

MILLER MIDDLE SCHOOL

2026-2027 Elective Brochure

Dear Students and Parents/Guardians,

We are proud to offer our students a variety of electives to enrich and enhance their learning. Please carefully read through each course description. Elective selections should be chosen carefully since first choices are not guaranteed. Also note that students who select a full year elective will not be permitted to "drop" the class mid-year. All electives are offered on a space available basis and dependent upon staffing. If you have questions, please contact our school counselor:

Kaitlin Chau, A-L

chau_kaitlin@cusdk8.org

Diane Lindsay, M-Z

lindsay_diane@cusdk8.org

HOW DO I READ THIS BROCHURE?

There are different elective offerings for each grade level. Some elective classes are year-long, others are semester-long, and a few have specific eligibility requirements called prerequisites.

KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR THE FOLLOWING SYMBOLS:

- 6 - Open to 6th Grade Students
- 7 - Open to 7th grade Students
- 8 - Open to 8th Grade Students
- Y - Year-long Class
- S - Semester-long Class
- STOP - Prerequisite Required

All videos/slidedecks linked below require a cusdk8.org login. Therefore, only students can access these media files.

YEAR-LONG ELECTIVE COURSES	SEMESTER-LONG ELECTIVE COURSES
Beginning Band (6, 7, 8) Mustang Band (7, 8) Advanced Band (7, 8) Choir The Beginning (6, 7, 8) Advanced Choir (7, 8) Foreign World Language (7, 8) • <i>French</i> • <i>Japanese</i> • <i>Spanish</i> Yearbook & Publications (7,8) Leadership (7,8)	Art (7,8) Creative Media (7,8) Drama (7,8) Exploratory Wheel (6 - quarter/semester long) Fashion Crafts/Screenprinting (7,8) Financial Literacy/Management (7,8) Food Science (Cooking) (7,8) Intro to Computer Science (7,8) Office Aide (7,8) Photography (7,8) SEARCH (7,8) Teacher Aide (7,8) Woodshop (7,8)

ART - 7 8 S

[Art @ Miller \(slidedeck\)](#)

[Video](#)

This semester-long class will focus on the skills and tools used in 2D art to refine students' artistic interests. The first quarter will be focused on traditional skills such as drawing and painting using various media. The second-quarter students will be introduced to digital art. For their final project, they will choose their favorite medium and create an art piece.

CREATIVE MEDIA - 7 8 S

[Miller Media in Two minutes \(video\)](#)

If you are interested in learning about film and audio production, consider signing up for Creative Media! Students work on both individual and team projects throughout the semester. As one of our primary responsibilities, teams produce the Millervision Announcements (seen by the whole school) as well as writing and producing such projects as advertisements, news segments, demonstration videos, music videos, and even more! Students also make podcast and learn more about that growing media along with other small projects among many possibilities. Working with iPads, Chromebooks, microphones, tripods, and other equipment, students learn the technical side of media production. Ideal applicants are enthusiastic, organized people who are good role models and collaborative thinkers.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS (LEADERSHIP II) - 7 8 Y

Community Connections is a fun, hands-on elective where students learn important life skills while building friendships and supporting one another. In this class, general education students will work alongside extensive needs students through activities like gardening, cooking, art, games, community outings, and collaborative projects.

This class is all about teamwork, patience, kindness, communication, and responsibility. We will learn by doing, helping, creating, and connecting with our school and community.

DRAMA - 7 8 S

[Miller Drama in two minutes \(video\)](#)

Drama is courage and creativity. It challenges a student to know herself/himself well enough to become another character, to connect with people in the class, and to build emotional intelligence. Students will practice improvisational games, projection, articulation, and disciplined acting technique as well as random silly behavior. Every day, we laugh and build personal confidence while developing lasting relationships. Some projects may include formal script-writing, Reader's Theater, video productions, and writing a theater review after a field trip to a live production. Although the new evolution of the class will not include a major stage production, students will still enjoy a culminating activity on stage at some point in the semester along with enduring memories. If you have questions before signing up, feel free to email Mr. Oncay.

EXPLORATORY WHEEL - 6 Y

In the exploratory wheel, students rotate through courses that may include a combination of art, forensics, cooking, drama, makerspace, sewing, study strategies, woodshop, and/or world cultures. The courses within the wheel vary from year-to-year and are randomly selected for students. This elective is designed for students to explore a variety of subject areas and fields of interest.

FASHION & CRAFTS/ SCREEN PRINTING - 7 8 S

[Fashion Crafts Promo Video](#)

Fashion Crafts: Students in this class will learn the basics of fashion and accessory design and construction. They will use sewing equipment such as needles and machines as well as computer aided design programs and vinyl/paper/fabric cutters. Working at their level/pace, students will come up with ideas for fun projects, then apply their math and language arts skills to bring the designs to life. Projects can include clothing that they can wear such as lounge pants or customized vinyl logos/images they can add to clothing and accessories through the use of a Cricut. Students will also learn to create accessories like scrunchies and tote bags, plus learn to mend torn clothing to make items usable again (save your holey socks from the landfills!). They will also learn about resource sustainability with the option to up-cycle materials instead of shopping in a traditional fabric store. The class will also touch on quality control, color theory, elements of design, and career application. If you love relaxing to music while completing more complicated usable projects, sign up for two semesters and in the 2nd semester, you can skip the hand sewing unit and jump straight to machine use to have more time to complete more difficult assignments such as a semi-formal dress, mini backpack, or even a pet clothing!

[ScreenPrinting Promo Video](#)

Screenprinting: From concept sketches to mass produced prints, students in this class will learn the entire process of running a screen printing business. Students will compile data on the costs of raw materials and labor time to set fair prices for their work and sell their products to fund the class supplies with additional profits being donated to various charities of their choice. Students who love art can design a logo by hand and/or digital design, which they may burn onto a screen and print onto shirts, hoodies, bags and other items to sell on campus during the school day or at after school events. All the steps in between will also be covered, such as market research, turning a sketch into digital art, burning screens, setting up the printing/drying equipment, squeegeeing ink, drying/curing the ink, advertising their products, and cutting overhead costs by figuring out ways to recreate items out of misprints and minimizing ink waste. They will also learn how to use the Cricut design space, GIMP, Remove, and Pixlr image editors, and vinyl/fabric/paper/wood cutting machine for one-off customization projects. Students may enroll for two semesters to continue their business and have access to the equipment.

FINANCIAL LITERACY & MANAGEMENT - 7 8 S

Slidedeck: [\\$ Financial Literacy & Management Course \\$](#)

[Promo video](#)

Financial Literacy is a core life skill for participating in any modern society. It leads to positive outcomes like stability in personal finance, college and career planning, investments, consumer knowledge, and wealth accumulation and planning in retirement age. In this increasingly complex world, students will need to take charge of their own financial future. Financial Literacy and Management will teach and guide students in the essential topics of savings, banking, college planning, credit scores, renting vs. owning, insurance and taxes, consumer protection, investments, grant writing, international currency and exchange, the stock market and more. Students will be working in pairs, in teams, and by themselves to increase their financial knowledge and sharpen their math skills. In addition, students will develop leadership, time-management, effective communication, adaptability, problem-solving, self-confidence building these skills. The requirements for this course are willingness to participate, positive and proactive learning attitude, and strong work ethics.

FOOD SCIENCE (COOKING) - 7 8 S

[Food Science Promo Video](#)

This course provides an opportunity to understand the science behind the ingredients that make up the food we eat, the process behind preparation techniques, as well as the economics/environmental impact of food sourcing. As a bonus, we develop cooking skills by beginning with the creation of simple dishes and progressing to specialty foods. When creating meals in class, students will work in groups to investigate a variety of foods' properties/compositions and experiment with preparation techniques/ingredients. Students will complete a cooking at home project, where they will prepare a meal for their family and reflect on their experiences (written report or vlog). Preparing recipes as well as learning about the physical/chemical make up for food, the basics of nutrition, consumer awareness in regards to quality/availability/pricing, the farm to table movement, meal/menu planning, food art, etiquette, safety, and sanitation are some of the many concepts incorporated into this class. We also will engage in discussions on carbon footprints and food waste as we think about our food choices in relation to our role within our family, community, and as a global citizen to aid in fostering healthy relationships with food sources. Students who want more time in the kitchen may enroll for two semesters and begin working on specialized techniques while beginners cover safety/sanitation/tools/uses. If you love to experiment, want to add more preparation techniques to your life skills arsenal, and eat, this is the class for you!

INTRO TO COMPUTER SCIENCE - 7 8 S

Do you want to learn how to write an app or design a game? This beginner's course in computer science will provide you the tools to do this in python. In this semester-long course, you will learn basic computer science concepts, how to solve problems, design algorithms, and write code!

LEADERSHIP - 7 8 Y STOP

[Leadership](#)

The Leadership class is required for Student Council Officers and is also open to students who are highly motivated to improve their leadership skills by their involvement in classroom activities and school/community service. Students have a 25-30 hour of out-of-class volunteer requirement for work done on leadership activities and projects per semester. Students develop leadership skills in three main areas: 1. Public Speaking Skills; 2. Learning the 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens; 3. Creation and Execution of Project Plans.

STOP- A Leadership application is required.

LEADERSHIP THROUGH SPORTS - 7 8 S

Join a class that goes beyond sports. Build your skills, develop your mindset, and become the kind of athlete others look up to.

In this course, you will:

- Train like an athlete—improve strength, skills, and performance
- Learn how to lead—motivate teammates and step up with confidence
- Think strategically—make smart decisions in high-pressure moments
- Work as a team—build trust, communication, and chemistry
- Plan real events—collaborate to create and run exciting activities

This isn't just about playing the game—it's about leading it.

If you want to grow, compete, and make an impact, this class is for you.

OFFICE AIDE - 8 S

[Teacher/Office Aide Promo Video](#)

Office aides assist the office staff, counselors and administrators with attendance procedures, sending for students, and other clerical duties as assigned. Only twenty-eight students are needed to fill the positions, so space is limited.

PHOTOGRAPHY - 7 8 S

[Photography Program](#)

This semester-long class will focus on digital photography. This is an introductory course. In the first quarter, you will work on small assignments that will help you understand the digital camera better. In the second quarter, you will be challenged with larger projects where you will set up a green screen, put together a stop motion video in iMovie, and much more!

SEARCH - 7 8 S

[SEARCH Intro](#)

Silicon Valley is home to the most innovative technological thinkers of our time and guess what? They are all scientists with an entrepreneurial spirit. This elective class is called Science Enrichment and Research (SEARCH) and will encourage the next generation of scientist entrepreneurs. This group of students will come from the 7th and 8th grade class. All that is asked is a good work ethic and the desire to do something interesting in science. Students will improve on their communication skills, teamwork skills, and develop an appreciation for the hard work needed to bring an idea to reality. Students will learn to use technology creatively and experience true teamwork to build something from scratch. They will develop their first business venture and apply the science learned to solve real problems. This class will culminate into a presentation in front of a judging panel to select the top groups who will have an opportunity to publicly present during the Showcase Event.

TEACHER AIDE - 7 8 S

[Teacher/Office Aide Promo Video](#)

Teacher aides assist teachers with correcting papers, individual tutoring, and other duties as assigned. Students who select teacher aide will be assigned to a teacher.

WOODSHOP - 7 8 S

[Woodshop Promo Video](#) Woodshop is an opportunity to learn practical skills useful for home life and future careers such as engineering and architecture. Students learn to master the correct use of basic hand tools and power tools, as well as planning and execution of a project from start to finish. Everyone has the potential to excel, as good work habits, patience, pride in craftsmanship, and self-confidence are a major focus of this class. Each student will complete several projects. Students may request to enroll in this class for two semesters.

YEARBOOK & PUBLICATIONS - 7 8 Y

[Yearbook Elective Night Promo/Commercial](#)

When you choose electives, you may want to flex your creative skills or work with the latest technology. Some like to keep a spotlight, helping promote the latest events or work in a business environment. Or maybe you'd like to do all these things. There's only one class that presents a hybrid of these activities: Yearbook. Students spend a semester creating the school's yearbook every step of the way.

BAND ELECTIVES

[Promo Video \(start here\)](#)

[Band Performance Recordings](#)

MILLER BEGINNING BAND - 6 7 8 Y

Miller Band offers a musical introduction to playing in a middle school band ensemble. Students may learn the following instruments in Miller Band: flute, oboe, bassoon, clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, French horn, trombone, baritone horn, tuba, and percussion. Students will learn and review basic instrumental performance techniques, fundamentals of music and music reading, band music literature, and working as a team in a performing ensemble. Students may need to provide their own instruments. It is recommended that students who choose percussion have keyboard experience. Drum set, piano, violin, and guitar are not included in Miller Band. Students should expect to practice their instrument at home for 20 - 30 minutes a day. The Miller Band will perform for the Miller community several times during the school year.

MUSTANG BAND - 7 8 STOP

Mustang Band is Miller's intermediate level band. It is for students who have successfully completed one year of Miller Band, Mustang Band, or the equivalent at another middle school. Percussionists (drummers) must be able to play mallets as well as snare drum. Mustang Band reviews and continues instruction in instrumental performance techniques, fundamentals of music and music reading, band music literature appropriate for the level, and working as a team in a performing ensemble. The Mustang Band participates in school and community events, as well as the CMEA Solo and Ensemble and band festivals. Performance techniques for developing bands are emphasized through quality band literature of many styles, composed specifically for middle school groups. Students should expect to practice their instrument at home for 20 - 30 minutes a day. **STOP- Successful completion of Miller Band or band at another middle school.**

ADVANCED BAND - 7 8 STOP

Miller's Advanced Band is an auditioned, highly select group of seventh and eighth grade band musicians who have achieved a high level of skill and commitment on their band instruments. The Advanced Band has a respected tradition of excellence, and it is one of the best middle school bands in the state of California. Advanced Band reviews and continues instruction in instrumental performance techniques, fundamentals of music and music reading, challenging band music literature, and working as a team in a performing ensemble. The Advanced Band performs for school and community events, the CMEA Solo and Ensemble, band festivals, and other festivals and performances around the state. Performance techniques are emphasized through quality band literature of many styles composed specifically for advancing middle school groups. Students should expect to practice their instrument at home at least 35 minutes a day.

STOP- Students are selected for Advanced Band by audition only (during spring of the previous school year). Audition information will be available on the Miller Band Website. We are unable to audition and add students to Advanced Band during the summer.

CHOIR ELECTIVES

[\(2022\)Choir-The Beginning Presentation](#)

[\(2022\)CTB Performance in the QUAD](#)

[\(2022\)AdvCHOIR Presentation](#)

[\(2022\)AdvCHOIR Recording-Double Trouble](#)

CHOIR - THE BEGINNING - 6 7 8 Y

This class focuses students to learn the steps to reading and performing vocal music. Students will learn how to read and sing music notation with help from students in the Advanced Choir who are assigned to students to encourage them, step by step, on this journey. Performance opportunities include two school concerts (Winter and Spring), our annual 6th grade Information Night, and the annual CMEA (California Music Educators Association) Choral Festival. Students also have the opportunity to join advanced choir students and travel abroad. Past trips have taken students to Walt Disney World in 2008 and the World Choir Games in Cincinnati, OH in 2012.

ADVANCED CHOIR - 7 8 Y STOP

This course not only focuses students to continue learning vocal music with an emphasis on sight-singing, but on becoming well-rounded leaders and musicians. Not only will students have opportunities to tutor various beginning students on campus and earn credit in the Tri-M Music Honor Society, they will also travel to festivals (West Valley, Napa, and CMEA) and music conferences (CMEA and ACDA) throughout the state and abroad to represent Miller Middle School.

STOP- Audition required. Please schedule an audition by contacting Mr. Arnold at arnold_anthony@cusdk8.org.

WORLD LANGUAGES

FRENCH 1A, JAPANESE 1A, SPANISH 1A - 7 Y STOP

French: [Welcome to Miller French Program final 1](#) // [Video](#)

Japanese: [Japanese 1A & 1B](#)

Spanish: [Spanish program at Miller](#)

The Miller World Languages program opens the door to an exciting, multi-ethnic, multicultural world. Students are immersed in the study of the language of their choice and become well acquainted with its cultural components. Students explore the language and experience the culture through conversation, videos, technology, publications, games, celebrations, puzzles, and media.

The two-year World Language program at Miller prepares students to take the second year of World Language in high school.

STOP- Choosing a world language class at Miller is a two-year commitment. Students complete 1A in 7th grade and 1B in 8th grade. Students wishing to take a World language class should have at least a “C+” average in their 6th grade academic classes.

Please note:

1. **World Language should be considered an additional academic class.**
2. World language classes may not be started in the eighth grade.
3. Eighth grade transfer students who have completed the 1A portion during 7th grade at another school may enroll in the 1B course, pending space availability and with the approval of the teacher upon assessment.
4. For Japanese: Native speakers are welcome to take this course with modified instructions

FRENCH 1B, JAPANESE 1B, SPANISH 1B - 8 Y STOP

Continuation of French 1A, Japanese 1A, Spanish 1A, respectively

STOP- In order to be placed in a 1B class, students must be enrolled as an eighth grader.