

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.

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.

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.

INTRODUCTION TO THEATER ARTS:

In Introduction to Theater Arts, students will dive into the world of theater through fun, hands-on experiences that build both confidence and creativity. They will explore the basics of acting, using their voice, body, and imagination to bring characters to life. Through improv games, collaborative activities, and creative exercises, students will learn essential acting techniques, how to work as a team, and how to express themselves boldly on stage. By the end of the course, students will have the opportunity to showcase their skills in a final performance for family and friends. No previous stage experience is necessary—just a passion for acting and a willingness to play!



MUSIC AT MAPLE STREET

The Maple Street School Music department believes that music is an essential part of a well-rounded education. From Pre-K through 8th grade, all students are immersed in a diverse and engaging music curriculum that fosters creativity, collaboration, and self-expression. Whether through vocal performance, instrumental ensembles, or composition, students develop skills that enhance their artistic growth and confidence. The music program encourages students to explore various styles, traditions, and techniques, providing them with a strong foundation in musical literacy and performance.

VOCAL ENSEMBLE (Semester or Full Year):

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 (Semester or Full Year – Full Year Recommended, Levels 1 & 2):

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.

MAPLE STREET VISUAL ARTS

The Maple Street School Art Department believes in fostering creativity, exploration, and self-expression through a dynamic and engaging curriculum. From early childhood through 8th grade, students are encouraged to develop their artistic voice while learning foundational skills in a variety of media. The program emphasizes both process and product, inspiring students to experiment, think critically, and appreciate diverse artistic traditions. Through hands-on projects, exposure to professional artists, and opportunities to showcase their work, students gain confidence in their creative abilities while developing a lifelong appreciation for the arts.

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 storytelling.

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

The Maple Street School Physical Education department is committed to fostering a lifelong appreciation for movement, fitness, and well-being. Through engaging and diverse activities, students develop physical skills, teamwork, and confidence while building healthy habits that will serve them throughout their lives. The curriculum emphasizes personal growth, skill development, sportsmanship, and the joy of movement, ensuring that every student finds a meaningful way to stay active and engaged. Whether through competitive sports, individual fitness training, or recreational activities, students are encouraged to set goals, challenge themselves, and discover the value of physical activity in their daily lives.

LIFELONG PHYSICAL ACTIVITY & FITNESS

This coed course is designed to foster a desire for lifelong physical activity through various sports, recreational activities, and personal fitness. Students will engage in a curriculum that includes racket sports, backyard games, outdoor recreation, fitness concepts, and the use of gamification to encourage healthy living. It's all about building a strong foundation for lifelong fitness while having fun.

ATHLETIC SPORTS: UPPER SCHOOL GIRLS

Tailored to meet the athletic needs of Upper School girls, this course offers a competitive environment focused on skill refinement, sport-specific rules, game play strategy, sportsmanship, and leadership. Students will engage in team-based sports that mirror the rules and regulations of female athletics, including basketball, softball, volleyball, futsal, modified girls' lacrosse, floor hockey, and handball.

ATHLETIC SPORTS: UPPER SCHOOL BOYS

Designed to meet the athletic needs of Upper School boys, this course offers a competitive atmosphere where students will focus on skill refinement, sport-specific rules, game play strategy, sportsmanship, and leadership. Students will engage in team-based sports that reflect the rules and regulations of male athletics, including football, basketball, baseball, volleyball, futsal, modified boys' lacrosse, floor hockey, and handball.

UPPER SCHOOL TEAM SPORTS

UPPER SCHOOL ATHLETICS (GRADES 6–8):

Maple Street’s Upper School interscholastic athletics program offers students the opportunity to compete against local middle schools in a structured, competitive environment. All teams practice and compete after school and are led by our Director of Athletics, who oversees skill development, team culture, and program integrity across seasons. Coaches emphasize cooperation, sportsmanship, leadership, and commitment to one’s team. Practices are designed to strengthen both individual ability and collective performance, helping students build confidence, resilience, and a strong work ethic. Athletes learn to compete with integrity, support their teammates, and represent Maple Street with pride both on and off the field.

Seasonal Offerings:

Fall: Soccer

Winter: Basketball

Spring: Lacrosse, Track and Field



MEET THE TEACHERS



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.



Geoff Chamberlain teaches the Cinematography elective 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.



Holly Wendell teaches both STEM and Service Learning. Holly holds a B.A. from Colby College and has previously taught a wide range of subjects including Middle School Science, STEM, Pre-Algebra, Algebra I, Chemistry, and Biology. She is deeply passionate about a hands-on approach to teaching, with a particular affinity for the middle school years.



Madame Lindenberg teaches Theatre Arts at Maple Street, inviting students to step onto the stage through fun, hands-on experiences that build confidence and creativity. Students explore the basics of acting using voice, body, and imagination to bring characters to life while engaging in improv, collaboration, and creative exercises. Along the way, they develop teamwork and self-expression skills that extend beyond the stage. The course culminates in a final performance for family and friends. No prior experience is required, just a willingness to play.

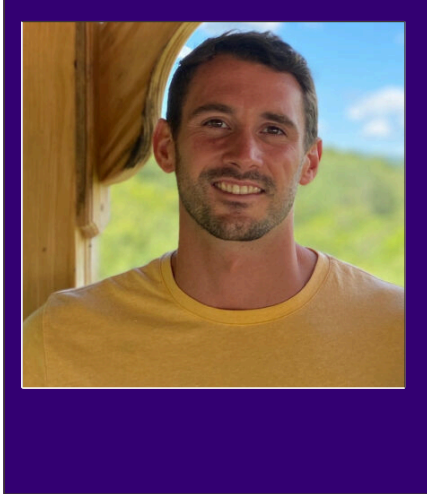


Susan White

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.



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 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!



MAPLE STREET SCHOOL



Main Campus:

322 Maple Street,
Manchester Center, VT 05255

Phone Number :

(802) 362-7137

Email :

jmackey@maplestreetschool.com