



BEN FRANKLIN ACADEMY

Middle School Electives Course Selection Guide

SECOND TRIMESTER 2024-25

Electives run on an A/B schedule, meaning that they rotate every other day. **Students will register for two electives (one for A day, and one for B day)**. The registration process will be online in the MySchoolBucks system on a seniority basis with eighth graders registering first, seventh registering second, and sixth graders last. All registrations are on a first come first served basis, so it is crucial that parents sign up when they are allowed.

Within the classes offered each trimester, there are spots for more than 350 students. However, every class has a limit to the number of students per class. As you are registering, if the class is not showing in the list, that means it is full and you will need to select one of the open classes.

Several classes require pre-approval from the teacher, so please take that into consideration. These are noted in the class descriptions below. If you register for one of these classes and do not have preapproval then you will be moved to a vacant class.

We are also limiting the number of students who can sign up for Study Hall, as each student has an advisory class during their schedule each day. This advisory class generally allows students additional time for studying and homework.

The following dates are when the registration window will be available by grade level. **Registration will open at 9 a.m. on the dates listed.** Again, the registration process will take place online in the [MySchoolBucks](#) system by grade level seniority. All registrations are on a first come first served basis. If the elective you wanted isn't listed, that means it is full and you must choose another class.

8th grade: November 4th

7th grade: November 5th

6th grade: November 6th

Registration will close at 12:00 p.m. on November 10th. Students that don't sign up during their registration window will need to meet with the MS Assistant Principal to be placed into a vacant elective course.

If you have any questions, please email Jjones@bfacademy.org.

2024-25 2nd TRIMESTER

A DAY CHOICES

Floor Hockey/Mr. Babb and Ms. Dychus/Lightning Gym

No Fee

Limit 24 students

In this elective, students will be split into teams and enjoy fun competition playing floor hockey. Emphasis will be on developing fundamental skills, learning positions, and good sportsmanship. Sticks will be provided. Gloves and/or shin guards are optional and must be provided by the student.

Focused Skills: team building, sportsmanship, fitness and hockey fundamentals

Net Sports/Mr. Russell and Mr. Macias/Thunder Gym

No Fee

Limit 35 students

Welcome to the exciting world of net sports! This elective is designed to introduce students of all skill levels to a variety of net sports. By the end of this elective, they will not only have a strong foundation in multiple net sports but also a deeper appreciation for the athleticism, strategy, and teamwork that make these sports so enjoyable. Whether they aim to compete at a higher level or simply have fun on the court, this elective will provide them with the knowledge and skills to excel in the world of net sports.

Focused Skills: beginning sport skills, communication, teamwork and fitness

Study Hall/Mrs. Fritzsche/Middle School Commons

No Fee

Limit 8 students per grade level

Students in this elective will have additional time to complete homework and work on their academic assignments. There will be 24 spots total per A or B day - 8 per grade level. This is not an off period.

Focused Skills: time management, organization, reading & writing, fostering independence, accountability

American Sign Language - Level 2 (ASL) /Ms. Whelan/Mr. Russell's Room 274

No Fee

Limit 26 students

Signing 2 is an American sign language elective. You will begin your journey by connecting with the deaf community through cultural etiquette. Students will learn to introduce themselves to deaf people, fingerspelling, handedness, and the importance of facial expression to show emotion. Some highlights of Signing 2 include learning the alphabet, colors, numbers, animals, and conversation starters.

Focused Skills: signing, communication, reading and presenting

Hollywood vs. History/Ms. Johnson/Ms. Johnson's Room 268

\$5 Fee

Limit 25 students

Midway, Cinderella Man, Pearl Harbor, War Horse: all entertaining movies, but how accurate are they? In this elective, you will watch American classics in addition to blockbusters with the goal of using the films to enrich the themes studied in social studies classes, as well as separating fact from fiction and history from Hollywood. All movies selected will serve to deepen your understanding of American or World history and enhance your ability to think more critically about Hollywood's treatment of history. Students will vote on which movies to view and which themes to discuss. Some movies will be rated PG-13 and will need parental approval before viewing.

Focused Skills: critical thinking, contrast and compare and presenting

Public Speaking/Ms. Salberg/Ms. Salberg's Room 246

No fee

Limit 24 students

This elective is designed to help students build confidence and develop effective communication skills. Through interactive exercises, students will learn how to organize their thoughts, engage their audience, and deliver persuasive presentations. This course offers a supportive environment for practicing speeches, receiving constructive feedback, and mastering the art of verbal expression.

Focused Skills: communication, organization, speaking, teamwork, expression

R.E.A.D FOR SUCCESS!/Ms. Erbaugh/Ms. Erbaugh's Room 174

No Fee

Limit 10 Students

Does your student struggle with reading? Could they benefit having an elective where they have more time with teacher assistance, iReady and/or Lexia? This elective is designed to foster a love for reading while increasing comprehension and critical thinking skills. This course aims to create a supportive environment where students can grow as confident, thoughtful readers and apply their skills to both academic and real-world contexts.
Focused Skills: critical thinking, reading comprehension, analyzing, group discussion

Hand Sewing and Embroidery/Ms. Inman/Ms. Inman's Room 170

\$15 Fee

Limit 25 students

This Elective teaches students the fundamentals of stitching, embroidery techniques, and creative fabric design. Students will learn how to use different types of stitches, create intricate patterns, and complete a variety of projects, from simple repairs to decorative art. This course fosters patience, attention to detail, and creativity while providing a hands-on introduction to the world of textile arts.

Focused Skills: fine motor skills, attention to detail, sewing, embroidering, designing

The Ping Pong Elective/Ms. Pierce/Ms. Pierce's Room 144

\$15 Fee

Limit 20 Students

This elective offers students the opportunity to learn and enjoy the fast-paced game of table tennis. Students will develop their skills through drills, practice matches, and friendly competitions, focusing on techniques such as serves, spins, and footwork. This course promotes physical fitness, hand-eye coordination, and sportsmanship, making it a fun and active way to build teamwork and agility.

Focused Skills: team building, fitness, agility and sportsmanship

Computer Simulation Strategy/Ms. Konesky/Ms. Konesky's Room 278

No fee

Limit 20 students

This elective focuses on strategic thinking and decision-making through the popular game *Age of Empires*. Students will engage in lessons covering historical context, game

mechanics, and advanced strategies, while also participating in interactive gameplay and team-based challenges. Through guided instruction and peer interactions, students will analyze different strategies, learn to adapt their approaches, and develop skills in resource management, critical thinking, and tactical planning.

Focused skills: team building, critical thinking, management, development and design

Graphic Design with Shape Grams/Ms. Tickle/Ms. Tickle's Room 277

No Fee

Limit 25 students

This elective introduces students to digital design and creativity using the Shapegrams program. Through guided activities, students will learn how to create detailed illustrations and graphics using basic shapes, developing skills in spatial reasoning, design thinking, and digital artistry. This course encourages creativity and precision, providing a fun and engaging way to explore graphic design concepts.

Focused Skills: design, computer technic, illustration, artistry

NJHS Teacher Assistant/Mrs. Murphy/Initial meeting in Murphy's Classroom (otherwise in assigned classroom) No Fee

Limit 12 students - 7th and 8th Grade NJHS Students Only

Students in the elective will be paired up with a teacher and will assist this teacher in several different capacities. Students will receive 35 hours of individual service hours for this elective.

Focused Skills: volunteerism, teaching training, youth development, reading/writing, assisting classroom

Sketching and Drawing/Ms. Hinkle/Ms. Hinkle's Room 286 Fee\$10

Limit 15 students

Students will have the opportunity to build on their drawing and sketching skills in a variety of ways with a wide assortment of materials. Drawings will be both imaginative and observational and students will be encouraged to maintain a sketch book by practicing on a regular basis.

Focused Skills: fine motor, design, illustration, artistry

Speed Stacking/Ms. Nichols/Mr. Babb's Room 172

No Fee

Limit 26 students

Students will learn the different speed stacking sequences for speed stacking competitions. They will practice and make goals to improve their times for each type of competition throughout the trimester. There will be a competition in the class at the end of the trimester. Students will also be taking cups to a few elementary classes to demonstrate a sequence and teach it to the students.

Focused Skills: team building, gross motor, goal setting, showcasing

Writing Scripts For The Stage & Screen/Welling/Mrs. Dychus' Room 264

No Fee

Limit 24 Students

Do you ever watch a movie or a show and wonder how the story began? By taking this class, you will walk in the steps of writers by learning how plays and movies begin; on the page. You will learn how to create and complete storyboards, characters, and then learn the differences between how to write scripts for theater productions and how to write scripts for movies.

Focused skills: writing, story development, character development, presentation

8th Grade Intro to Spanish/ Ms. de Bedout/Ms. Hayes' Room 262

Fee paid 1st Trimester

THIS IS A YEAR LONG ELECTIVE

Students pre-registered and do not sign up for an A Day Elective

Immerse yourself in the dynamic world of Spanish language and culture with this introductory elective course. You'll develop a strong foundation in basic Spanish vocabulary, grammar, and conversational skills through engaging activities and interactive lessons. Additionally, explore the rich traditions, music, and cuisine of Spanish-speaking countries, enhancing your global perspective.

Focused Skills: listening comprehension, speaking, pronunciation, vocabulary, memorization, conversational skills

Theater Around the World: Exploring Global Performance Traditions/Ms. Gelley/Ms. Johson's Room 184

Fee \$20

Limit 16

In this immersive class, students will journey through diverse theatrical traditions from various cultures and historical periods. From the classical dramas of Ancient Greece to the dynamic forms of Japanese Noh and Kabuki (we will make masks), the vibrant festivals of African storytelling, and the colorful dances of Indian Kathakali, this course offers a deep dive into the global tapestry of performance art. Students will explore the unique techniques, storytelling styles, and cultural significance of each tradition while examining the universal themes that connect them. Through interactive activities, script readings, creative projects, and performance exercises, students will not only gain an appreciation for different cultures but also discover how these traditions influence modern theater. This class encourages students to broaden their understanding of storytelling, develop empathy, and embrace the artistic diversity that shapes the world of theater. No previous theater experience is required, just a curiosity to explore and celebrate how the art of theater unites us all!

Focused Skills: cultural exploration, researching, performance, empathy

2024-25 2nd TRIMESTER

B DAY CHOICES

Middle School Musical Performing- Mary Poppins/Ms. Johnson, Ms. Gelley, Ms. Taylor/ThunderGym

\$40 Fee Elective fee will be invoiced through [MCB](#)

Students pre-registered and do not sign up for a B Day Elective

Perform in the middle school musical! Young Jane and Michael have sent many a nanny packing before Mary Poppins arrives on their doorstep. Using a combination of magic and common sense, she must teach the family members how to value each other again. Mary Poppins takes the children on many magical and memorable adventures, but Jane and Michael aren't the only ones upon whom she has a profound effect. Even grown-ups can learn a lesson or two from the nanny who advises that "Anything can happen if you let it."

There are roles for performers that want to sing solos and performers that do not! All dancers and non-dancers welcome!

Focused Skills: performing, reading, public speaking, dancing and vocal arts

Musical Tech Crew - Ms. Hinkle, Ms Pierce/Thunder Gym

\$20 fee Elective fee will be invoiced through [MCB](#)

Students pre-registered and do not sign up for a B Day Elective

The tech crew for Mary Poppins will be responsible for creating sets, props and costumes for the school musical. During the performance these students will run lights, move props, run special effects and help with actors lines and entrances. Must be available February 29th and March 1st at 5pm.

Focused Skills: scene design, set building, costume design, light design, special effects

Boot Camp/Mr. Macias, Mr. Case/Lightning Gym

Fee \$15

Limit 30 students

Students will be given an environment that will challenge them to grow as athletes. This elective will give them the opportunity to better understand how their body moves through exercise. Kids will develop a new level of fitness whilst beginning to better understand and appreciate weight training. A great introduction to weight training especially for 8th graders.

Focused Skills: strengthening, fitness, modification, teamwork

Study Hall/Mrs. Fritzsche/Middle School Commons

No Fee

Limit 8 students per grade level

Students in this elective will have additional time to complete homework and work on their academic assignments. There will be 24 spots total per A or B day - 8 per grade level. This is not an off period.

Focused Skills: time management, organization, reading & writing, fostering independence, accountability

Drone Dynamics/Mr. Astler/Mr. Astler's Room 178

\$50 Fee

Limit 9 Students

Students learn to fly drones and use those skills to fly real-world missions that teach students to work in teams, use failures to find success, and problem-solve. Concepts include drone piloting, real-world drone applications, engineering design process, aerial video and editing, coding concepts, science, math, and an introduction to visual-based coding.

Focused Skills: programming, designing, problem solving, teamwork

Yearbook/Ms. Svensen/Ms. Svensen's Room 245

No Fee

Students pre-registered and do not sign up for a B Day Elective (Elective is 2 Trimesters long)

Students work with the Jostens Yearbook software to create the 2023-2024 Ben Franklin Academy yearbook. Students are responsible for taking pictures, creating layouts, and editing the book. There is an application process for yearbook elective and space is limited. This elective is two trimesters long.

Focused Skills: designing, photography, print design and review & editing

History of Rock and Roll/Mr. Knudsen/Mr. Knudsen's Room 272

No Fee

Limit 24 students

History of Rock and Roll will be filled with lessons starting with how rock and roll started to the present day. We will learn and discuss how it has progressed to how it is still influenced from the beginning.

Focused Skills: critical thinking, contrast and compare and presenting

Rubik's Cube Engineering & Puzzles/Ms. Murphy/Ms. Murphy's Room 276

No Fee

Limit 25 students

Learn to solve and create works of art in The Rubik's® Cube elective and solve complex puzzles! In this class you'll learn to solve puzzles and cubes with friends and create your own Rubik's Cube mosaics through peer collaboration. Using over 100 Rubik's Cubes, students will create mosaics using templates provided as well as templates they create on their own. They will learn how to solve only one side of the Rubik's Cube to create mosaics and learn how to solve all six sides in record time!



Focused Skills: problem solving, memorization, design, teamwork

NJHS Teacher Assistant/Mrs. Murphy/Initial meeting in Murphy's Classroom

(otherwise in assigned classroom) No Fee

Limit 12 students - 7th and 8th Grade NJHS Students Only

Students in the elective will be paired up with a teacher and will assist this teacher in several different capacities. Students will receive 35 hours of individual service hours for this elective.

Focused Skills: volunteerism, teaching training, youth development, reading/writing, assisting classroom

Book Sisters/Ms. Harms/Ms. Harms' Room 170

\$18 Fee Limit 10 students

In Book Sisters, middle school girls will come together to read and discuss powerful stories featuring strong, resilient female characters. Each book selection will highlight themes of selfdiscovery, courage, and empowerment. From titles like Pictures of Hollis Woods by Patricia Reilly Giff to The Remarkable Journey of Coyote Sunrise by Dan Gemeinhart, students will explore a variety of girl-centered narratives that inspire personal growth, empathy, and perseverance. Throughout the course, participants will engage in group discussions, creative activities, and reflective writing that delve into the journeys of these characters and their relevance to their own lives.

Focused skills: comprehension, retelling a story, exploration, empathy, reflection, writing

Kids Heart Challenge!/Ms. Nichols/Mr. Case's Room 244

No Fee Limit 24 Students

In this elective, students will help plan and promote the Kids Heart Challenge that BFA will be participating in through the American Heart Association. They will also help educate students about healthy living and heart health, learn and teach hands-only CPR to younger grades, plan an assembly and/or classroom visits to talk about why our school is participating in the challenge and what funds are being raised for, help distribute student prizes, assist during the day of the event, and more. This is a great opportunity for students to learn leadership skills while serving the BFA community.

Focused skills: planning and developing, leadership skills, public speaking, coordinating

Touch Typing/Ms. Tickle/Technology Lab Room 277

No Fee Limit 26 students

Focus is on proper form with fingers resting on the home row keys. Learning to type without looking at the keyboard increases your speed and accuracy which makes typing more fun and enables you to get homework done faster! If you type less than 30 words per minute, consider this course!

Focused Skills: fine motor, increased typing accuracy & speed

7th Grade Intro to Spanish/ Ms. de Bedout/Ms. Hayes' Room 262

Fee paid 1st Trimester

THIS IS A YEAR LONG ELECTIVE

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Immerse yourself in the dynamic world of Spanish language and culture with this introductory elective course. You'll develop a strong foundation in basic Spanish vocabulary, grammar, and conversational skills through engaging activities and interactive lessons. Additionally, explore the rich traditions, music, and cuisine of Spanish-speaking countries, enhancing your global perspective.

Focused Skills: listening comprehension, speaking, pronunciation, vocabulary, memorization, conversational skills