

SAMPLE - 4th Quarter Middle School X-Block Course Guide

1st X-Block

Intermediate Band (Combined with HS)	In this class students will learn intermediate music techniques on their chosen instrument as well as how to play together as a large group ensemble. Students will work on and perform a variety of music including pop, movie, and classical music. This class is designed for students who have either already played in Beginning Band at RSS or who have played an instrument (band or orchestra) in either a previous ensemble or taken private lessons for at least 6 months. IMPORTANT: Students will need their own instrument. To rent or purchase an instrument, see Mr. Stover. A limited number of financial aid awards are available for school instruments for families who qualify. Email: info@rensec.org to make a request.
Guitar (combined with HS)	Learn guitar! All levels are welcome. Students will learn open chords and scales. Students will also play the guitar in a group setting and individually before a small audience. Instruction will be differentiated for multiple levels.
Yearbook 101 (combined with HS)	Yearbook 101 teaches students "all things Yearbook", such as photography, writing techniques, interviewing skills and publication design. Students who are interested in being on the Yearbook staff for the 2023-2024 school year must take Yearbook 101 before they can apply to be on the Yearbook staff.
Yearbook Staff (combined with HS)	Students who have been in Yearbook Quarter 3 can sign up to take Yearbook Staff in Quarter 4. In the last quarter of the year staff will finalize remaining pages of the Yearbook and prepare for Distribution Day!
Brain Life Balance (8th grade and High School)	How to unlock the power of executive functioning skills, your well being and happiness. In this course you will learn: self-understanding, organizational skills, time management, emotional control, behavioral control, flexibility, initiative, attention, working memory, and persistence.
Motley Crew (MS Only)	Want to do it all? This class is designed to cultivate all your curiosities. Each day will be as different as the next. There will be kickball, poetry, ecology, calligraphy, art, discussions, music, walking, podcasting, hide and seek, maybe even time travel. When you arrive you will find a group of people who marvel at life and who are willing to try anything. Open- mindedness required.
Photography	Do you like to take pictures? Have a camera or just a cell phone? Join this class to learn the basics of how to construct fun and beautiful photographs.

(MS Only)	Have fun with weekly challenges that will push both your skills and your artistic vision.
Climbing (MS Only)	Rock Climbing is officially an Olympic Sport! Learn why climbing is hailed as one of the fastest growing sports around (hint: it's super fun). This course will teach you the basics of bouldering including how to fall safely, and classic bouldering techniques to improve your skill level. Bouldering is widely acclaimed among professional climbers because it combines the most difficult moves in climbing, and puts them back to back - drastically improving your climbing skill level in a relatively short amount of time. This sport challenges the body, mind, and spirit - providing growth opportunities for students of all ages and abilities. Come see what all the hype is about!
Acting Styles (8th Grade ONLY - Combined with HS)	This class will focus on the fundamentals of creating characters and allow students to learn about the craft of stage business. Students will research acting styles of their choice, and final products will be One Act plays. Students will write, direct, and act in One Act plays. Whether you're interested in writing, directing, or acting, this block is for you! All experience levels welcome - no experience required!
Ultimate Frisbee: Spirit of the Game (combined with HS)	Discover the reason Ultimate Frisbee is a way of life. "Spirit Of The Game" is unique to Ultimate and it governs the sport. Players will learn the mindset needed to play hard, push themselves, and be inclusive. We will learn basic throws, rules, and strategies. We will practice different offense and defense patterns. Participants should be able to run and cut (change direction). Most importantly, participants should join with an open mind and an attitude that supports being a "good sport". Cleats or turf shoes will be helpful but not necessary.
Genius Hour (MS Only)	Do you have some "pet project" or an idea you've always wanted to explore but just haven't had the time? Sign up for Genius Hour! During this X-Block we will explore the concept of "autodidactism" (teaching oneself) and work on an (approved) long-term project of your own design. This X-block is student-driven and requires a high level of independence; if you consider yourself a self-starter and are "chomping at the bit" with an idea that you can't wait to develop and implement, sign up!
Broomball (Combined with HS)	Kim is pumped to announce that Broomball is back! This active x-block will get you outside almost every afternoon as we play this sport at the rinks at Metzler Ranch Park. This sport is similar to hockey (without the skates) and soccer. 36 players are welcome to join our RSS league this spring -- no experience necessary. 'Checking' is NOT permitted in this sport and students must abide by our Full-Value Contract. Helmets are required. Excited to see you at the rinks soon!

2nd X-Block

Blast-off Into the Universe! (MS Only)	Explore the mysteries of the universe in the "Blast-off into the Universe" X-Block. We will take a science-based journey through our solar system and beyond. Astronomy physics, and exciting projects will help us understand how the universe works. <i>This course will cover the same content as in previous quarters. Only students who have not previously taken this course may take it this quarter.</i>
Boys Volleyball (MS Only)	*First priority for this X-Block will be given to students who want to compete in the South Metro Conference League. There is a \$175 fee associated with League play for this X-Block, which covers the costs associated with league play, including registration fees, jersey/shirt, coaching, etc. <i>*If this fee presents a hardship, you'll be able to register and contact info@rensec.org for financial assistance information*</i> Students who want to participate in the Volleyball X-Block but not in league play will be placed on a space available basis.
Choir (8th grade & HS)	In this class, students will learn the basic skills of singing and reading music. Students will study a variety of musical styles: including gospel, musical theater, pop, and classical. The class will be taught as a performing ensemble with daily rehearsals and students will learn multiple part music as part of a team in preparation for a formal performance/concert. Choir is open to all High School and 8th grade students regardless of musical experience or ability.
Advanced Climbing (MS Only)	Advanced Climbing - PREREQUISITE REQUIRED This class is designed specifically for students who have already taken and mastered Climbing 101. In this course, we will focus on intermediate/advanced climbing techniques, route building, strength and endurance training, roped climbing skills, and learn about climbing gear and how it is used in order to be safer and better climbers both indoors and outdoors. Please note: this class will be physically demanding and is designed for those who are looking to push themselves in their personal climbing journey.
Wiffle Ball (8th Grade ONLY - Combined with HS)	In this X-block students will learn to play Wiffle Ball in accordance with the World Wiffle Ball Championship. It will be competitive, informative, and fun! Additionally, it will provide a chance to hone some basic fielding and batting skills, as well as provide a unique addition to our fitness routines.
Musical Theater Workshop (MS & 9th Grade)	Come hone your musical theater skills in this workshop-model course! This class will culminate in a Musical Revue. All experience levels welcome - no experience required!
Park Rats (MS Only)	Interested in spending some time at the skate park learning how to skateboard, scooter, or skate? Perhaps you want to learn some new tricks or perfect your technique? Then join your fellow park rats as we head over to the skate park to try out the bowls! Helmets are required.

	Students in this x-block will be required to sign a waiver to participate and will need to provide their own board, scooter, or skates, and a proper helmet. No previous experience required, but active participation is expected!
Sculpture (MS Only)	This course is an introduction to sculptural approaches in a variety of media including traditional and experimental. Examples: Paper, Cardboard, Wire, Clay. The aim of this course is to assist students to explore sculptural processes through the body and space, considering visual aesthetics. Students will be required to produce a new body of work and to talk about it in critiques and write about it using proper vocabulary. Emphasis will be on integration of studio practice and critical thought.
Chess (MS & HS)	Come play chess, as well as research and present on various strategies, styles, and intricacies of one of the world's oldest and most esteemed board games.
Stewardship and Student Aide (combined with HS) <i>Limited Availability, Teacher approval required</i>	This course offers an opportunity for a small crew of students to serve the Renaissance campus by maintaining the grounds, being responsible for stewardship in our spaces, and providing teachers with office support (copies, lamination, etc). Join this small crew!
Video Game Development Level 2 (8th Grade ONLY - Combined with HS) <i>Limited availability: teacher approval required</i>	Video Game Development Level 2 If you have taken the Introduction to Video Game Development course and you are interested in learning more, this is the x-block for you! During this course we will continue to build on our basic software development skills and expand our knowledge by learning about new tools, concepts, and frameworks critical to indy game developers. During this course you will be responsible for coming up with a game concept and making it a reality. Please note, although most of the software we will be learning about in class should work on a Chromebook, you may be limited if that is the only type of device you have access to. You must have taken the Introduction to Video Game Development course before you can take this course.

*Off-Campus X-Blocks

With approval, students who are participating in a sport or activity at another school, which requires them to leave Renaissance before the end of the school day, may request a “non-Renaissance off-campus X-Block.” Sports and activities are approved on a case-by-case basis. There must be an instructor or coach affiliated with the activity who can provide reliable grading and attendance information. Requests should be made using [this process](#).