade	Prerequisite
Theater Intermediate	Semester	7-8	Theater Beginning

Counts Towards Theater CapStone May be repeated: Yes	(Instructor Approval) In this year-long drama class students build on the foundational skills of performance and ensemble work. Students will explore playwriting, directing, improv and acting, culminating in a mandatory ensemble showcase in order to fulfill the district standards of Create/Connect/Perform.
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Course Title	Length	Grade	Prerequisite
Advanced Theatre	Year	7-8	Intermediate Theatre
Counts Towards Theater CapStone May be repeated: Yes	(Instructor Approval) This year-long class is only open to 8th graders through an audition process. Masters level students will be creating their own work in class, which includes writing, directing, acting, and producing. They will also explore acting theory, auditioning techniques, acting for the camera, theater for social justice, multicultural theater, and creating devised work.		

Course Title	Length	Grade	Prerequisite
Theatre Tech	Semester	6-8	None
Counts Towards Theater CapStone May be repeated: Yes	Students will learn all about costume design for theatre, including design work for hairstyles and stage makeup. Students will learn to design and draw out costumes digitally and on paper. Students will also learn basic sewing and patterning skills and will work hands-on to create miniature costumes. Students will learn about lights, sound, and set design for theatre. This class has a strong emphasis on storytelling and how tech plays into telling the story of a performance. In addition to design drawing, digital drafting, and building model sets, students will learn the basics hands-on skills to run lights and sound for a show.		

Course Title	Length	Grade	Prerequisite
Advanced Theatre Tech	Semester	7-8	Theatre Tech

Counts Towards Theater CapStone May be repeated: Yes	(Instructor Approval) This is a more advanced class: You must have been through at least one semester of drama tech or been involved in multiple after-school tech projects and be approved by the teacher to join this class. This class is whole-production based - we look at plays, musicals, and dance performances as a whole, and break down how we would cover all aspects of tech. Students will also get hands-on experience in the tech field by working backstage, on the spotlight, on control boards, and on headsets during school assemblies and special events.
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III. Creative Writing Pathway

Course Title	Length	Grade	Prerequisite
Creative Writing	Quarter	6-8	None
Counts Towards CR/AVID CapStone May be repeated: Yes	You will experiment with forms of writing, including stories, poems, prose poems, flash fiction, essays, comics, rants, letters, novels—and much more. We build a collaborative and supportive class community, and we work through many drafts to create our best work.		

Course Title	Length	Grade	Prerequisite
Advanced Creative Writing	Year	7-8	Creative Writing
Counts Towards CR/AVIDCapStone May be repeated: Yes	(Instructor Approval) Advanced CW builds on the foundational skills developed in creative writing class and takes them to the next level. We continue to develop skills in many forms of writing, and students also propose and develop their own projects, working independently and collaboratively to refine their work. Expect to share writing and support fellow writers in their process.		

IV. Music Pathway

Course Title	Length	Grade	Prerequisite
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Music African Drumming	Quarter	6-8	None
Counts Towards Music CapStone May be repeated: Yes	Focus on the traditional songs and rhythms of West Africa, playing authentic instruments including djembe and sangban.		

Course Title	Length	Grade	Prerequisite
Music Appreciation	Quarter	6-8	None
Counts Towards Music CapStone	This class will look at a number of aspects of music making. There will be units on notation, guitar, keyboards, digital audio workstations and electronic music, and a band instrument petting zoo. In addition to hands-on experience in all of those areas we will be watching and responding to videos of musical performances from around the world throughout the class.		

Course Title	Length	Grade	Prerequisite
Choir Concert	Year	6-8	None
Counts Towards Music CapStone May be repeated: Yes	This class is open to all students. The focus of the class is to develop singing, sight-reading, and rehearsal skills. Students will sing music from a variety of cultures and historical periods including some popular, contemporary songs that will be presented throughout the year. Attendance at all performances, both in and out of school is mandatory.		

Course Title	Length	Grade	Prerequisite
Band Beginning	Year	6-8	None

Counts Towards Music CapStone May be repeated: Yes	For students with little or no experience. Instruction on flute, clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, trombone, tuba, and percussion. Open to all students regardless of experience and/or skills. Attendance at all performances is mandatory.
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Course Title	Length	Grade	Prerequisite
Band Advanced	Year	7-8	Beginning Concert Band
Counts Towards Music CapStone May be repeated: Yes	(Instructor Approval) This is an ensemble designed for students who have completed beginning band and have mastered certain basic skills required for Intermediate/Advanced Concert Band. Instruction on flute, clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, trombone, tuba, and percussion. Attendance at all performances both in and out of school is mandatory.		

Course Title	Length	Grade	Prerequisite
Guitar	Quarter	6-8	None
Counts Towards Music CapStone May be repeated: Yes	Students will be learning all aspects of playing the guitar including chords, strumming, tablature, staff reading, scales, soloing, performing technology and more! Open to students who have never played before through intermediate level guitarists, the focus will be on individual student growth and progress on the guitar. We have guitars here at da Vinci or you can bring your own.		

V. Arts Pathway : Visual Arts, Ceramics and or Textiles

Course Title	Length	Grade	Prerequisite
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Arts Beginning	Quarter	6-8	None
Counts Towards Art CapStone May be repeated: Yes	Students will learn the fundamentals of visual art. We will study the elements of art and principles of design to understand how we can create visually intriguing artworks. Projects will focus on skill building and exploring mediums such as: drawing, painting, printmaking, digital art, photography, and sculpture. We will study a range of artists to inspire our class projects. This Intro to Visual Arts class is prerequisite (meaning you have to take it first) for all other visual arts classes.		

Course Title	Length	Grade	Prerequisite
Arts Advanced	Year	7-8	Visual Arts
Counts Towards Art CapStone May be repeated: Yes	(Instructor Approval) In Intermediate Visual Arts, students will explore a range of media (painting, drawing, printmaking, bookmaking, collage, sculpture, photography, and digital art) through a series of different projects. This class will build off of the curriculum that students' learned in Art 1 (required) while providing new opportunities to dive deeper into concepts and skills through studying new artists and creating more advanced artworks. In year-long Advanced Visual Arts, students will have the opportunity to guide their own learning through exploring concepts and skills that excite them. Students will learn advanced artistic techniques, study contemporary artists, and create their own independent projects. Students will also be conceptually challenged to create art that can be used as a tool for liberation and justice. This year-long Advanced Visual Arts class is for students who are serious about building up their visual art practice and continuing it beyond daVinci.		

Course Title	Length	Grade	Prerequisite
Art Ceramics	Quarter	6-8	None
Counts Towards Art CapStone May be repeated: Yes	This is an introduction to the world of ceramics. We will study handbuilding techniques, basic wheel throwing skills, and a variety of glazing techniques. Students will learn coil building, pinch method, slab building as well as a variety of sculpture techniques.		

Course Title	Length	Grade	Prerequisite
Art Ceramics Advanced	Year	6-8	Ceramics

Counts Towards Art CapStone May be repeated: Yes	(Instructor Approval) The Ceramics Teacher will create class lists. This course is for students who have taken Ceramics 1. This class will build on skills learned in Ceramics 1 and challenge students with more in depth projects. Students will also continue to develop and refine wheel throwing skills. Students will learn advanced hand building techniques and a variety of new glazing processes
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Course Title	Length	Grade	Prerequisite
Art Textiles	Quarter	6-8	None
Counts Towards Art CapStone May be repeated: Yes	Students in this class will be learning about the basic principles of art through experiential learning using the media of textiles. Students will explore a variety of textile techniques such as hand sewing, needle felting, embroidery, weaving, crochet, knitting, and fabric dying. Students will be introduced to artists and topics of study that span many communities and cultural identities to achieve a greater understanding of the world around them.		

Course Title	Length	Grade	Prerequisite
Art Textiles Advanced	Year	6-8	Textiles
Counts Towards Art CapStone May be repeated: Yes	(Instructor Approval) Students in this class will be furthering their knowledge of textiles and challenging themselves to incorporate art elements and design principles into their work. Students will explore a variety of textile techniques such as hand and machine sewing, needle felting, embroidery, weaving, crochet, knitting, and fabric dying. Students will be introduced to artists and topics of study that span many communities and cultural identities to achieve a greater understanding of the world around them. This course is for students who have taken Textiles 1. Advanced Textiles students will build on skills learned in Textiles 1 with more depth. Students will continue to refine and practice sewing, yarn arts, and weaving skills. Students will explore textile arts they are passionate about through independent and teacher directed projects.		

Other Electives:

Course Title	Length	Grade	Prerequisite
Yearbook	Year	7-8	None
Counts Towards Art CapStone May be repeated: Yes	(Instructor Approval) This year-long class provides a unique opportunity to create the daVinci yearbook! To start, students will learn photography, graphic design, digital art, and editing skills through a series of projects. Students will then get to select their role in the yearbook process and work to create a celebratory reflection of the 23-24 daVinci school year. This class is for students who are passionate about capturing, design, and community! They are self-sufficient, trustworthy and can work independently.		

Course Title	Length	Grade	Prerequisite
Teacher Aid/Office Aid	Quarter	8	None
May be repeated: Yes	(Assistant Principal with Teacher Approval) Students are selected by teachers who believe a student demonstrates the following qualities: organized, on time, attending daily, responsible, safe, friendly, flexible and quick learner. Students must get approval from Administration and recommended by teachers. Parents are not emailing or asking for permission.		

Course Title	Length	Grade	Prerequisite
Leadership	Year	7-8	None
May be repeated: Yes	(Assistant Principal with Teacher Approval) Students are selected by leadership teachers who believe these students demonstrate the following qualities: inclusive, creative, accountable, respectful, thoughtful, safe, organized, on time, attending daily, friendly, flexible and quick learner. Students must turn in an application and approval from Administration and recommended by teachers. Parents are not emailing or asking for permission.		

REQUIRED ELECTIVE CLASSES (Will be automatically placed)

Course Title	Length	Grade	Prerequisite
Physical Ed/Dance	$\frac{3}{4}$ of a Year	6-8	None

	Required for all students each year for at least 3/4 of the year. Introduces students to the fundamentals of movement, coordination, rhythm and music. In class, students learn the basic tenets and concepts of Tap, Jazz, Ballet and Modern Dance. It is designed to enhance body conditioning strength, control and flexibility and to develop an awareness of basic alignment and principles of safe and effective movement.
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Course Title	Length	Grade	Prerequisite
Health	¼ Year	6-8	None
	All students are required to take one quarter of Health. Health classes are divided by grade so that students have access to content that is developmentally appropriate for them. Units covered will include but are not limited to such topics as Decision Making, Self-Management, Advocacy, Analyzing Influences, Goal Setting, and Alcohol, Tobacco and Drugs.		