

# LANIER ELECTIVE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS 2018-2019

## Language Acquisition

Lanier offers Mandarin Chinese, French, and Spanish.

### Foreign Language

**6<sup>th</sup> Grade:** ALL students must take an **introductory** course in one of the languages.

**7<sup>th</sup> Grade:** Students select which (one) language they would like to take for the next two years. It does not have to be the language they took in 6<sup>th</sup> grade.

**8<sup>th</sup> Grade:** Students will continue with the same language they took in 7<sup>th</sup> grade. During this time they will have the opportunity to earn one high school credit through foreign language, as well as earning college credit with a score of 3 to 5 on the Advanced Placement Exam (if applicable).

## Performing or Visual Arts

### Band

**General Music: 6<sup>th</sup> grade** This course is for students with little or no experience playing an instrument or reading music. Students will receive a general overview of basic music skills through a variety of genres and styles.

**Beginning Band: 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> grade** students start the year with little or no experience playing a band instrument. The first order of business for the Beginner Band is to choose an instrument during the first few days of school. Students learn how to read rhythmic and pitch notation. By the end of the school year, beginner students will know basic musical terms and skills including; reading sheet music, scales, dynamics, style, intervals, instrument maintenance, instrument origin/history, playing posture and rehearsal/concert behavior.

**Symphonic Band: 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> grade** This band is for students that can already read music, know their twelve major scales, create characteristic tones on their instruments and are knowledgeable enough to prepare music outside of the classroom. The symphonic band performs 6-8 times a year and attends competitions. It is expected that all students will have improved enough to be promoted to the Honors Band but ***it is not guaranteed***.

**Honors Band: 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> grade** This is the Top Performing Band at Lanier. These students show a high understanding of music notation, sight reading, high-quality tone production, intonation and eagerness to perform difficult music and take private lessons. Students in this group show a robust interest in playing and performing at a high level and learn how to work well with other students who are also high energy and opinionated! Depending on All City and Region Band auditions, Honors Band students can perform anywhere from 6 – 13 times in a year.

**Guitar: 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> grade** students start the year with little or no experience playing a band instrument. The first order of business for the Beginner Band is to choose an instrument during the first few days of school. Students learn how to read rhythmic and pitch notation. By the end of the school year, beginner students will know basic musical terms and skills including; reading sheet music, scales, dynamics, style, intervals, instrument maintenance, instrument origin/history, playing posture and rehearsal/concert behavior.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Choir</b></p>	<p><b>Beginning Choir – 6<sup>th</sup> Grade</b> - No previous singing experience necessary. Content focuses on basic music theory and ear-training skills as well as healthy vocal technique through a variety of musical genres and styles.</p> <p><b>History of Popular Music: 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade</b> students will learn about the history of popular music across genres and ages.</p> <p><b>Intermediate Girls' Choir</b> – Open to <b>7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup></b> girls who have sung one year in a Lanier Choir; it is also open, by audition, to girls who have previous singing experience and theory knowledge. Content focuses on more advanced music theory, ear-training skills, and healthy vocal technique through a variety of musical genres and styles.</p> <p><b>Advanced Girls' Choir</b> – Open to <b>7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup></b> grade girls by audition only. Content focuses on advanced music theory, ear-training skills, and healthy vocal technique through a variety of musical genres and styles.</p> <p><b>Boys' Choir</b> - Open to any <b>7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup></b> grade boys with no prior Lanier Choir experience. No previous singing experience necessary. Content focuses on basic music theory, ear-training skills, and healthy vocal technique through a variety of musical genres and styles.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Orchestra</b></p>	<p><i>*Orchestra involves the following four main stringed instruments: Violin, Viola, Cello, and Bass*</i></p> <p><b>Beginning Orchestra:</b> This orchestra is for students in all grade levels that have no previous experience on a stringed instrument. In fact, they don't have to have any musical experience at all! We teach the basics in this orchestra. We focus on proper instrument posture, note reading, rhythms, and bow technique.</p> <p><b>Piano/Keyboard:</b> This is for students in all grade levels that have no previous or some experience with a piano/keyboard. In fact, they don't have to have any musical experience at all! We teach the basics in this class.</p> <p><b>Concert:</b> This intermediate level orchestra class is for students who have been playing for 1-2 years. This class will focus on developing intonation, rhythm, shifting, vibrato, bow technique, ensemble performance and sight-reading skills. Concert orchestra also plays a wider variety of world, popular and classical music.</p> <p><b>Philharmonic:</b> This intermediate/advanced level orchestra class is for students in all grade levels with 2-3 years previous experience on a stringed instrument. We focus on many intermediate skills in this class, including: intonation (pitch), rhythms, shifting, vibrato, bow technique, and ensemble performance. Students are accepted into this orchestra by audition only. This orchestra participates in UIL and there are occasional morning sectionals before school.</p> <p><b>Sinfonia:</b> This advanced level orchestra class requires a high level of commitment from its members. Students are accepted into this orchestra by audition only. We focus on skills such as: two-octave scales, advanced shifting and rhythms, and advanced bow technique. Students are expected to be able to read music proficiently. All 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students are required to audition for the region orchestra. There are morning sectionals before school, as well as after-school rehearsals from time to time. This orchestra also participates in the Lanier Symphony Orchestra (LSO) with members of the band.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Art</b></p>	<p><b>6<sup>th</sup> Grade:</b> Students are introduced to a variety of media and techniques to explore the differences in working with: Observation VS Imagination; Organic VS Manufactured Form; 2D VS 3D Form; Black and White VS Color and Realism VS Abstraction. In addition, through analyzing their own work and others, students practice deconstructing how works of art are put together.</p>

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Art</b></p>	<p><b>7<sup>th</sup> Grade:</b> Students will apply the elements and principles of design to create artworks from direct observation, imagination, and personal experience. Subject units will include one and two point perspective, visual storytelling, and art history. Students will also learn to use descriptive vocabulary accurately, while making informed judgments about personal artworks and the artworks of others.</p> <p><b>8<sup>th</sup> Grade:</b> This is a high school credit art class that expands upon the elements of art and the principals of design with continued exploration of basic art media and techniques, such as drawing, painting, graphic design, ceramics, collage and sculpture. This course will consist of more in-depth study of art criticism, aesthetics, and art history. Students will develop an ability to talk about their work and the work of others in classroom critiques. Students are required to bring class art fee and have the option to purchase additional personal art supplies. Students will also have many opportunities to explore careers in the arts, showcase their artwork in the community as well as compete in competitions such as the Rodeo Arts showcase, HISD Holiday greeting card competition and much more!</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Introduction to Theatre</b></p>	<p>This full year <b>6<sup>th</sup> grade</b> class is an introduction to performing and designing for live theatre, with a focus on building the ensemble. Students will learn basic skills in acting, devising, and designing for the stage, with equal emphasis on both performance and production. No previous theatre experience is required. All performances are held in class.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Theatre</b></p>	<p>This a full year class for <b>7<sup>th</sup> graders</b> that offers opportunities for experience equally in both performance and design. Students will study acting, directing and writing, as well as set, costume and prop design and lighting and sound operations. No previous theatre experience is required. However, because this class works with expensive equipment and materials, theatre arts students must be self-disciplined and responsible. Student behavior is strongly taken into consideration when selecting students for this class and a Teacher Recommendation is required. All performances are held in class.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Non-Performance Theatre</b></p>	<p>This a full year class for <b>8<sup>th</sup> graders</b> that offers opportunities for experience equally in both performance and design. Students will study acting, directing and writing, as well as set, costume and prop design and lighting and sound operations. No previous theatre experience is required. However, because this class works with expensive equipment and materials, theatre arts students must be self-disciplined and responsible. Student behavior is strongly taken into consideration when selecting students for this class and a Teacher Recommendation is required. All performances are held in class.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Performance Theatre</b></p>	<p>This a full year <b>audition-only</b> class for <b>8<sup>th</sup> graders</b>, focusing on producing live theatre, with equal focus given to production and performance. Rehearsal and production occurs primarily during class time, with very few after-school rehearsals. No previous theatre experience is required. However, because this class works with expensive equipment and materials, theatre arts students must be self-disciplined and responsible. Student behavior is strongly taken into consideration when selecting students for this class and both a Teacher Recommendation and <i>audition</i> are required. The audition will include a short interview and a cold reading (you'll read from a script that you will see for the first time when you come and audition). A production fee is required to cover costs of costumes, make-up, scripts, royalties and any other expenses that may occur in this production class.</p>

## Design

<b>Debate</b>	<p><b>6<sup>th</sup> Grade:</b> <i>Public Speaking</i> - The class is an introduction to competitive speech and debate that covers a variety of areas such as debate, speech and interpretive events. There is also a unit over George Orwell's <i>Animal Farm</i>. Students will have the opportunity to compete at tournaments. <u>NOTE: Sixth graders do not have to be in the class to join the team. The afterschool 6<sup>th</sup> grade debate club is open to all 6<sup>th</sup> graders regardless of whether or not they are in the rotation class and is the best way to join the team.</u></p> <p><b>7<sup>th</sup> Grade:</b> <i>Contemporary Issues</i> - This is for any 7<sup>th</sup> grader wishing to compete on the debate team. Students on the team are eligible to compete for spots on the national team as well. When not preparing for tournaments, 7<sup>th</sup> graders spend time giving daily speeches and taking weekly current event quizzes. Major projects include Original Oratory, the Presidential Presentation, and group projects related to various domestic issues facing the United States.</p> <p><b>8<sup>th</sup> Grade:</b> <i>Debate Team</i> - This is for any 8<sup>th</sup> grader wishing to compete and there is no pre-requisite. Students on the team are eligible to compete for spots on the national team. When not preparing for tournaments, 8<sup>th</sup> graders spend time giving daily speeches, taking weekly current event quizzes and participating in a mock government. Major projects throughout the year are centered on various countries. The 8<sup>th</sup> graders are also responsible for the recruitment and training of the 6<sup>th</sup> graders who join debate.</p>
<b>Technology Applications</b>	<p><b>6<sup>th</sup> Grade:</b> This course offers students an exploration of LEGO's <i>Simple &amp; Powered Machines</i> curriculum, as well as an introduction to learning Scratch programming (developed by MIT) using Harvard's <i>Creative Computing</i> curriculum culminating in the design of an educational game.</p> <p><b>7<sup>th</sup> &amp; 8<sup>th</sup> Grade:</b> Students will have the opportunity to learn coding, and basic computer skills. They will learn about various concepts related to computer and technology through engaging units throughout the year.</p>
<b>Model United Nations</b>	<p>This is a full year class for <b>6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> graders</b> and includes Thinking Skills, Model United Nations, The World Peace Game (John Hunter Tedtalks), Imaginary Countries as well as two annual Peace Events. We study the role of global political issues and are visited by UNICEF and other organizations. We practice note taking, writing research papers, debate and attend MUN meetings with other middle schools.</p>
<b>Leadership Skills</b>	<p><b>6<sup>th</sup> Grade:</b> This class will consist of lessons that teach and support leadership skills. Students will be able to take a deeper look at some of the lessons they will learn in their GSG, leadership skills in general, and community involvement. <b><i>(This class is not a pre-requisite for 8<sup>th</sup> grade Leadership, and does not guarantee selection for the 8<sup>th</sup> grade course.)</i></b></p>
<b>Leadership</b>	<p>This class is for <b>8<sup>th</sup> graders</b> that were selected through the application process as part of their GSG (Guidance Support Group) who have also receive approval from administrators to become classroom leaders. These student present lessons on character education, tolerance, peer pressure, time management, and study skills. Leadership students also give back to the community by participating in events such as Race for the Cure, Trick or Treat for UNICEF, and helping Lanier maintain its No Place for Hate status.</p>
<b>Yearbook</b>	<p><b>7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders</b> will participate in the actual production of Lanier's yearbook. This involves photography, layout and design, writing stories and captions, interviewing students and adults, handling yearbook orders, and finally distribution of the completed book. Students need to be able to cover stories outside of school such as club meetings, concerts, academic competitions, and athletics. Applications must be completed and turned in by the deadline to be considered for this class.</p>

<p><b>Robotics</b></p>	<p>This <b>7th and 8th grade</b> class utilizes Carnegie Mellon's Robotics Engineering Vol. 1. Students will work in pairs to program their LEGO NXT robots to perform a variety of robotic behaviors with the use of five sensors. A variety of challenges &amp; investigations will allow students to exercise creativity, learn programming, &amp; improve their designing/building skills.</p>
<p><b>Physical Education or Dance</b></p>	
<p><b>Dance</b></p>	<p><b>Non-Performance Dance</b> – Non-performance dance is a general dance class for <b>6th, 7th, and 8th</b> graders that will teach multiple styles and techniques throughout the year, including jazz, hip hop, ballet, break dance, pom, high kick, house, modern, and others. There are no performances, competitions, or extracurricular events.</p> <p><b>Break Dance (Open Enrollment)</b> - Break dance is a <b>6th, 7th, and 8th grade</b> non-performance/performance class. Students will focus on a B-boy style of dance that is very physical in nature while learning both choreography sequences and the elements of freestyle.</p> <p><b>Drill Team</b> – Drill Team is a <b>6th grade</b> performance and competition class. Students will focus on a dance style that is a combination of jazz and traditional Texas Drill Team. There is also a strong emphasis on technique, performance quality, personal responsibility, and learning to work as a team. This is the best prep class for Dance Team or Dance Company.</p> <p><b>Dance Ensemble</b> - Dance Ensemble is a <b>7th or 8th grade</b> performance class. Students will focus heavily on personal dance technique, as well as learn choreography in the jazz and lyrical styles.</p> <p><b>Dance Company</b> – Dance Company is a <b>7th and 8th grade</b> performance, competition, and travel class. Students will focus on advanced technique, and will perform in several styles throughout the year, including pom, jazz, high kick, and others.</p> <p><b>Dance Team</b> – Dance Team is a <b>7th and 8th grade</b> performance and competition class. Students will focus on advancing their technique and will perform in several styles throughout the year, including pom, jazz, and others.</p> <p><b>Dance Crew</b> – Dance Crew is a <b>7th and 8th grade</b> performance, competition, and travel class. Students will focus on executing advanced technique and choreography in the hip hop, house, and break dance styles.</p> <p><b>Performance Fusion</b> - Performance Fusion is a <b>7th and 8th grade</b> performance class. Students will alternate between instructors to focus on both a jazzy Texas Drill Team style and a hip hop style.</p>
<p><b>Physical Education</b></p>	<p>P.E. is a class for <b>6th, 7th, and 8th graders</b> which focuses on the development of fitness for life. Students will develop knowledge of fitness through a variety of physical activities with emphasis on body awareness, conditioning, outdoor education, movement, games, sports, dance, tumbling, and gymnastic activities. Students are provided with opportunities to learn and practice fitness concepts while actively participating in a program that promotes a healthy lifestyle, physical awareness, social development, and positive attitudes toward active lifestyles. Instructional activities stress life management skills, such as cooperation, fair-play, teamwork, citizenship, sportsmanship, and leadership. Some activities students may participate in include: archery, basketball, bowling, football, field hockey, fishing, lacrosse, outdoor education, badminton, softball, soccer, track, tumbling, and volleyball. Students will need to purchase a P.E. uniform and are required to dress out before each class. Teachers use pre and posttests, teacher evaluation and observation, rubric skill tests, peer evaluation, written tests, qualitative analysis, individual, small and large group activity as well as active learning along with peer teaching. Students develop oral presentations, critical thinking skills, and portfolios.</p>