



High School of the Future

An Alternative High School for Students with Learning Differences

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Curriculum Guide For A New Generation of Creative Learners

Table of Contents

Academic Overview

English

Mathematics

Science

Social Studies

Foreign Language

Business and Technology

The Arts

Physical Education and Health

Life Skills

Graduation Requirements

Co-Curricular Activities

Re-Inventing High School

Academic Overview of A New Kind of School

The *School of the Future* is committed to providing each student with an exceptional learning experience. We recognize that all students learn differently, and we personalize instruction to meet individual needs. Our high school program is designed to unlock each student's potential and to develop lifelong learners. *School of the Future* students will soar beyond the boundaries of traditional education.

The School of the Future's curriculum exceeds state requirements for high school graduation, while providing the flexibility to meet each student's academic needs and goals. A dedicated staff, small class sizes, and individualized instruction assist students in achieving these goals. Students not planning on attending college may graduate with the completion of minimum State of Ohio standards totaling 20 credits.

Entering Assessment

The School of the Future's education process begins with an analysis and evaluation of a student's strengths and weaknesses. Mastery of basic skills is assessed, and prior testing results are reviewed. Interviews with students and parents then address attitudes about school, interests, personality, goals, and concerns. Interviews also assist in defining the factors that have impeded a student's academic success.

Once an initial assessment is complete, staff members, students, and parents develop an individual plan for action. The plan outlines achievable goals and will identify measurable objectives for the next academic year. Because the plan is fluid and flexible, students and parents are expected to be active partners in formulation and implementation.

Tri-Level Curriculum

Each student entering high school has strengths and weaknesses. The *School of the Future's* curriculum recognizes that students who learn differently may be deficient in basic competence skills. To fully benefit from advanced course work, students must first achieve a mastery of reading, writing, and fundamental math skills. English and Mathematics courses are offered at three different levels to insure students with deficits in basic skill areas receive specialized remediation before advancing to more challenging course work. The *School of the Future* is committed to providing remedial services to students for as long as is necessary.

Basic Level Courses

Basic Level Courses in English and Mathematics are designed to provide students with a mastery of reading, writing, and fundamental math skills. In Basic Level Course instruction, specialized educational materials and hands on teaching methods that have proven effective with struggling learners are used to maximize student potential. Participation in Basic Level Courses *does not exclude* students from enrolling in higher-level courses.

Basic Level Courses in English will address decoding problems, spelling, writing skills, and reading comprehension. Basic Level Courses in Mathematics will focus on whole number operations, fractions, decimals, problem solving skills, and application of math concepts to daily life.

Progressive Level Courses

Progressive Level Courses in English and Mathematics move beyond the basic skill level and offer more challenging learning opportunities for students preparing for post secondary education or a career. English courses at this level include Writing Composition and a Literature Survey. Pre-Algebra is a Progressive Level course offering in Mathematics.

Preparatory Level Courses

Preparatory Level Courses in English and Mathematics are offered for the college bound student. This challenging curriculum is designed to prepare students to confidently undertake college and university course material. English courses at this level develop an appreciation of literature, critical reading ability, writing proficiency, and research skills. College bound math students may select course offerings in Algebra II and Trigonometry. Individual study programs in Pre-Calculus and Calculus are available for advanced students.

Course Participation Flexibility

Students who learn differently or who have specific learning disabilities often demonstrate uneven achievement levels in different subject areas. A student may have difficulty reading, for example, but will perform mathematical operations easily. The ***School of the Future*** will design each student's course work to match ability and potential.

Students enrolled in Basic Level Courses with the ability to understand and manipulate the concepts of more advanced material may simultaneously enroll in Progressive or Preparatory Level Courses. A dyslexic reader requiring remediation in decoding, for example, may utilize books on tape to participate in a higher-level course. Students with limited writing skills may prepare oral presentations for advanced level English classes. Similarly, a Basic Level mathematics student, with an ability to understand the concepts of higher-level science material, may be eligible for Chemistry and Physics classes.

Study Skill Development

Developing effective studying techniques is vital for a student's academic success. Since these techniques cannot be effectively taught in isolation, the ***School of the Future*** will address study skill development in all content subjects. Teachers assist students in identifying and outlining important textbook information. Students also learn to integrate lecture notes with textbook notes and to develop effective test-taking strategies.

When individual action plans include an intention to attend college, our goal is to prepare students to confidently undertake rigorous college programs. All students benefit from the problem solving skills gained through a comprehensive approach to study skill development.

English

A minimum of four (4) credits required for graduation

Basic Level Courses

Linguistics I

One (1) Credit

This course is designed for students requiring basic language instruction in spelling and word attack skills. To improve students' skills, a variety of systematic and multi-sensory techniques are employed. The course uses RICHARDS READS Systematic Phonics as its core curriculum. With prior staff approval, a student participating in this course may also enroll in more advanced English courses.

Intermediate Linguistics

One (1) Credit

Working one-on one with an instructor, students enhance their language knowledge and develop horizontal skills in this independent study course. Students are assigned short readings from level-appropriate material. With prior staff approval, a student participating in this course may also enroll in a Progressive Level English course.

Prerequisite: Linguistics I

Advanced Linguistics

One (1) Credit

In this course, students explore the structure of the English language by studying its more complex components. Spelling and vocabulary development are key instructional goals. With prior staff approval, a student participating in this course may also enroll in a Progressive or Preparatory Level English course. This course will also serve as valuable preparation for the SAT and other college entrance exams.

Prerequisite: Linguistics I or prior staff approval.

Progressive Level Courses

Writing Composition Paragraphs and Essays

One (1) Credit

Students build writing composition skills by first developing strong, clear sentences and then building them into unified, coherent paragraphs. Paragraphs are then expanded into three to five paragraph essays. Students will write persuasive, narrative, descriptive, and analytical essays. This course focuses on the writing process and will address the elements of prewriting, editing, rewriting, and proofreading. The course uses RICHARDS READ Systematic Writing as a core curriculum and supplements with other appropriate materials.

Literature Survey

One (1) Credit

This course couples the reading of modern short stories with creative writing. Students read selected materials and examine character, plot structure, imagery, theme, and the writer's voice. Reading material will focus on authors who reveal varied insights into the American experience. Daily light reading is required and students write weekly essays that compare, contrast and analyze selected works. During the second semester, students use the knowledge they have gained as a springboard to developing an original work. Students complete a fictional short story as a final project.

Prerequisites: Linguistics and Writing Composition or staff approval.

Preparatory Level Courses

American Literature

One (1) Credit

This course celebrates American authors from the colonial eighteenth century to modern times. Students read and discuss selected works of literature including poetry, short story and the novel. Writing assignments are a key element of this course work.

British Literature

One (1) Credit

This course examines the British authors and encompasses literary works **from ancient to** modern times. Class discussions and writing assignments focus on the works of authors including Chaucer, Shakespeare, and Dickens.

The Research Paper

One (1) Credit

This course breaks down a research paper into manageable segments. Students select a topic to research and are guided by the instructor through the research and writing process. The course addresses identification of appropriate research materials, the preparation of note cards, outline development, and correct bibliography format. Teachers assist students in writing and revising the 10 to 12 page paper. Research topics may include assignments from other classes.

Mathematics

A minimum of three (3) credits is required for graduation.

Basic Level Courses

Real Life Math

One (1) Credit

This course is designed to build conceptual understanding of place value, whole number operations, fractions, decimals, percentage, measurement and math problem-solving skills. Special emphasis is placed on applying math skills to everyday situations.

Intermediate Real Life Math**One (1) Credit**

Students may repeat the Real Life Math course as needed, while working one-on-one with an instructor to enhance their knowledge and develop horizontal skills. As an independent study, students are assigned mathematics projects with real life implications. Students, for example, may prepare a budget for independent apartment living or plan for a lengthy trip. With prior staff approval, students may also enroll in a Progressive Level Mathematics course while participating in this independent study.

Prerequisite: Real Life Math

Progressive Level Courses**Pre-Algebra****One (1) Credit**

For students requiring further review of basic math concepts, the pre-algebra course provides an opportunity to build on skills while learning basic algebra concepts. Mathematical concepts addressed include rational numbers, real numbers, ratios and proportions, statistics, probability, expression evaluations, equation solutions, sequences, and functions. All students expand their basic math skills by enrolling in this course.

Preparatory Level Courses**Algebra I****One (1) Credit**

This first year algebra course addresses the operations of real and rational numbers, solving first degree equalities, word problem applications, graphing, line equations, systems of equations, and quadratic equations. Topics for advanced students include parabolas and their graphs and the application of these concepts.

Algebra II**One (1) Credit**

This second-year course examines applications and models. Topics include linear equations, systems of equations, quadratic functions, powers, roots, complex numbers, conic sections, polynomial and exponential functions, matrices, and an introduction to logarithms and right triangle trigonometry. Students must purchase a TI-83 graphing calculator for class use. This course provides fundamental preparation for pre-calculus and college level mathematics.

Prerequisite: Algebra I

Geometry**One (1) Credit**

The geometry course will develop logical thinking through proofs and attention to definitions. Students benefit from a new way of looking at the world by analyzing its symmetries and patterns and developing practical skills through applications and hands-on learning.

Prerequisite: Algebra I

Pre-Calculus and Calculus

One (1) Credit

This course is offered to advanced math students, on an individual basis, as a teacher-directed independent study. Pre-calculus topics include elementary functions, trigonometry, analytic symmetry and discrete mathematics. The calculus course will address differential and integral calculus.

Science

A minimum of two (2) credits is required for graduation including a biological and physical science.

Environmental Science: *A Race to Save our Planet*

One (1) Credit

The Environmental Science Course looks at the economics, politics and ethics of our environment through reading, discussions and experiments. Become an active participant in a “race to save our planet!”

Biology

One (1) Credit

This course introduces students to biology and provides an overview of cells, zoology, and botany. More advanced students may explore independent biology study units like gene cloning, molecular revolution, or a relevant topic of their choice.

Prerequisite: Environmental Science or prior staff approval.

Chemistry: *A Physical Science Course*

One (1) Credit

This college preparatory course offers students an introduction to general chemistry. Topics addressed include scientific measurement, conversion factors and problem solving, atomic structure, the periodic table, ions, molecules, ionic compounds, matter measurement, chemical reactions, kinetic theory, heat capacity, gas behavior, and atomic orbitals. The course instructor will employ extensive hands-on learning techniques to enhance a student’s conceptual understanding.

Prerequisites: Environmental Science, Biology, and Algebra I

Physics: *A Physical Science Course*

One (1) Credit

The Physics course curriculum includes the study of natural laws and their relationship to space, time, matter, and energy. Course topics include mechanics, heat, electricity, magnetism, and optics.

Prerequisites: Environmental Science, Biology, and Algebra II

Physics: *A Physical Science Course*

One (1) Credit

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Prerequisites: Environmental Science, Biology, and Algebra II

Social Studies

A minimum of three (3) credits is required for graduation including one (1) credit in American History, and one-half (1/2) credit in American Government.

World History I

One (1) Credit

Students study the history of the world from ancient civilizations to the Renaissance. Reading assignments and class discussion topics include Mesopotamia, Ancient Egypt, Greece, Rome and Medieval Europe. Students will complete several short papers that analyze historical events and their relevance to our modern world.

World History II

One (1) Credit

This course begins where the World History I course concludes. Students study the Renaissance and Reformation periods, European enlightenment and revolution, industrialism, the World Wars, and international terrorism. Students must submit a research paper to successfully complete this course.

American History

One-half (1/2) Credit

Students explore the people and events that shaped the history of our country. American History study topics include colonization and the Revolutionary War, the Civil War, industrialization, the Great Depression, the World Wars, the Cold War, the Vietnam War, and major twentieth century events including the tragedy of September 11, 2001. Course instructors emphasize a conceptual understanding of historical events and their relationship to the student's life today.

American Government

One-half (1/2) Credit

Students examine the United States Constitution and its provision for three branches of government. Upon course completion, students understand the duties and responsibilities of each government branch and the constitutional system of checks and balances. Students also explore the role that the media plays in a democratic society.

Foreign Language

A minimum of two (2) credits required for college admission

Spanish IA and IB

One (1) Credit

The Spanish I course is taught over a two-year period. The course's extended length insures success for college preparatory students who struggle with language. Conversational Spanish is this course's primary emphasis, but reading and writing skills will also be addressed.

Prerequisite: Prior staff approval

Spanish IIA and IIB

One (1) Credit

Spanish II is also taught over a two-year period. This course reviews the fundamental concepts of Spanish I and builds stronger conversation, reading comprehension, vocabulary, and writing skills.

Prerequisite: Spanish I and prior staff approval

Accelerated Foreign Language

One (1) Credit

Under the direction of a teacher, this independent study course allows more advanced students to learn a foreign language at an accelerated pace.

Prerequisite: Prior staff approval

Business and Technology

A minimum of one half (1/2) credit is required for graduation.

Introduction to Computers

One Half (1/2) Credit

This course emphasizes keyboarding skills, basic software program knowledge, and a comprehension of Microsoft Word and Excel. Students learn keyboarding by touch and gain an understanding of the alphabetic, numeric and symbol keyboard of standard terminals. In addition, students learn word processing skills and are required to format letters, outlines, and reports with footnotes and a bibliography. Students may test out of this course if their touch keyboarding skills and knowledge of software programs is strong.

Computer Independent Study

One (1) Credit

Do you REALLY love computers? Design your own computer course. Under the direction of an instructor, design software, build a computer, develop a website, or explore your own computer interests.

Prerequisite: Pass a keyboarding skills test and demonstrate your strong personal knowledge of computers.

Personal Finance

One Half (1/2) Credit

Students learn basic economic principles and personal financial skills in this course. Course topics include banking (checking and savings accounts), credit, budgeting, retirement accounts (Roth IRA, IRA, 401k etc.), taxes, social security and the stock market.

The Arts

A minimum of one (1) credit required for graduation.

Basic Drawing

One Half (1/2) Credit

Students explore drawing basics like perspective, shading, and the three dimensional form.

Painting and Watercolor

One Half (1/2) Credit

This year long course explores painting in a variety of contexts. Students learn the techniques of painting with watercolors and acrylics. Students additionally learn artistic concepts and their relationship to texture and color.

Ceramics

One Half (1/2) Credit

In this course, students use slab and coil hand-building techniques to create artistic and utilitarian clay pottery. Students additionally learn glazing and firing techniques.

Computer Graphics

One Half (1/2) Credit

Using desktop publishing and computer graphics programs, students enrolled in this course design and publish the school newsletter.

Chorus

One Half (1/2) Credit

This course is open to all students without audition. The Chorus meets twice weekly throughout the year. Students perform both classical and contemporary pieces.

NOTE: More talented art students are encouraged to complete projects beyond the standard curriculum. Course offerings in music and art will expand as student enrollment increases.

Physical Education and Health

Students must complete two (2) credits in physical education, and one half (1/2) credit in both physical education and health to meet graduation requirements.

Yoga

One (1) Credit

Offered once weekly, this course combines physical exercise with yoga techniques of centering, controlled breathing, and relaxation.

Self-Defense/Martial Arts

Offered once weekly, students learn self-defense techniques while building strength and concentration levels.

Creative Movement

One (1) Credit

Students participate in a class that provides them with an opportunity to “blow off” steam. Offered three days per week. Activities will vary.

Health

One Half (1/2) Credit

This course promotes a healthy lifestyle through proper nutrition, physical activities, and lifestyle choices. Maintaining a healthy way of life requires a balance of physical, mental, emotional, and social well being. This course provides students with important skills including decision-making, goal setting, problem solving, self-assessment, communication, and self-management.

NOTE: We encourage students to participate in physical education courses whenever their schedule permits. Attending PE course five (5) days per week helps develop physical fitness, mental concentration, and overall well being.

Life Skills

A minimum of four (4) credits in annual internships is required for graduation. The Expedition program is strongly encouraged, but not required for graduation.

The Expedition

One (1) Credit

Like Sir Ernest Shackleton, the Antarctic explorer, students participate in a yearlong expedition program. Students will select an expedition project and work together to plan and budget for its completion. Under the direction of the teacher, these projects may include helping to build a home for Habitat for Humanity; an archeological ‘dig’, or building canoes or kayaks for an overnight river trip. This course develops team building, problem solving abilities, and interpersonal skills, while experiencing the fun of a real-life adventure.

The Internship

One (1) Credit

During the first semester, students will explore their career interests. Using the books What Color is Your Parachute, by Richard Nelson Bolles and Wishcraft, How to Get What You Really Want, by Barbara Sher, students examine their strengths and interests and begin defining their life paths. During the second semester, each Friday afternoon, students intern for local companies to further explore personal interests and career opportunities.

Graduation Requirements

To successfully complete the ***School of the Future*** high school program and receive a diploma, students must accumulate the State of Ohio minimum requirement of twenty (20) credits. Credits required for specific subjects listed in the sections of this guide.

Co-Curricular Activities

After School Clubs

Do you have a special interest or passion? Meet with staff members and present your idea for a *School of the Future* club. Clubs include two or more students and a faculty advisor.

Yearbook

One Half (1/2) Credit

Students create a *School of the Future* yearbook using desktop publishing software. Students learn computer layout and design techniques while developing and formatting an original yearbook. If you are an aspiring photographer, sign up as the local “paparazzi!”

Athletic Programs

During the first year, no athletic teams will be organized. As the student body grows in subsequent years, a team sports program will be established.

