

Upper School Elective
Course Catalog
2025/2026

IGNITE THEIR CURIOSITY



MAPLE
STREET
SCHOOL



GROWTH BEYOND ACADEMICS

At **Maple Street School**, we believe that great learning happens when passion meets purpose. Our Upper School elective program is thoughtfully designed to tap into the interests and expertise of not just our students, but also our dedicated faculty. Each course is an opportunity for students to dive deeper into areas they're curious about while discovering new paths they may not have considered. Whether exploring the natural world, serving the local community, or experimenting with creative expression, our electives offer a dynamic, hands-on curriculum that prepares students for high school and beyond.

OUTDOOR EXPLORATION: *All students will participate in Outdoor Exploration each year.*

This interdisciplinary course immerses students in nature-based learning through field studies, where they will observe, identify, and collect specimens while developing a deeper understanding of local ecosystems. In addition to scientific exploration, students will engage in environmental writing, crafting poetry, fiction, and non-fiction inspired by their experiences in the natural world.

The course also includes hands-on stewardship projects, such as maintaining the school's outdoor classroom and participating in community service initiatives. Through this work, students will develop environmental awareness, ecological responsibility, and a personal connection to the natural world. Outdoor Exploration encourages students to appreciate nature through both scientific inquiry and creative expression, fostering a lifelong commitment to environmental stewardship.

SERVICE LEARNING: *All students will participate in Service Learning at least once during their Upper School career.*

This course immerses students in community-driven projects that address real needs in the Manchester community. Through hands-on volunteer work, students will engage in local initiatives such as assisting at nonprofit organizations, organizing community clean-ups, leading food drives, and coordinating fundraisers. In addition to making a tangible impact, students will develop leadership skills, cultivate compassion, and foster a strong sense of social responsibility. By working closely with community members, they will gain a deeper understanding of civic engagement and the ways in which individual actions contribute to positive change.

STEM

In this hands-on, project-based STEM course, students will engage in robotics challenges and problem-solving activities that apply core STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) concepts to real-world scenarios. Students will develop procedural thinking, algorithm design skills, and teamwork abilities through experimentation and iterative learning.

Additionally, students will participate in the nationwide MATHCOUNTS program, an engaging initiative that fosters curiosity, confidence, and problem-solving skills through fun and challenging mathematical activities. The MATHCOUNTS competition takes place in March, and any students enrolled in the STEM course (either semester) will be invited to participate. This course is designed to build critical thinking, collaboration, and innovation skills in a supportive and engaging environment.

CINEMATOGRAPHY

In Introduction to Cinematography, students will explore the exciting world of filmmaking by using iPads and the iMovie app to craft compelling stories through the art and science of the moving image. Students will learn the fundamentals of camera operation, shot composition, visual storytelling, and editing through hands-on projects and collaborative activities. Throughout the course, they will analyze filmmaking techniques, experiment with different cinematic styles, and refine their creative vision. By the end of the semester, students will have produced their own short films, gaining both a deeper appreciation for cinema and practical skills in digital media production. No prior experience is required—just creativity, curiosity, and enthusiasm.

MUSIC AT MAPLE STREET

At Maple Street School, we believe music is a powerful way to express who you are. In Upper School (grades 6–8), you'll dive into a dynamic music experience that goes beyond just learning notes. Whether you're singing, playing an instrument, or writing your own music, you'll build confidence, connect with others, and explore your creativity. Our program is designed to introduce you to a wide range of musical styles and traditions, helping you grow your skills and discover your own musical voice.

VOCAL ENSEMBLE

In this course, students will engage in developing their vocal skills in a variety of settings. From full group ensembles to small groups and solos, from traditional styles to theater and modern pop, students will be given opportunities to grow in their skill sets as singers and performers. This course is designed to foster confidence, technique, and musical expression in a supportive and engaging environment.

BAND (FULL YEAR)

Band students will rehearse and work together in small groups and as a full ensemble. Pieces chosen will cover a variety of styles, including jazz, funk, rock, movie themes, and classical. Students are expected to have some prior experience with playing a band instrument and to be self-motivated to progress in their instrumental skills. Cultivating a strong personal work ethic along with a teamwork mentality is the goal of this course.

WORLD MUSIC ENSEMBLE

In this course, students will engage in developing their musical skills in a variety of settings. Students will participate in mixed ensembles (instrumental and vocal) using musical styles from around the world. Instruments may include and are not limited to xylophones, djembes, steel drums, ukuleles, handbells, and congas. This course is designed to foster creativity, collaboration, and a deeper appreciation for global musical traditions in an engaging and supportive environment.

SONG CREATION

In this course, students will engage in developing their musical creativity and composition skills. Students will explore different approaches to writing and creating songs. From traditional methods to modern, students will learn about the music theory and skills necessary to be successful in creating a variety of different musical compositions. This course is designed to inspire originality, enhance technical knowledge, and support students in developing their unique musical voices.

MSS ART DEPARTMENT

In the Upper School art program at Maple Street, you'll have the chance to explore who you are as an artist. Through hands-on projects and time to experiment with different materials and techniques, you'll learn how to take creative risks and develop your own style. From drawing and painting to mixed media and sculpture, you'll gain real skills while also learning to think critically and express ideas in new ways. You'll also get to connect with the work of professional artists and share your own creations with our school community.

STUDIO ART

The Studio Art elective is designed to encourage students to take time to experiment and play with various media, staying curious with the process of discovery that is inherent to making art. Projects will include a focus on collage and assemblage (3D collage), researching an artist to inspire and influence work in a chosen area, and developing a community mural at Maple Street School. Lessons will be supplemented with a visiting artist and a museum field trip. This course nurtures creativity, exploration, and hands-on engagement, allowing students to develop confidence in their artistic process.

ART FOUNDATIONS

Art Foundations offers projects that continue to build on fundamentals in a fun and engaging way while stressing compositional principles and the elements of art. This semester's course will focus on architecture and interior design, introducing students to concepts of spatial design and aesthetic decision-making. Units will include observational and perspective drawing, designing and building a stable cardboard construction, and color theory exercises grounded in the contexts of interior design and portrait painting. This course provides a strong technical foundation while encouraging creative problem-solving and visual communication.

MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES IN ART

Multiple Perspectives in Art takes a hands-on approach to appreciating art history, encouraging students to value multiple perspectives and voices as they examine artworks from a diverse range of cultures and time periods. This semester's focus will be on narratives in art, beginning with creating personal stories through fabric and ceramics, inspired by African textiles, the story-quilts of Faith Ringgold, ancient Greek vases, and the art of Roberto Lugo. The printmaking unit will culminate in learning how to bind a book with hand-printed pages, incorporating personal storytelling. This course fosters a deep appreciation for cultural influences in art, encouraging students to see themselves as part of a global artistic dialogue.

MSS PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Physical education at Maple Street's Upper School level is all about discovering what movement means to you. Whether you're into team sports, personal fitness, or just like staying active, our program helps you build strength, confidence, and healthy habits that last. You'll set your own goals, challenge yourself, and work together with classmates in a supportive, inclusive environment. PE is about more than just games—it's about finding joy in movement and learning how to take care of your body and mind.

PERSONAL FITNESS

In this course, students will dive deeper into key fitness concepts, including cardiovascular endurance, muscular strength, muscular endurance, and flexibility. Students will learn how to support their personal fitness through goal setting, gamification, and various workout styles. Training methods will include body weight exercises and free weights, such as dumbbells, barbells, and plates. This course empowers students to take ownership of their fitness journey, equipping them with the knowledge and skills to build and maintain a healthy lifestyle.

INTRAMURAL SPORTS

In this course, students will engage in a series of team-based sports, including but not limited to flag football, futsal, basketball, volleyball, floor hockey, slow-pitch softball, and handball. Students registering for Intramural Sports can expect a competitive atmosphere that emphasizes skill refinement, sport-specific rules, gameplay strategy, sportsmanship, and leadership. This course provides an exciting and dynamic environment for students to develop athletic abilities, teamwork, and a competitive edge in a supportive setting.

LIFELONG PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

In this course, students will explore activities that support lifelong physical movement, social interaction, and mental health. Students can expect to participate in activities that are accessible at any stage of life, align with individual skill levels, and target gross motor skills applicable to a variety of physical activities. While competition is not a focal point, it will be incorporated to enhance engagement, purpose, and enjoyment. This course encourages students to develop an active lifestyle that extends beyond school, emphasizing movement for wellness, connection, and personal fulfillment.



Mr Conor Welch

Conor Welch teaches English and the Outdoor Education program. He holds a B.A. in English from St. Lawrence University and an MFA in Creative Writing from The New School. His interdisciplinary outdoor course immerses students in the natural world through field studies, creative writing, and community engagement. Whether exploring local landscapes, or maintaining the school's outdoor classroom, Conor helps students connect deeply with nature while fostering environmental and civic responsibility.



Mr. Dan Skoglund

Our Head of School will guide the Service Learning course at Maple Street. He holds a B.A. in History from Middlebury College and an Ed.M. from the University of Pennsylvania. Dan brings a passion for community engagement, collaboration, and experiential learning to the course.

He will be supported by Chessy Slater, M.A. in Psychosocial Studies, whose passion for local service and community connection helps bring real-world relevance to student learning.



Mr Geoff Chamberlain

Geoff Chamberlain teaches Cinematography at Maple Street. He holds a B.A. in English from Middlebury College and an M.A. in Teaching from Castleton State College. With experience in both public and independent schools—and even abroad through the World Teach program in Thailand—Geoff brings a creative and global perspective to the classroom.



Math/STEM – Teacher TBD

We are currently in the process of hiring a new Math teacher for the 2025–26 school year who will also lead our STEM programming. Stay tuned—exciting updates to come!



Susan White

Susan White leads the Art Department at Maple Street and brings over 30 years of experience in art education. She holds a B.A. in Studio Art from UNC Chapel Hill, an MAT in Art Education from Tufts/SMFA, and an MFA in Studio Art from UC Davis. A mixed-media artist, Susan inspires students through creative exploration in the studio and beyond.



Mrs. Stephanie Paul

Stephanie Paul, who holds a B.S. in Music Education from Roberts Wesleyan College, leads the Music Department at Maple Street. She has over a decade of experience teaching music, band, and chorus, as well as private instruction in piano, guitar, voice, and saxophone. Steph joined the faculty in 2017 and brings a passion for music and creativity to all her classes.

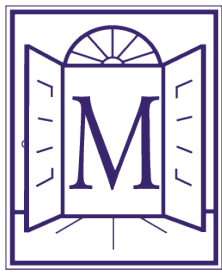


Ryan Wonsor

Ryan Wonsor leads the Physical Education program at Maple Street. He holds a B.S. in Kinesiology & Physical Education from the University of Maine, with a focus on Teaching and Outdoor Education. With experience teaching and managing athletic programs, Ryan brings energy and a love of the outdoors to everything he does—on and off the field.

WHICH COURSES WILL I GET?

Soon you will receive a Google Form to help us gauge your main interests for electives. Most electives run for one semester unless otherwise noted. While we do our best to match students with their selections, placement is not guaranteed. Please note that we do not take requests based on friend groups. Final courses will be shared with families prior to the start of the school year. As always, feel free to reach out with any questions or feedback!



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SCHOOL



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