

Westpine Middle School

Electives Course Descriptions



Cambridge Assessment
International Education

Cambridge International School

Ambassadors of Change: This course is designed to empower Cambridge students to take action and prevent bullying and youth violence while raising social justice awareness. Students will develop strong leadership skills by planning fun and exciting events and beautification projects across the school. Students will also visit neighboring schools and become Cambridge mentors for incoming 5th graders. **(Cambridge Students Only)**

Audio/Visual Production: Students produce digital animated images through the single or combined use of computers, digital cameras, digital video cameras, scanners, photo editing software, drawing, and painting software, graphic tablets, printers, new media, and emerging technologies. This course incorporates hands-on activities, the use of technology, and consumption of art materials. Broadcasting will introduce students to a variety of experiences, including producing their own morning announcements daily show and using software to make a variety of video presentations. Students will learn to use a variety of digital media to relay relevant information to a variety of audiences. Students will learn to create and maintain website, conduct daily monitoring announcements, and newsletter.

Beginning Band: Students with little or no instrumental experience develop foundational instrumental technique, foundational music literacy, and aesthetic musical awareness through rehearsal, performance, and study of high-quality band literature. Instrumentalists work on the fundamentals of music notation, sound production, instrument care and maintenance, and personal and group rehearsal strategies. Public performances may serve as a culmination of specific instructional goals. Students may be required to attend and/or participate in rehearsals and performances outside the school day to support, extend, and assess learning in the classroom. **This course requires students to obtain a musical instrument (e.g., borrow, rent, purchase) from an outside source.**

Intermediate Band: Students with previous band experience build on instrumental technique, music literacy, and aesthetic response through rehearsal, performance, and study of a variety of high-quality band literature. Instrumentalists expand their knowledge of music notation, music theory, sound production, and personal and group rehearsal strategies. Public performances may serve as a culmination of specific instructional goals. Students may be required to attend and/or participate in rehearsals and performances outside the school day to support, extend, and assess learning in the classroom. **This course requires students to obtain a musical instrument (e.g., borrow, rent, purchase) from an outside source.**

Advanced Band: Students with previous band experience expand on their instrumental technique, music literacy, and aesthetic response through rehearsal, performance, and study of a variety of intermediate-level, high-quality band literature. Instrumentalists extend their knowledge of music notation and theory, sound production, and personal and group rehearsal strategies. Public performances may serve as a culmination of specific instructional goals. Students may be required to attend and/or participate in rehearsals and performances outside the school day to support, extend, and assess learning in the classroom. **This course requires students to obtain a musical instrument (e.g., borrow, rent, purchase) from an outside source.**

Business Computers: Introduces students to computers as a vehicle for problem solving, communication, and personal expression. The course focuses on the visible aspects of computing and computer science and encourages students to see where computer science exists around them and how they can engage with it as a tool for exploration and expression. Centering on the immediately observable and personally applicable elements of computer science, the course asks students to look outward and explore the impact of computer science on society. Students should see how a thorough student-centered design process produces a better application, how data is used to address problems that affect large numbers of people, and how physical computing with circuit boards allows computers to collect, input and return output in a variety of ways.

Chess: Provides new or beginning students with a strong foundation in the game's rules and strategies, and a community of enthusiasts to learn alongside. You'll begin with a brief history of chess and learn about the board and pieces through quizzes, videos, and games about how each piece moves. At the end of each lesson, you'll have the chance to play computerized chess games at varying degrees of difficulty and you'll also have the opportunity to play with your classmates. By the end of the course, you'll be able to read and write the algebraic notation for chess moves, understand the strategies and rules of the game, and competently attack your opponent's king while defending your own.

Chorus: Students with little or no choral experience develop beginning vocal technique and skills, critical and creative thinking skills, and an appreciation of music from around the world and through time. Public performances may serve as a culmination of specific instructional goals. Students may be required to attend and/or participate in rehearsals and performances outside the school day to support, extend, and assess learning in the classroom.

CTACE/Engineering: Students learn important aspects of building, site design and development. They apply math, science, and standard engineering practices to design and build various structures as it relates to other local structures. Students will also learn and apply the engineering and design process and develop an understanding of the influence of creativity and innovation in their lives.

Dance/Theater: This course develops dance technique and movement vocabulary in two or more dance forms. In the process, dancers demonstrate use of class and performance etiquette, analytical and problem-solving skills, and studio practices in a safe dance environment. This course also introduces various topics that may include, but are not limited to theatre history, basic acting techniques, improvisation, pantomime, music, make-up, Shakespearean plays, poetry, concepts of lighting and sound, set construction, producing, career possibilities, moviemaking, teamwork, and musical theatre.

Disney "Twisted Tales": Collaborative book studies class using Disney series which allows students a way of building experiences of the world helping students to see how and understand things which have never happened to us firsthand. Topics may include Science Fiction & Fantasy stories, Heroes & Villains and Realistic Fiction.

Project Based Math: This course is for students who are struggling with math but are motivated to win the battle. Teachers focus on foundational skills that are the building blocks to grade level skills. The goal is for students to reach grade level proficiency in math by the end of the school year. To accomplish this, students must be willing participants in the process, putting forth sincere effort. That effort will be met with support, encouragement, mathematical expertise leading to success.

Financial Literacy/Entrepreneurship: This course will engage students in meaningful conversations to positively influence some life decisions about finance and managing money. Students will develop a deeper understanding through activities and real-world application how to purchase, save and how to create a budget as well as develop and understanding of credit and debt.

Gaming: Describes the world of competitive, organized video gaming. Competitors from different leagues or teams face off in the same games that are popular with at-home gamers: League of Legends and Madden NFL, to name a few.

Health & Wellness: This course will explain how lifestyle choices affect individual and/or community health within two or more dimensions of wellness (e.g., emotional, physical, social, mental, spiritual, environmental health). Students will analyze values and behaviors that contribute to a healthy lifestyle and engage in a process of healthy behavior change or health promotion.

Latinos In Action: "Latinos In Action" is a program designed to help Latino youth meet their potential by leveraging their personal assets, excelling in education, serving the community, and being a leader. Our model facilitates opportunities to develop that potential for students from elementary school through college. The core of our program is designed around the secondary student population but extends into all levels of the education system. We are the model for Latinos Youth engagement.

Music Theory: Students explore the essential elements of 20th- and 21st-century music in America (e.g., jazz, rock, soul, blues) and global cultures (e.g., Latin, Bollywood, European, Asian, world drumming). Students reflect on the significance of social influences and historical events on the development of music. Participants focus on the creation, use, and performance of music; and the modes of listening, distributing, and gaining access to music. ***Students may be expected to attend one or more performances outside the school day to support, extend, and assess learning in the classroom.***

Peer Counseling: The purpose of this course is to enable students to develop awareness of self and others. Emphasis will be on acquisition of basic skills for thoughtful planning, peer facilitation, effective communication and making healthy choices.

Photography: This beginner digital photography course is meant to help students master the digital camera. Learn the basic functions of the camera to shoot in manual mode, capturing higher-quality images of the people and places. Professional photographers will show students how to see the world like a photographer. Throughout the course, students will complete a series of photo projects that will help them practice the skills they learn. The teacher will review the photos and helping students improve as they complete the program. By the time you finish, you will have the skills and know-how to take professional-quality photographs.

Physical Education: The purpose of this course is to provide a foundation of knowledge, skills, and values necessary for the development of a physically active lifestyle. The course content provides exposure to a variety of movement opportunities and experiences which includes, but is not limited to: Fitness Activities, Educational Gymnastics and Dance, and Team Sports. The integration of fitness concepts throughout the content is critical to student success in this course and in the development of a healthy and physically active lifestyle.

High School HOPE (PE/Health)*: The purpose of this course is to develop and enhance healthy behaviors that influence lifestyle choices and student health and fitness. Students will combine the learning of principles and background information in a classroom setting with physical application of the knowledge. **Majority of class time will be spent in physical activity.**

2-D Art: Students refine techniques used to create a variety of two-dimensional (2-D) artworks through developing skills in drawing, painting, printmaking, and collage. Students manipulate the structural elements of art with increasing independence to promote creative risk-taking in 2-D artwork. Student artists use an art criticism process to evaluate, explain, and measure artistic growth in personal or group works.

High School 2-D Art*: Students experiment with the media and techniques used to create a variety of two-dimensional (2-D) artworks through the development of skills in drawing, painting, printmaking, collage, and/or design. Students practice, sketch, and manipulate the structural elements of art to improve mark making and/or the organizational principles of design in a composition from observation, research, and/or imagination. Through the critique process, students evaluate and respond to their own work and that of their peers. This course incorporates hands-on activities and consumption of art materials.

High School Speech & Debate I*: The purpose of this course is to begin awareness, understanding, and application of language arts as it applies to oral communication concepts and strategies in a variety of given settings. **Students will participate in Debate competitions.**

High School Speech & Debate II*: The purpose of this course is to develop awareness, understanding, and application of language arts as it applies to oral communication concepts and strategies in a variety of given settings. **Students will participate in Debate competitions.** *Prerequisite: Speech & Debate I*

School Beautification Initiative: This course is designed to introduce middle school students to the fundamentals of gardening. Through a combination of classroom instruction and hands-on experience, students will learn about the benefits of gardening, plant anatomy, soil health, and how to cultivate and maintain a garden.

STEM/Robotics: The purpose of this course is to give students an opportunity to explore the area of robotics technology and its associated careers. Students will be given the opportunity to solve technological problems using a variety of tools, materials, processes, and systems while gaining an understanding of the effects of robotics technology on our everyday lives. The objective of this course is to introduce the student to basic programming in addition to problem solving strategies. This course will involve students in the development, building and programming of a LEGO Mindstorm robot and VEX. Using robotics, students will work, hands-on, in teams to design and build.

Cyber Squad: The Verizon Innovative Learning Tech Team will serve as a valuable resource for teachers and students alike by offering assistance and support to ensure that iPads are being utilized effectively for educational purposes. The Tech Team students will be equipped to troubleshoot any connectivity or software issues that may arise with the iPads. Moreover, the student Tech Team will provide training to both teachers and students on how to optimize the use of iPads for learning purposes.

Yearbook: This course is designed to teach the skills necessary to produce the school yearbook, which offers a complete record of an entire school year. The year begins by planning the coverage for the school year and designing a unifying theme for the book. This course provides the study of and practice in gathering and analyzing information, interviewing, note taking and photography. Students will learn proofing strategies and work independently with photographers. ***At times, deadlines require that staff members work after school, on weekends, and holidays.***

Cambridge Global Perspectives: The program develops the skills of research, analysis, evaluation, reflection, collaboration and communication. It strengthens the links across English as a first or second language, mathematics, science, and ICT Starters. **This course supports progression to many other creative subjects at Cambridge Upper Secondary (Mandatory for 6th grade Cambridge Students)**

Cambridge 2-D Art: Students will develop creative skills that will help with many aspects of their future learning and development. They will: Learn to see themselves as artists and become increasingly reflective and independent, develop the skills needed to express creative ideas and to communicate visually, and understand their place and the place of others in a creative, innovative, and interconnected world. **This course supports progression to many other creative subjects at Cambridge Upper Secondary**

Cambridge Physical Education: This subject is about learning to move and moving to learn. Learners develop skills through a wide variety of age-appropriate physical activities, including games, team sports, gymnastics, and dance. As individuals and team members, they will: Increase confidence, moving with increasing control, fluency and variety, improve their understanding of concepts, rules, tactics, strategies and compositional ideas, participate in respectful and responsible ways, engaging appropriately and safely, improve knowledge and understanding of how physical education can contribute to a healthy and active lifestyle, and develop transferable skills promoting physical, cognitive and social development and become independent, critical and reflective movers and thinkers. Students develop creative skills that will help with many aspects of their future learning and development. **The course supports progression to the next stage of the Cambridge Pathway.**

High School Cambridge Spanish I*: ***Proficiency in Reading is required.*** Cambridge Spanish 1 introduces students to the target language and its culture. The student will develop communicative skills in all 3 modes of communication and cross-cultural understanding. Emphasis is placed on proficient communication in the language. An introduction to reading and writing is also included as well as culture, connections, comparisons, and communities. **This course supports progression to many other creative subjects at Cambridge Upper Secondary**

High School Cambridge Spanish II*: ***Proficiency in Reading is required.*** Cambridge Spanish 2 reinforces the fundamental skills acquired by the students in Spanish 1. The course develops increased listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills as well as cultural awareness. Specific content to be covered is a continuation of listening and oral skills acquired in Spanish 1. Reading and writing receive more emphasis, while oral communication remains the primary objective. The cultural survey of the target language-speaking people is continued. **This course supports progression to many other creative subjects at Cambridge Upper Secondary**
Prerequisite: Spanish II

Spanish for Spanish Speakers: The purpose of this course is to enable students whose heritage language is Spanish to develop, maintain, and enhance proficiency in their heritage language by reinforcing and acquiring skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing, including the fundamentals of Spanish grammar. Language Arts Standards are also included in this course to enable students to become literate in the Spanish language and gain a better understanding of the nature of their own language as well as other languages to be acquired.

