

**Current
Course Offerings**

Middle School Curriculum Guide



ABC

+
x
-
÷



Middle School - **Course Progression**

	6TH GRADE	7TH GRADE	8TH GRADE
Language Arts	Humanities 6 Introduction to Spanish	Language Arts 7	Language Arts 8
Social Studies		Latin America and New Mexico History	United States History
Science	STEM 6	Science 7	Science 8
Math		Pre-Algebra	Algebra I
Physical Education	Team Sports or Strength & Conditioning		
Religious Education	Introduction to the Bible (1 semester)	Ethics and Morality (1 quarter)	World Religions (1 quarter)
Electives	Beginning Band: Introduction to Instrumental Music (1 semester)	Visual Arts (1 quarter) Drama (1 quarter) Choir (1 quarter) Robotics (1 quarter) Spanish (1 quarter)	
Arts Block	Vanguard Band Musical Theater Creative Writing Visual Arts		

Middle School - Academic Policies & Procedures

Middle School is an exciting time of transition in many ways, but it's also a complicated one, and students need help navigating the many aspects of this passage from childhood into young adulthood. As a School, we can best serve our students by providing them with opportunities to grow in body, mind, and spirit.

Physically, students are supported with opportunities to move throughout the day, daily physical education, and opportunities to hone teamwork and athletic skills with organized sports. Providing students with the tools to stay physically (as well as emotionally) healthy is another way support their physical development, particularly in this developmental period marked by so much change.

In the academic realm, students are synthesizing the knowledge that they've already developed in elementary school, at the same time that they are expanding their horizons with new challenges and experiences. Our Middle School structure affords students and teachers both the time and structure needed to examine subjects in a multidisciplinary and holistic way, helping students to examine questions and find solutions with context. Our goal is for the strong foundation that our students build here to support them well into high school and beyond, pairing curiosity about the world with the strong study skills and habits of mind needed for success.

Students' spiritual education is geared toward helping them find meaning in the world, an understanding of self, and ethical ways of interacting

with others. Spiritual education is accomplished formally in religious studies classes, which include Biblical foundations, ethics, and world religions. Informally, helping students' to develop spiritually – with all that entails – is part of classroom interactions, conversation, and all-school programming throughout the school day.

ACADEMIC SUPPORT

Students needing support for achievement in academic subjects have a variety of resources at hand. First, students who are struggling in a class will be assigned to support sessions for STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) or Humanities (English and Social Studies) for one-on-one or small-group tutoring and skill building. These support sessions take place during part or all of afternoon Physical Education classes, and ensure that students leave for the school day with the support they need to successfully complete homework and studying in the evening.

Second, students are always encouraged to meet with teachers to discuss course topics and get extra help. Teachers are generally available after school, and by arrangement, before school and during part of the lunch period.

Third, the Tinnin Center provides help with study strategies, time management, and organization, as well help with accommodations for documented learning differences. In general, the School offers the following

accommodations: preferential seating, extra time on tests and other assessments, use of the iPad for note-taking, and use of the iPad for tests and other assessments.

Finally, tutoring is available from a variety of sources. Peer tutors are high school students who volunteer to guide younger students through challenging material, and can be a valuable resource for review. A list of paid tutors who accept individual students or small groups is kept on file in the Tinin Center.

ADVISORY PROGRAM

Advisory groups meet each morning to provide a launch pad for each student's day at school, and to help advisors track students' academic work and technology use. Advisors pay attention to individual students' progress, both academically and socially, helping to form a safety net for each child. As a group, advisees get to know other students in a small group setting, form an identity as a group, and share in activities.

COUNSELING

The Middle School Director and students' advisors are the best sources for academic counseling. The Middle School Director will manage course selection with help from the Registrar. Personal counseling and academic support are delivered through the staff of the Tinin Counseling Center and the School's Learning Specialist. The School Chaplain also provides pastoral counseling.

Middle School - **Academic Policies & Procedures**

GOOD ACADEMIC STANDING

In order to be in good academic standing, a student must maintain at least a 2.0 cumulative GPA, including summer school grades.

The Registrar will calculate a student's GPA at the end of each quarter (four times a year).

A student who is not in good academic standing may be asked to leave Menaul under the following circumstances:

1. Falling below a 2.0 for two consecutive quarters.
2. Falling below a 2.0 for a total of three quarters any time during his or her attendance at Menaul School.

Students' eligibility for sports and other extracurricular activities is linked to overall academic standing. A student whose GPA falls below 2.0 or who has received an F during the nine-week quarter will be ineligible for sports and activities during following nine-week grading period.

GRADE POINT AVERAGE

The Grade Point Average (GPA) for each student is calculated by using the following system:

GRADE	POINTS
A	4
B	3
C	2
D	1
F	0

GPA is calculated by dividing the total number of grade points earned by the number of courses taken per semester. Please note: Menaul School neither recognizes nor grants credit for courses with a grade of E or F.

GRADING SCALE

A = 90-100%
B = 80-89%
C = 70-79%
D = 60-69%
F = below 60%

HONOR ROLL

Students who earn a GPA of 3.25 in the first and third quarters and the first and second semesters are placed on Honor Roll. Students with a GPA of 3.75 or higher are placed on the President's Honor Roll for that period.

REGISTRATION

Students will be scheduled for classes at time of registration. Schedule changes will be made in the event of improper placement of a student or for the purpose of balancing classes.

TESTING AND EVALUATION

To evaluate basic skills, eighth grade students will be tested using the PSAT 8/9 test.



HUMANITIES 6

Students in Humanities begin the interactive journey through the Five Themes of Geography. Students use emerging technology, explorative field trips and historically context-based literature to make reading, writing, speaking, and listening an engaging experience in examining the world and its people. Students are guided through the link between Humanities and STEM based curriculum.

Both fiction and non-fiction texts that are challenging, interesting and relative are used to develop students' reading and critical thinking skills, and provide students an opportunity to engage and connect with culturally relevant and diverse text. The goal is to use traditional and contemporary text to allow for collaboration and creativity as language arts, social studies and technology are blended for a dynamic learning experience. Study skills, time management, and organization are also a part of this course, and help to support students at the beginning of their Middle School careers.

A variety of coming-of-age themed literature – short stories, essays, poetry, plays, and novels – are used to help students explore new ideas and reflect on life experiences.

Learning about elements of theme and characterization, as well as expanding vocabulary and spelling skills helps students to deepen their understanding of reading material.

The study of people and places is developed using non-fiction texts, maps, art, and physical models as students concentrate on ancient

civilizations, the Middle Ages, the Age of Exploration, and people and places in the modern era. In addition to text-based research, students learn a variety of presentation formats and correct formatting for academic papers.

LANGUAGE ARTS 7

The purpose of this course is to motivate and encourage students to be competent, confident, and enthusiastic readers, writers, listeners and speakers, and to provide them with the skills to do so. Seventh graders study a variety of literary genres in novels, short stories, plays, and poetry. They pay close attention to defining literary terms, such as plot, theme, setting, and characterization. This course also requires outside reading at regular intervals. As students discuss literature and write about it, they study grammar, usage, mechanics, and vocabulary to extend their skills in reading and writing. In Language Arts 7, students write essays, and they also hone their creative writing skills by crafting pieces with narrative, descriptive, and explanatory passages.

LANGUAGE ARTS 8

The purpose of this course is to motivate and encourage students to be competent, confident, and enthusiastic readers, writers, listeners and speakers, and to provide them with the skills to do so. Language skills are essential tools because they serve as the necessary basis for further learning and career development, and enable the human spirit to be enriched. Mastery of language skills will ensure

that the students enter the worlds of higher education and the workplace armed with the tools they need to be literate, confident communicators.

Eighth graders in this class further develop their skills in language arts to enhance reading, writing, spelling, and grammar. They explore their own voices as writers and share ideas, thoughts, concepts, and values. Emphasis is placed in close reading and critical analysis of literary texts as well as developing composition skills in writing, expressive skills in poetry, and analytical skills in essay writing, all to prepare students for success in Upper School.

LATIN AMERICA AND NEW MEXICO HISTORY

Seventh grade students conduct an in-depth study of the history and cultures that influence the Southwest in this history course by studying the geography, technology, climate, art and architecture, and human settlement patterns of many groups of people – South American and Latin American civilizations, traditional southwestern cultures (Ancestral Puebloan, Mogollon, early Pueblo and Plains civilizations), and Europeans.

New Mexico history is the focus of the second half of this course, from Spanish Colonization to the close of World War II. Settlement patterns, cultural exchange, geography, and climate have combined to make the history of New Mexico a very rich source of study. Treasure hunts, revolts, colonization,

Middle School - **Humanities**

the Santa Fe Trail, the Civil War, range wars, women in the West, railroads, automobiles, tourists, artists, and atomic bombs are just a few of the topics the Grade 7 students will explore in trying to determine why we do things the way we do in New Mexico.

U.S. HISTORY

This class is designed to examine the course of American history using a chronological approach, beginning with the search for independence and concluding with the modern era. Students are actively involved in making connections between the formation and the development of the United States, and its cultural progress through literature, economics, and geography. Class presentations, dramatizations, research projects, independent study, reading, and written compositions are all used as a means to discovery. Special emphasis is placed on issues of cultural diversity, constitutional government, national identity, and civil rights. Themes of multiculturalism, social and economic implications, conflict, and conflict resolution are explored as they apply to each stage of American growth and change. This class shares common themes with Language Arts 8.

SPANISH 7 AND 8

¡Bienvenidos a la clase de Español!
During this marking period of Spanish, students will practice speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

Students will learn to speak and understand basic phrases as well as learn how to read and write using basic grammar. Cultural understanding of Hispanic cultures will be developed by studying music, art, and traditions. Language is our connection to the community and to the world. It opens the doors to understanding other cultures and allows us to express our hopes and dreams as well as share our experiences and traditions with others.

RELIGION 6: INTRODUCTION TO THE BIBLE

Students in Religion 6 share and reading and discussing selections from the Hebrew Scriptures and New Testament. While content (e.g., examples, dates, cultural practices, names, and setting) has importance, this class centers on discovering and developing, in a group setting, the student's own method of inquiry and dialogue. This course's formal seminar structure encourages students to ask questions, lead discussions, and listen actively.

RELIGION 7: ETHICS AND MORALITY

In this quarter-long course, students will examine and discover ethics through a variety of texts, media, and group exercises. Students will read and discuss a variety of sources, from newspaper articles to fiction to case studies to examine why people make judgments about what is good and bad,

right and wrong, legal and illegal. In this class, the formal seminar structure encourages students to ask questions, lead discussions, and listen actively.

RELIGION 8: WORLD RELIGION

Other cultures' views of the sacred are examined using stories and practices in this comparative religion course. Students will explore creation stories from around the world as well as non-fiction accounts of traditional practices to understand how the religious beliefs of different cultures influence their people. Emphasis is placed on students learning to read deeply, ask open-ended questions using a text, and participate in student-run dialogues.



STEM 6

This course continues the development of learned math skills and concepts and extends the student's ability to manipulate the basic operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division with whole numbers. This course will emphasize the application of the basic operations to decimals and fractions. Further, the course introduces and extends the application of number theory to algebraic concepts employing perimeters and areas, ratios, proportions, percentages, integers, and one-step equations.

Sixth grade STEM builds on the quantitative reasoning and science perspectives that students have developed during elementary school, and applies those skills to real-world situations. Emphasis on basic mathematical operations with whole numbers, decimals, and fractions, combined with a variety of science topics. Science topics for sixth grade include health (body systems, gardening, cooking, and nutrition), flight, rocketry, Newton's Laws of Motion, astronomy, and NASA's space program.

The format for this STEM course allows students to both explore mathematical concepts at their pace, while working together to apply those concepts to authentic and rich real-world projects, using their developing social skills to complete work with partners or in small groups. Students will complete weekly engineering design challenges to spark their creativity and prompt them to employ the math and science

concepts they have learned during the first semester. In the second semester, students learn basic coding skills and begin to integrate programming with other curricular areas.

MATH FOUNDATIONS

This course is designed to provide strong groundwork in math and to help the student further develop a broad understanding of the nature of math. Students will achieve proficiency with adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing whole numbers, decimals, and fractions. Integers, one and two-step equations, the order of operations, simple geometry, and word problems are also part of the course. Students will deepen their mathematical understanding by constructing models, using other manipulatives, and applying mathematical concepts to real-world applications. Graphing inequalities and equations, writing and solving proportions, and exploring basic statistics will help students practice using math to describe the natural and designed world. The "why" and "how" of problem solving are emphasized in this course to help students prepare for success in Algebra I.

ALGEBRA I

In Algebra I, students write and interpret numerical expressions, analyze patterns, and relationships. Algebra I is the foundation for the basic structure and abstract nature of mathematics, emphasizing logical

thinking and the application of prior skills and concepts. Students will develop a range of problem solving strategies to tackle a variety of real-world and more abstract applications.

Students who earn a B or above in Algebra I will earn math credit in the Upper School.

SCIENCE 7

Seventh grade students study the natural world and its phenomena by examining the world with physical, earth, and life sciences. The building blocks of matter provide the beginning of students' investigation, followed by cellular biology and genetics, energy, fossils, and geology. In all of the work students do, students practice acting like scientists by participating in lab investigations, collecting and analyzing data, and working collaboratively with others.

SCIENCE 8

Students continue their exploration of the natural world and phenomena in Science 8. Practices of science and the scientific world view are examined through the lens of topics in life, physical, and earth sciences that include ecology, weather, and biochemistry. Students in eighth grade will use various types of models, conduct experiments, and design their own experiments to develop their understanding of the natural world. The development of independent academic skills for the transition to Upper School is also emphasized,

including effective note-taking, time-management, and solid homework and study habits.

ROBOTICS 1

In Lego Robotics, students can use their creative imagination and learn real-life problem-solving skills. Students in this class will use build Lego Mindstorm robots and program them to perform specific tasks and refine their strategies to address practical challenges. This class offers students immersive and interrelated STEM activities, including math, science, engineering, and problem-solving skills.

ROBOTICS 2

Students in Robotics 2 extend their learning about building robots and programming. Cooperation in a team environment is emphasized as students build robots to meet design challenges. Skills and knowledge developed in this course help students build proficiency with programming, and a boost to their extracurricular robotics competition work.

MATH ENRICHMENT

Math Enrichment is a support for students who need to boost their basic math skills. Project-based learning helps students to develop a conceptual

understanding and procedural skills as they build number sense. Cooking with fractions, scale drawings, and graphing student-collected data are all examples of projects in this course.



CHOIR

Students in Choir are introduced to the fundamentals of vocal music production, various choral techniques, and the performance of a variety of choral styles at the Middle School level. Musical literature is chosen to develop the young singing voice and to give the student opportunities for public performance. The student will develop the musical and teamwork skills needed for involvement in Upper School Choir.

MUSICAL THEATER

Musical theater focuses on the art of the singing actor. We train our bodies, minds, and spirits to perform stories with music. Students will be trained in music, music theory, movement, dance, and repertoire. Repertoire is picked based on students' level, and will reflect their skills in performance and storytelling. Students will learn to engage their bodies and voices in a way that will encourage others to be engaged. Preparing students and communities for performances of standard Broadway and other musical works is the focus of this course. Students will learn to use their voices and bodies to effectively tell honest stories on stage.

BEGINNING BAND: INTRODUCTION TO INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

Students in Beginning Band will have the opportunity to play a band instrument, learn to read basic music notation, and perform in a traditional music ensemble setting. Beginning Band is a place for students to build confidence, concentration, and performance skills in a supportive environment. Students who advance quickly in Beginning Band will be able to join the Middle School Vanguard Band in the spring. All students enrolled in Beginning Band need to obtain an instrument, typically by purchasing an instrument or by renting one from a local music store or through the School.

VANGUARD BAND

Vanguard Band is composed of Middle School students who have played a musical instrument for at least one year. In class, students will practice the fundamentals of good breath control, sound production, and music reading. Students will also hone their performance skills as they prepare for public performances with the ensemble.

Vanguard Band also serves as a steppingstone to greater involvement in the music world in Albuquerque;

students may be asked to join Pep Band, to audition for District Honor Band, participate in the Solo/Ensemble Festival, and to audition for All-State Band, Albuquerque Youth Symphony, and the New Mexico Youth Band. The Vanguard Band also participates in combined concerts with bands from other local schools.

DRAMA

The focus of this course is to introduce students to the skills and knowledge necessary for building a firm foundation and understanding of the theatrical arts. Particular emphasis will be given to developing the actor's craft. Students will be introduced to physical, vocal, and analytical investigation, and will be apply these to creative drama, short monologues, and scene work.

VISUAL ARTS

Students taking Visual Arts will develop their creative skills by sampling a variety of ways to make art, including drawing, painting, sculpture, and collage. This course will also introduce students to principles of design and techniques to improve artistic expression. Students will use resources from art history and a variety of cultures to inform their work.

CREATIVE WRITING

Creative writing is an opportunity to write in a supportive atmosphere that allows for freedom of expression, imagination, and fun. Students learn a variety of literary and poetic forms as they practice creating realistic characters, engaging plots, and effective poems. Students publish their work twice per month on the class's literary blog.

CERAMICS

This class will explore a variety of ceramics projects including hand built projects, functional pottery, clay jewelry, a sculpture project, embossing and raku firing. Keeping the work space organized will be an important part of the class.

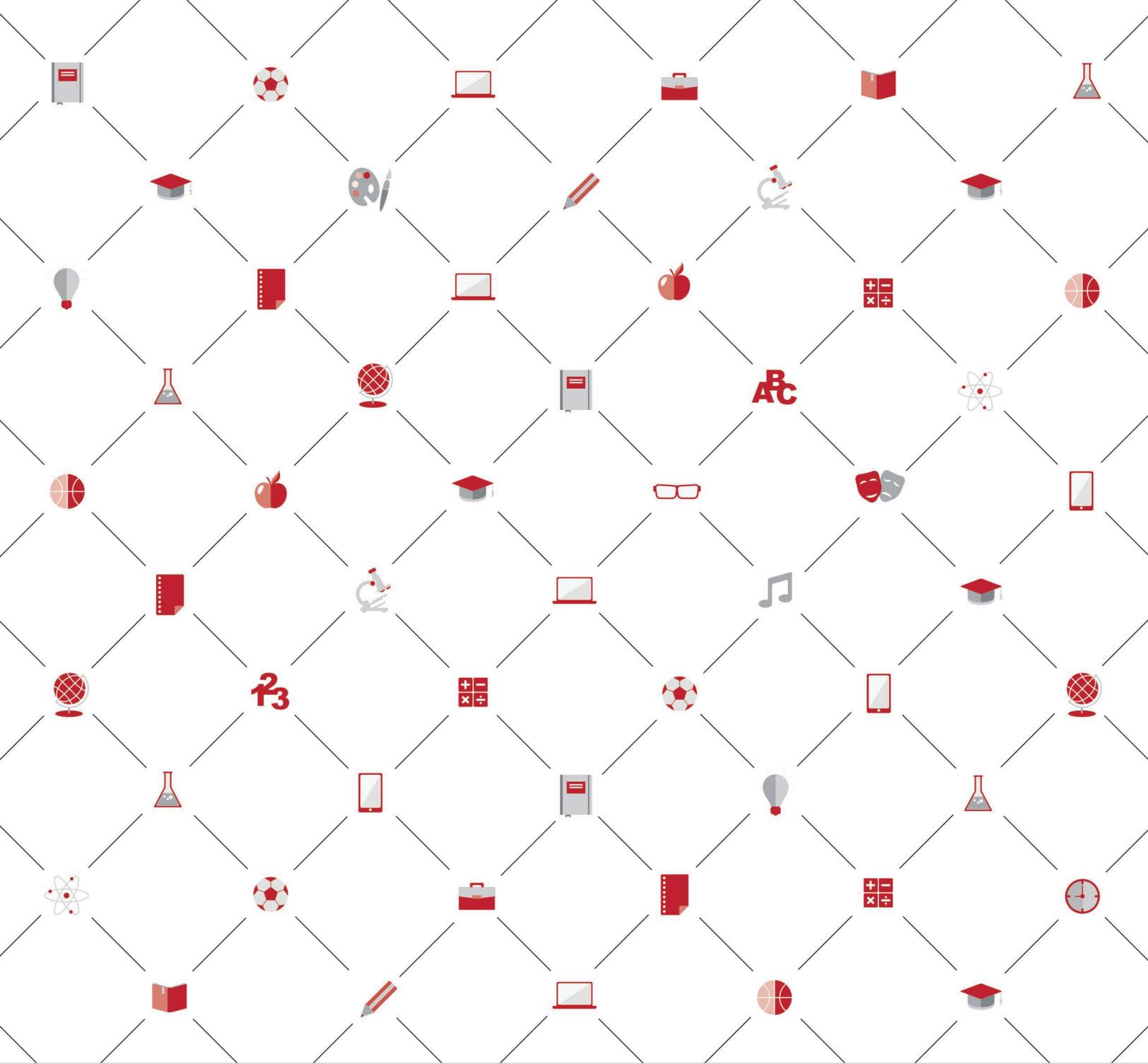
PRINTMAKING

This class will explore a variety of ways to make prints. Printmaking uses techniques from drawing and collage to make a picture. This class will explore monotype, linocut, collage print, and other methods to make handmade prints.



PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Physical Education is an important part of students' education about healthy lifestyles. This activity-oriented class helps students develop knowledge, skills, and appreciation for sports and other types of recreation, along with the practices of good sportsmanship. The Physical Education class will take place during the end of the school day, and overlap with Middle School sports practices. Team sports include flag football, volleyball, basketball, and track. For students not participating in an organized sport, strength training and aerobic conditioning will be the focus of Physical Education.



301 Menaul Blvd. NE Albuquerque, NM 87107
505.341.7252
www.MenaulSchool.org

