

February 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians:

At this time of the year, 7th grade students and their parents begin planning for the transition to grade 8 at Pearl River High School. As students enter the 8th grade, the nine period day will include math, language arts, science, social studies, world language, physical education, unified arts, lunch and an elective. Students who were unsuccessful in a seventh grade course and do not attend summer school may be enrolled in an academic intervention lab in lieu of an elective. Additionally, students identified as needing academic intervention services will be enrolled in an academic support lab.

The [PRHS Program of Studies](#) can assist you and your child in planning his/her high school career. Descriptions of electives can be found in the [Program of Studies](#) and are also attached to this letter. It is important to note that the 8th grade year will set the stage for high school success. Final course grades in electives, world languages, and accelerated courses in math (Algebra) and science (Earth Science) become a part of the permanent transcript record and count toward the overall grade point average and class rank. Electives available to 8th grade students include music, Career Exploration, Studio Art, and Technical Design.

Upon successful completion of a high school elective in music, technology or art, students will earn one credit towards high school graduation. This credit will also satisfy your child's high school fine arts graduation requirement. Students enrolled in any performing music program will be required to participate in parades, evening concerts, and community events. The half year Career Exploration elective is paired with a study hall and earns a half credit toward high school graduation. This half credit will also satisfy your child's Career Exploration graduation requirement. Please discuss the options with your child and determine which electives are of interest.

We are asking 7th grade parents and students to enter their elective requests through the parent or student portal. Attached are the step by step instructions on how to complete this process on the parent or student portal. We ask that you enter your child's request by February 28, 2020. If you do not have access to the student or parent portal, or if you need hard copies of the forms below, copies will be available in the guidance office at the middle school.

Sincerely,

Michael J. Murphy,
Principal

Description of PRHS Electives offered to Grade 8 students

JUNIOR BAND (C0644)

1 credit

Prerequisite: Participation in MS Band or director approval

The concepts and skills learned in Junior Band will allow students to be successful in the upper level band the following school year. On a daily basis, students will work on basic theory concepts, individual instrument technique, ensemble technique and basic composition. Students will participate in regularly scheduled pullout lessons, which will focus on individual technique, instrument care and maintenance as well as small ensemble technique. **Requirements:** students are required to participate in quarterly assessments as well as the mid-term and final exams (the winter and spring concerts).

Offered: full year course. **Credited:** This course fulfills the Fine Arts requirement or can be used for elective credit.

Course open to 8th & selected 9-12th graders who may be new to the music program.

JUNIOR ORCHESTRA (C0694)

1 credit

Prerequisite: Participation in MS orchestra or director approval

Junior orchestra is a performing group open to string players in grade 8 and older students who are learning a string instrument for the first time. The concepts and skills learned in Junior Orchestra will prepare students for the more challenging music performed by the 9-12 orchestra. On a daily basis, students will work on basic theory concepts, individual instrument techniques, as well as ensemble technique. Student will participate in regular scheduled pullout lessons, with a focus on skills and techniques specific to their instrument. The members of the Junior Orchestra perform at annual concerts and also participate in local and state music festivals and competitions.

Requirements: Mandatory participation in Winter Concert I and Spring Concert, group lessons (5 per quarter), written tests and quizzes, playing exams, and graduation ensemble.

Offered: full year course. **Credited:** This course fulfills the Fine Arts requirement or can be used for elective credit.

Course open to 8th & selected 9-12th graders who may be new to the music program.

CHORUS (C0680)

1 credit

A largely performance based course which touches on the basics of singing, sight reading, vocal anatomy, and performance etiquette. **Requirements:** mandatory participation in the Winter Concert I and Spring Concert, group voice lessons (2 per quarter), written tests and quizzes, parts quizzes, and daily participation in singing, breathing, and music reading exercises.

Offered: full year course. **Credited:** This course fulfills the Fine Arts requirement or can be used for elective credit.

CAREER EXPLORATION 8 (C0518)

½ credit

This course will provide students with the opportunity to plan for future educational and career goals as well as personal financial responsibility. Students will discover their own aptitudes and interests, to determine relevant college majors and career paths. Assessments will incorporate information from personalized surveys, and a database with over 7,000 colleges and universities; and over 2,000 occupations. Students will synthesize information from a range of sources that will allow them to make

informed and effective decisions about their future educational and career plans. Additionally, this course will give students an overview of Microsoft Office software: Word, Excel, Access, PowerPoint, and Publisher, as well as to provide opportunities for the integration of these programs. The emphasis of the assessments is on practical, relevant applications for the high school student. The assessments are intended to foster creativity and critical thinking, as each student completes unique, individualized projects. **Requirements:** students are required to submit a final portfolio. **Offered:** half year course. **Credited:** for core credit **This course is open to students in grade 8.**

STUDIO ART 8 (C0603)

1 credit

Students will develop basic art skills through the exploration of a variety of art materials and processes. The course projects will help students develop the ability to work with the elements of art and the fundamentals of design. Students learn to evaluate artwork, become aware of historical factors that shape visual communication and strengthen their powers of observation.

Offered: full year course. **Credited:** This course fulfills the Fine Arts requirement or can be used for elective credit. **NOTE:** Studio Art is a **prerequisite** for all other art courses.

TECHNICAL DESIGN 8 (C0541)

1 credit

A full year introductory course for the technology program. In Design and Drawing for Production students will study the design elements, technical drafting and the problem solving process in order to produce various models, prototypes and projects. Students will be introduced to the world of graphical communication using mechanical drawing skills to complete single view, multi view, isometric, and architectural drawings. Students will also learn basic hand tool and machine use when building their models, prototypes and various projects. **Offered:** full year course. **Credited:** This course fulfills the Fine Arts requirement or can be used for elective credit. **NOTE:** Technical Design is a **prerequisite** for all other technology courses.

Instructions for entering incoming 8th grade elective course requests through the parent or student portal. You will be entering one first choice elective, and one alternate/second choice elective.

1. In the Parent or Student Portal, click on the tab at the top for Course Request
2. Click the tab on the right side of the screen for New Request
3. Go to the Subject box and click on the drop down arrow
4. Click on the subject for the course you are requesting as your first choice elective:
 - For Studio Art 8, click Art
 - For Tech Design 8, click Technology
 - For Jr Band, Chorus, or Jr Orchestra, click Music
 - For the Career / Study Hall combo, click Social Studies
5. Go to the Course box and click on the drop down arrow
6. In the drop down box below, click on the course # : name for the course you are choosing (i.e. C0603: Studio Art 8)
7. Click Save
8. When you see the box that says "Success. Your course request has been added," click OK
9. Next, to enter your alternate/second choice request, click the yellow + to the right of the course request you have just entered. Follow steps 3 through 8 to select your alternate/second choice course. Once you see the success message, you are all set.

Grade 8 Elective Course Request Form

We are asking 7th grade parents and students to enter their elective requests through the parent or student portal. We ask that you enter your child's request by February 28, 2020. However, if you do not have access to the student or parent portal, please complete the form below and hand it in to the guidance office at the middle school. **If you have already selected your electives on the student or parent portal, please do not complete this form.**

Student Name: _____

Please indicate 1st and 2nd choice below.

_____ Junior Band (1 credit)

_____ Junior Orchestra (1 credit)

_____ Chorus (1 credit)

_____ Careers (1/2 credit)/ Study Hall

_____ Studio Art 8 (1 credit)

_____ Technical Design 8 (1 credit)

Parent's Signature: _____ Date: _____