



PA Distance  
Learning  
CHARTER SCHOOL

**Middle School Course Catalog**  
**Grades 6-8**

Welcome to Middle School, grades 6, 7 and 8! At PA Distance Learning, we use a blended learning model, which students are expected to attend live-learning sessions and also work independently to complete asynchronous lessons that are assigned daily for each course. Pennsylvania public school regulations require every middle school student to spend a minimum of 5.5 hours on their academics each school day, which equates to spending approximately 45 minutes completing daily lessons in each class.

## **6<sup>th</sup> Grade Courses**

### **6<sup>th</sup> Grade English Language Arts**

Course length: Full-year

Curriculum Resource: *McGraw Hill - Study Sync*

The Sixth Grade English Language Arts curriculum takes students through literary and nonfiction texts that explore individuals facing crucial decisions, learning from their responses, and becoming a better version of them. Students will develop a rich vocabulary, enhancing their knowledge of sentence structure and grammar. Reading comprehension strategies, text-based analysis, and various types of writing techniques are employed throughout the year. Students will also take part in two novel studies, *Walk Two Moons* by Sharon Creech and *Freedom Walkers: The Story of the Montgomery Bus Boycott* by Russell Freedman.

### **6<sup>th</sup> Grade Mathematics**

Course length: Full-year

Curriculum Resource: *Zearn*

Sixth Grade Mathematics is about connecting ratio and rate to whole number multiplication and division and using concepts of ratio and rate to solve problems; completing understanding of division of fractions and extending the notion of number to the system of rational numbers, which includes negative numbers; writing, interpreting, and using expressions and equations; and developing understanding of statistical thinking.

### **6<sup>th</sup> Grade Science**

Course length: Full-year

Curriculum Resource: *Mosa Mack*

In Sixth Grade Science, students will use interactive tools and technology to gain a better understanding of the world around them. Students will focus on physical and earth sciences with main concentrations on astronomy, forces and motion, and earth structure. Students will explore objects in space, forces, movement, Newton's laws of energy, electricity, and magnetism. Additionally students will also explore various earth systems, rocks, minerals, plate boundaries, earthquakes, and volcanoes.

### **6<sup>th</sup> Grade Social Studies**

Course length: Full-year

Curriculum Resource: *Savvas MyWorld*

In Sixth Grade Social Studies, students will investigate various ancient civilizations that originated from the Old Stone Age through Ancient Rome. The ancient civilizations of Mesopotamia, Egypt, Africa, India, China, Japan, and Greece are discussed including all aspects of their geography, culture, religion, leadership, trade, and development. Through these studies, students will be able to extend their learning beyond these ancient civilizations to have a greater understanding of the modern world.

## **6<sup>th</sup> Grade Music**

Course length: Semester

6th Grade Music is designed to cycle through four major topics of music history, international music, composition and theory and music technology. As these fields are in higher demand in the workforce, we are excited to offer engaging course material for students to engage in and research. In Sixth Grade, we discover Early Music up the 1400's and the Renaissance (1400-1600) are introduced to the musical structure of South America and its culture, an introduction to Music Theory notation and scales and finally an exciting exploration of Music Technology' how it is used currently and its history. This course is set up for students to engage in productive group work, create interdependence in small tasks, and ensure individual success.

## **6<sup>th</sup> Grade Visual Art**

Course length: Semester

6<sup>th</sup> Grade Visual Art is designed to continue building upon the elements and principles of visual art through drawing, painting and sculpting, while also engaging in aesthetic and critical analysis. Students will explore artistic expression by reviewing their portfolio, writing artist statements and completing a self-portrait. Additionally, students will learn about how visual art and other subjects are connected, and will explore careers in the visual arts. Students will have the opportunity to exhibit their work.

## **6<sup>th</sup> Grade Health and Wellness**

Course length: Full-year

Curriculum Resource: *McGraw Hill Teen Health Courseware*

Throughout the Health and Wellness course, students will be engaged in lessons focused on the following categories: concepts of health, healthful living, safety and injury prevention, physical activity and concepts, principles and strategies of movement. To meet the physical activity standards, the students are responsible for engaging in daily physical activities by completing a weekly fit log. This approach makes fitness very personal and individualized while giving the students the freedom to choose their own fitness activities. Units of study include: Introduction to Health & Wellness, Importance of Physical Education, Presidential Youth Fitness Program, Basic Movements, Endocrine System, My Plate, Circulatory System, Healthy Life, Drugs, Alcohol, Emergencies, Emotional Health, and Manipulation Movements.

## **6<sup>th</sup> Grade Introduction to Programming 2**

Course Length: Full-year

Curriculum Resource: *CodeHS*

Throughout this CodeHS course, students will learn the basics of programming by writing code and creating programs that solve problems. The programming language students will be using in this course is Python. Students will learn Python commands, functions, for loops, variables, comments, parameters, If/Else statements, and top down design. Students will be required to engage in a live learning class with a teacher and peers to enhance their understanding of all the learned concepts and skills. Students will be required to work independently in CodeHS throughout the week to remain on pace with course concepts.

## **6<sup>th</sup> Grade Homeroom**

Course Length: Full-year

Students enrolled in 6th grade homeroom will be demonstrating mastery of the foundations of career readiness/ life skills. Students will be taught lessons by a certified school counselor in regards to distinguishing between types of behavior related to bullying, creating and completing S.M.A.R.T goals, analyzing all aspects of respect, growth mindset, learning and applying the 12 concepts of kindness, conflict resolution in various relationships, and test taking strategies.

## 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Courses

### **7<sup>th</sup> Grade English Language Arts**

Course length: Full-year

Curriculum Resources: *StudySync*

In 7<sup>th</sup> grade English Language Arts, students will read literary and nonfictional texts, and practice close reading and analysis to delve deep into the interactive texts. The class will explore themes such as conflict, relationships, dreams, and change. A variety of creative projects, discussions, and activities will be used to assess comprehension and analysis skills. The novel *Stargirl* will also be read. Writing will also be a focus with students writing narratives, persuasive essays and completing a research project.

### **7<sup>th</sup> Grade Math**

Course length: Full-year

Curriculum Resource: *enVision Realize*

Seventh grade math offers a fun and exciting curriculum that builds and strengthens students' foundational math skills. Students in this course will have access to interactive curriculum and resources that help will help them demonstrate mastery. With a heavy focus on critical thinking, analysis, and real-world problem solving, students will begin with an expansion of their knowledge of the number system by studying rational number operations. They will analyze and apply proportional relationships and percent to solve real-world scenarios. Expressions and equations will be explored by means of translating, generating and solving problems on the topic, and students will learn about statistics and probability by drawing inferences about populations and the investigation of chance processes to develop, use, and evaluate probability models. Lastly, students will study geometry through drawing, constructing, describing and comparing geometric figures and solving real-world mathematical problems involving measurement.

### **7<sup>th</sup> Grade Science**

Course length: Full-year

Curriculum Resource: *Mosa Mack Science*

In 7<sup>th</sup> grade science, students will explore concepts from life science, earth science and physical science throughout the year. The curriculum is phenomena and problem based, and focuses on the process of scientific inquiry. The scientific process and design thinking will be woven through the units of study. A variety of activities including in class demonstrations, hands on labs, collaborative group work, writing assignments, and projects will enhance the learning experiences in Middle School Science.

### **7<sup>th</sup> Grade Social Studies**

Course length: Full-year

Curriculum Resource: *Savvas MyWorld*

Seventh grade Social Studies examines the geography of the world and the great events in history shaped by it. Course topics include people, economy and culture, government, looking at the past, North America, South America, Central America, Ancient Greece and Rome, Middle Ages, Renaissance, Exploration, Revolution, Europe, Russia, West Africa, East Africa, North Africa, the near and far East, and Oceania. Students will build map skills, learn key events in world history, and practice critical thinking and writing skills as we travel the world together. Students will complete a variety of writing, reading, and critical thinking activities.

### **7<sup>th</sup> Grade Art**

Course length: Semester

This elective course meets the Pennsylvania Art Standards for grades 7-8 and builds upon knowledge learned in K-6th grade art. Work in the course is primarily project based. Lessons are located in the course delivery. The course will continue to focus on the elements of art and principles of design as well as major art movements in history and significant artists of these movements. Guided practice, videos and quizzes will also support the subject matter

taught through the online curriculum. This class requires daily work to be completed in order to be successful. Art supplies are provided to complete all assigned projects.

### **7<sup>th</sup> Grade Music**

Course Length: Semester

Music in this Seventh Grade elective course is designed to cycle through four major topics: Music History, International Music, Composition and Theory, and Music Technology. These fields are in higher demand in the workforce. In 7th grade, students discover and research the Baroque Period 1600 to 1750 and the Classical Period 1750-1830. Students are also introduced to the musical structure of Africa and its culture, an introduction to Music Theory scales, modes and intervals, an exciting exploration of Music Technology, and, finally, the physics behind the sounds and the studios in which they are made.

### **7<sup>th</sup> Grade Computing Ideas**

Course length: Full-year

Curriculum Resource: *Code HS*

This elective course is a first computer science course introducing the basics of programming with Karel the Dog, the basics of designing a web page, and how information and images are represented with computers. With a unique focus on creativity, problem solving and project based learning, the course also gives students the opportunity to explore several important topics of computing using their own ideas and creativity and develop an interest in computer science that will foster further endeavors in the field.

### **7<sup>th</sup> Grade Health and Wellness**

Course length: Full-year

Curriculum Resource: *McGraw Hill Teen Health*

In 7th Grade Health and Wellness, students will focus on gaining a greater awareness about what constitutes their physical, mental, and social wellbeing. Students will be provided knowledge and skills that will enable them to make responsible decisions and maintain a healthy lifestyle, which benefits adolescents in all aspects of their growth and learning. Work in this course will meet PA Academic Standards for Health, Safety and Physical Education with age appropriate topics such as concepts of health, healthful living, safety and injury prevention and principles and strategies of movement. In addition, students will focus on completing the Presidential Youth Fitness Program to assess their overall fitness levels, as well as, engage in daily physical activity by completing a Weekly Fit Log.

### **7<sup>th</sup> Grade Homeroom**

Course length: Full-year

Required for 7<sup>th</sup> grade level students, this course is co-taught with teachers and the 7<sup>th</sup> grade school counselor. School Counselors and teachers will facilitate lessons and discussions promoting students' social and emotional learning (SEL). Topics such as anxiety, decision making, self-esteem, healthy relationships, positive thinking, bullying, digital safety, communication skills and other topics that follow the ASCA (American School Counseling Association) national model will be presented and discussed. Teachers and counselors will foster relationship building and create a shared sense of community through all of the unique backgrounds, experiences and interests of the students. Homeroom sessions will also include activities to promote positive school behaviors (the Core 4: attendance, organization, self-advocacy, and independence), discuss Digital Citizenship, examine Financial Literacy, and explore Career Education and Work. Homeroom teachers and counselors will ensure that all students create annual goals and have a documented career plan (Student Annual Goal Sheets).

## 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Courses

### **8<sup>th</sup> Grade English Language Arts**

Course length: Full-year

Curriculum Resource: *StudySync*

8<sup>th</sup> English Language Arts focuses equally on both reading and writing skills. The course builds upon previously learned skills and serves to prepare students for high school level English courses. Students use an interactive textbook to read fiction, non-fiction, poetry and the novel *The Outsiders* by S.E. Hinton. The writing portion of the course includes creative, informative and persuasive essays. We will also focus on PSSA preparation including text-dependent analysis.

### **8<sup>th</sup> Grade Math**

Course length: Full-year

Curriculum Resource: *enVision Realize*

In 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Math, students will focus on pre-algebraic curriculum to help students prepare for Algebra I and high school math. Students in this course will explore all domains of math with a focus on critical thinking, analysis, and problem solving skills. Students will learn about ratios and proportional relationships, the number system, expressions and equations, functions, geometry, and statistics and probability. Throughout the school year, students will be given the chance to share mathematical dialogue with their peers.

### **8<sup>th</sup> Grade Social Studies: American History**

Course length: Full-year

Curriculum Resource: *Savvas MyWorld*

This course is a survey of historical, cultural, political, economic, and institutional factors and events that have shaped United States history from colonization through the Reconstruction era following the Civil War. The course takes a chronological approach with an emphasis on major themes throughout history that have impacted the development of our nation. Additionally, students will analyze how continuity and change have influenced U.S history by evaluating the primary source and secondary documents. Throughout the year, students will compare the role that groups and individuals have played in the social, political, cultural, and economic development of the United States and the effects this change still has today.

### **8<sup>th</sup> Grade Science**

Course length: Full-year

Curriculum Resource: *Mosa Mack Science*

Our new middle school science curriculum consists of an integrated course at each grade level. Students will explore concepts from life science, physical science and earth science throughout the year. The curriculum is phenomena and problem based, and focuses on the process of scientific inquiry. The scientific process and design thinking will be woven through the units of study. Students will be engaged in class demonstrations, labs and activities to enhance their understanding of the key concepts.

### **8<sup>th</sup> Grade Health and Wellness**

Course length: Full-year

Curriculum Resource: *McGraw Hill Teen Health*

Throughout the Health and Wellness course, students will be engaging in lessons that focus on the following categories: concepts of health, healthful living, safety and injury prevention, physical activity and concepts, principles and strategies of movement. To meet the physical activity standards, students are responsible for engaging in daily physical activities by completing a weekly fit log. This approach makes fitness very personal and

individualized by giving the students the freedom to choose their own fitness activities. In addition to the weekly fit log, students will focus on completing the Presidential Youth Fitness Program to assess their overall fitness levels. Students will also learn the importance of decision-making skills, nutritional choices, the body systems, disease prevention, and skills related fitness and principles of training.

### **8<sup>th</sup> Grade Music**

Course Length: Semester

Music in this Eighth Grade elective course is designed to cycle through four major topics of Music History, International Music, Composition and Theory, and Music Technology as these fields are in higher demand in the workforce. In 8<sup>th</sup> grade, students discover the Romantic Period 1830-1900 and 20<sup>th</sup> Century Music 1900-2000, students are introduced to the musical structure of Europe and Asia and its culture, an introduction to Music Theory chords, cadences and melody writing, and finally an exciting exploration of Music Technology. Platforms for electronic music making are used as well as tools used in the trade of music editing.

### **8<sup>th</sup> Grade Introduction to Art**

Course length: Semester

This introductory, elective course in the arts builds upon the Pennsylvania Art Standards learned in Grades K-7. This course offers opportunities for artistic expression and development. Students will explore a wide variety of art methods, techniques, and skills such as drawing, painting, sculpture, computer graphics, and crafts with emphasis on design and creativity. Art history and art appreciation are incorporated as various time periods, movements, and styles are introduced. Students will work in the course delivery system to learn about these concepts. Hands-on projects, videos and quizzes will also support the subject matter to deliver this well-rounded curriculum. This class requires daily work to be completed in order to be successful. Art supplies are provided to complete all assigned projects.

### **8<sup>th</sup> Grade Web Design**

Course Length: Full-year

Curriculum Resource: *CodeHS*

In today's world, web pages are the main medium for sharing ideas and information. Learning to design websites is an incredibly useful skill for any career path. This course is a project-based course that teaches students how to build their own web pages. Students will learn the languages HTML and CSS, and will create their own live homepages. By the end of this course, students will be able to explain how web pages are developed and viewed on the Internet, analyze and fix errors in existing websites, and create their very own multipage websites.

### **8<sup>th</sup> Grade Homeroom**

Course length: Full-year

Required for 8<sup>th</sup> grade level students, this course is co-taught with teachers and the 8<sup>th</sup> grade school counselor. School Counselors and teachers will facilitate lessons and discussions promoting students' social and emotional learning (SEL). Topics such as anxiety, decision making, self-esteem, healthy relationships, positive thinking, bullying, digital safety, communication skills and other topics that follow the ASCA (American School Counseling Association) national model will be presented and discussed. Teachers and counselors will foster relationship building and create a shared sense of community through all of the unique backgrounds, experiences and interests of the students. Homeroom sessions will also include activities to promote positive school behaviors (the Core 4: attendance, organization, self-advocacy, and independence), discuss Digital Citizenship, examine Financial Literacy, and explore additional Career Education and Work opportunities. Homeroom teachers and counselors will ensure that all students create annual goals and have a documented career plan (Student Annual Goal Sheets).