The Department's Educational Philosophy

Art is essential in education. Students engage in art production, art history, art criticism and discussion of aesthetics to broaden their understanding of self and community, to place the arts in an historical and cultural context, and to experience the arts as a universal form of human expression and communication.

Guiding Principles

The art curriculum does the following:

- Emphasizes development of students' skills and understanding of creating and responding.
- Teaches the language inherent in the four disciplines: art production, art history, art criticism, aesthetics.
- Enables students to apply both imagination and rational thinking to the making of art.
- Enables students to invent and explore multiple solutions to a problem.
- Enables students to understand the value of reflection and critical judgment in creative work.
- Promotes knowledge and understanding of the historical and cultural context of the arts – how world cultures have been influenced and shaped by the arts.
- Facilitates positive peer interaction, including receiving and using feedback.
- Encourages self-motivation to create and problem solve.
- Uses artistic literacy as a natural enhancement to learning in other content areas.
- Fosters positive attitudes toward art and opinions of other artists.
- Uses a variety of assessment methods to evaluate what students know and are able to do.
- Introduces career possibilities.

ART ELECTIVE: GRADE 7 AND 8

<u>**Course Frequency**</u>:   Class meets every other day for a quarter of the year (22 class sessions)
<u>**Credits Offered:**</u>   None
<u>**Prerequisites:**</u>   None

<u>**Background to the Curriculum:**</u>

Art Elective is a new course being offered for 7th and 8th grade students during the 2008-2009 school year. Both 7th and 8th grade students are currently required to take Art I and II within the Exploratory Program. Art Elective is offered as an additional course for students who are interested in exploring the visual arts in a wider scope. Holly Vlajinac and Amanda Correiea developed this curriculum, funded by an R&D grant in the summer of 2008.

<u>**Core Topics/Questions/Concepts/Skills**</u>

In the 'Art Elective' class, 7th and 8th graders will be exposed to and guided to create/experience within 'Eight Studio Habits of Mind'*.

The 'Habits of Mind' that students will be focusing on are:

• <u>Develop Craft</u>: Technique or learning to use tools and materials. Also, learning artistic conventions (e.g., perspective, color mixing), as well as learning to care for said tools, materials and work spaces.

• <u>Engage and Persist</u>: Learning to embrace problems of relevance within the art world and/or of personal importance, to develop focus and other mental states conducive to working and persevering at art tasks.

• <u>Envision</u>: Learning to picture mentally what cannot be directly observed and imaging possible next steps.

• <u>Express</u>: Learning to create works that convey an idea, a feeling, or a personal meaning.

• <u>Observe</u>: Learning to attend to visual contexts more closely than ordinary "looking" requires, and thereby to see things that otherwise may not have been seen.

• <u>Reflect</u>: Learning to think and talk with others about an aspect of one's work or working process. Learning to judge one's own work and working process, and the work of others in relation to standards of the field.

• <u>Stretch and Explore</u>: Learning to reach beyond one's capacities, to explore playfully without a preconceived plan, and to embrace the opportunity to learn from mistakes and accidents.

• <u>Understand Art World</u>: Learning about art history and current practice. Learning to interact as an artist with other artists (i.e., in classrooms, in local art organizations, and across the art field) and within the broader society.

*Hetland, Winner, Veenema, Sheridan. *Studio Thinking*. Teachers College Press, 2007

Learning Objectives

1) <u>Mixed Media Unit</u>: Artist Trading Cards (ATCs)

Students will:
- Understand the value of the global artist community, exchange of ideas/concepts and the importance of experimentation/play through making small works of art.
- Create ATCs that will explore a variety of techniques and themes in their cards and ultimately 'trade' their card to get the full ATC experience.

- Art History Connection: Various mix-media artists; e.g., M. Vanci Stirnemann, Claudine Hellmuth, Sarah Fishburn.

2) <u>3-D Unit</u>: Sculptural Maskmaking (Metamorphosis)

Students will:
- Learn to create an armature.
- Explore the possibilities of using plaster gauze molding strips to create a 3-D mask.
- Learn craftsmanship through the construction and finishing of the mask using paint and mixed media materials.
- Reflect and critique the work through small group discussions.

- Art History Connection: Masks from various cultures; e.g., African, Native American, Japanese.

3) <u>Drawing Unit</u>: Experimental Drawing

Emphasis will be placed on drawing skills being a practical and important way to visually discuss and express ideas, how drawing is a learned skill, and making the student feel at ease and comfortable with their own developing drawing skills.

Students will:
- Engage unique and exciting drawing workshop exercises that will be designed to 'loosen' and enlighten them to all that drawing can be.
- Finish the unit with a portfolio review and discussion of their artwork.

- Art History Connection: Drawings from various artists; e.g., Pablo Picasso, M.C. Escher.

Assessment

Students will be graded on their portfolio of work and how well they met the requirements for each unit.

Grading for Art Elective is Pass/Fail. The art teachers use a variety of assessment strategies including small group critiques and written self-reflection.

Materials and Resources

Teacher developed PowerPoint presentations, a variety of books, digital slides, prints and exemplars of actual art are used as resources to introduce concepts and skills. A range of media is explored including collage, painting, stamping, printmaking, drawing, and plaster gauze sculpture.