



**L A C S M I D D L E S C H O O L**  
**A C A D E M I C S**  
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**C O U R S E D E S C R I P T I O N**

Los Altos Christian Schools offers curriculum which is based on a Christian perspective of education. We feel it is important to integrate scriptural principles and biblical threads into each area of subject matter. We continually research a variety of curriculums and have selected materials that will offer your child a high-quality academic education, centered on the principles of God's Word.

# MIDDLE SCHOOL

## Three-Year Course Plan

	6 <sup>th</sup> GRADE	7 <sup>th</sup> GRADE	8 <sup>th</sup> GRADE
<b>English</b>	English 6 Literature and Composition	English 7 Literature and Composition	English 8 Literature and Composition
<b>Math</b>	Math 6 Pre-Algebra Pre-Algebra Advanced	Pre-Algebra Pre-Algebra Advanced Algebra 1	Pre-Algebra Pre-Algebra Advanced Algebra 1 Geometry
<b>Science</b>	Earth Science and Ecology	Life Science	Physical Science
<b>History</b>	Ancient History	World History	American History
<b>Foreign Language</b>	Spanish 1 ASL 1	Spanish 2 ASL 2	Spanish 3 ASL 3
<b>Bible</b>	Bible 6 Redemption- God's Design	Bible 7 The Life of Christ from the Gospel of John	Bible 8 The Spirit Filled Life of the believer from the Acts of the Apostles
<b>PE</b>	P.E 6 Strength & Conditioning	P.E 7 Strength & Conditioning	P.E 8 Strength & Conditioning
<b>One Elective per Semester</b>	Art Studio Gardening & Cooking Basics Introduction to Journalism  Knitting  Learn to Play the Ukulele Math Lab  Speech and Debate  Tech Challenge  Trail Trekking  Web Programming	Art Studio Gardening & Cooking Basics Introduction to Journalism  Knitting  Learn to Play the Ukulele Math Lab  Speech and Debate  Tech Challenge  Trail Trekking  Web Programming	Art Studio Gardening & Cooking Basics Introduction to Journalism  knitting  Learn to Play the Ukulele Math Lab  Speech and Debate  Tech Challenge  Trail Trekking  Web Programming

### COMMUNITY SERVICE GUIDELINES

Students must complete **at least 40 hours** of LACS approved community service during their 3 year middle school career as part of their graduation requirement. Students will complete a minimum of 8 hours each 6<sup>th</sup> grade and 16 hours each year in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

# ENGLISH Course Description

## ENGLISH 6

English for 6th grade is broken into four key components: literature, grammar, writing, and vocabulary. This year, students will develop skills that will help them express themselves more clearly and creatively. The myPerspectives curriculum is used for Literature and reading and Step-Up-To- Writing and Language Network Program for grammar and writing will take students through the writing process in a variety of different assignments and writing genres. Students work through weekly vocabulary lessons from the *Wordly Wise* curriculum. Literature units include *Hatchet* in addition to a variety of classic and contemporary short stories.

- Course Length: 1 year
- Textbook(s): myPerspectives 6 by Pearson, Wordly Wise 6, Step-Up-To- Writing, Language Network Program 6, Novels
- Prerequisite: Successful completion of 5<sup>th</sup> grade language arts.

## ENGLISH 7

This yearlong English course focuses on reading comprehension and analysis, essay writing, creative writing, vocabulary expansion, and public speaking. The course content reviews all basic skills while teaching new skills. Students complete literature units using the myPerspectives curriculum in addition to a variety of classic and contemporary short stories. The course focuses on the writing process through a variety of assignments, including narrative, literature response, and persuasive writing. This course is intended to prepare students for success in the subject of English in 8th Grade.

- Course Length: 1 year
- Textbook(s): myPerspectives 7 by Pearson, Wordly Wise 7, Step-Up-To- Writing, Language Network Program 7, Novels
- Prerequisite: Successful completion of 6<sup>th</sup> grade language arts.

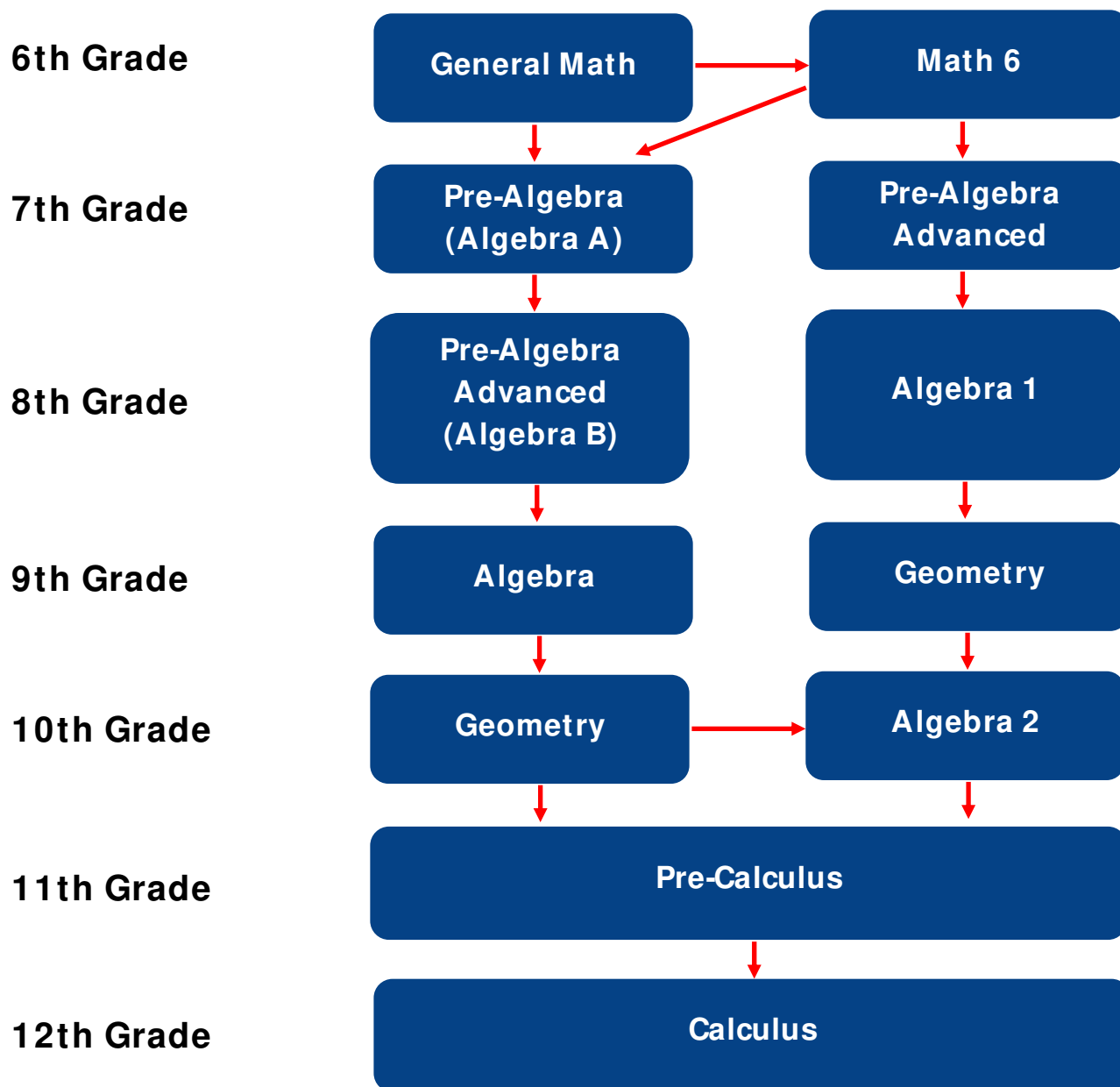
## ENGLISH 8

This yearlong English course focuses on reading comprehension and analysis, essay writing, vocabulary expansion, and public speaking. The course content reviews basic skills previously taught and teaches new skills with an emphasis on the application of these skills. Students use the myPerspectives curriculum and read various novels such as *The Pearl* by John Steinbeck. Students collaborate in small group projects to analyze literary works. Over the course of the year, students write multiple essays including responses to literature and argumentative essays. This course is intended to prepare students for success in high school.

- Course Length: 1 Year
- Textbook(s): myPerspectives 8 by Pearson, Wordly Wise8, Step-Up-To- Writing, Language Network Program8, Novels
- Prerequisite: Successful completion of 7<sup>th</sup> grade language arts.

# MATH

# Course Description



- Students will take math every year.
- The paths shown are typical ones that may be followed by students.
- Generally students will remain on their path.
- Placement will be decided year to year based on student performance, evaluations, and teacher recommendation.
- A minimum grade of 80% on a screening assessment is necessary to change path.

## MATH 6

Students learn to solve problems, increase computational competence and build critical thinking skills. Skills in addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, decimals, measurement, percentage, factoring, ratio, fractions and basic geometry are reviewed and expanded. Beginning Algebra concepts are integrated.

- ◇ Course length: 1 year
- ◇ Textbook: California SAXON Math Course 1
- ◇ Prerequisites: Successful completion of fifth grade math, test scores, teacher recommendation, and parent input.

## PRE-ALGEBRA A

Student work, write and simplify numerical expressions as well as introductory algebraic expression. They focus on developing problem-solving strategies, especially on writing equations that require the use of signed numbers and several inverse operations for solutions. Emphasis is placed on the use of variables in equations and expressions. Operations containing decimals, fractions, exponents, ratios, and percentages are taught. This is the first half of a two-year course in pre-algebra concepts. A student must complete both halves of the course to move to Algebra I.

- ◇ Course length: 1 year
- ◇ Text: California Pre-Algebra, Prentice Hall, 2009
- ◇ Prerequisites: Successful completion of Math 6, teacher recommendation

## PRE-ALGEBRA B

Students complete their work on introductory algebraic concepts. Emphasis is placed on the linear functions and graphing, spatial thinking, area and volume, irrational numbers, and data analysis. This is the second half of a two-year course in pre-algebra concepts. A student must complete both halves of the course to move to Algebra I.

- ◇ Course length: 1 year
- ◇ Text: California Pre-Algebra, Prentice Hall, 2009
- ◇ Prerequisites: successful completion of Pre-Algebra A, teacher recommendation

## PRE-ALGEBRA ADVANCED

Students work with numerical expressions as well as introductory algebraic expression. They also explore operations that use fractions, exponents, ratios, proportions, and percents. The class will also work on linear functions and graphing, spatial thinking, work with irrational numbers and nonlinear functions, introduce basic geometric concepts, and focus on application and critical thinking skills.

- ◇ Course length: 1 year
- ◇ Text: California Pre-Algebra, Prentice Hall, 2009
- ◇ Prerequisites: yearlong high-class performance in sixth grade math, high-standardized test math scores, teacher recommendation, parental permission. Students must maintain a yearly average of 85% or higher to remain in the class.

**ALGEBRA**

This course is designed to sharpen skills that use variables with whole numbers, signed numbers, decimals and fractions. Students will be introduced to polynomials, functions, algebraic functions and the quadratic formula. There is an emphasis on learning strategies for solving work problems.

- ◇ Course length: 1 year
- ◇ Text: Algebra, CA edition, Prentice Hall, 2009
- ◇ Prerequisites: successful completion of Pre-Algebra, high-standardized test math scores, teacher recommendation and parental permission. Students must maintain a yearly average of 85% or higher to remain in the class.

**GEOMETRY**

This honors course includes learning the language of geometry, studying parallel and perpendicular lines, congruence and similarity, special right triangle relationships and trigonometric ratios. Students gain skill in logical thinking by exposure to conditional statements, indirect proofs and two-column proofs. This course will involve studying area, perimeter, surface area and volume of a variety of geometric shapes. This is a high school level course.

- ◇ Course length: 1 year
- ◇ Text: Geometry, Prentice Hall, 2009
- ◇ Prerequisites: successful completion of Algebra with an 85% average or higher, proficiency test, high-standardized test math scores, parental permission and teacher recommendation. This is an honors class for 8th grade.

## EARTH SCIENCE, ECOLOGY AND THE ENVIRONMENT 6

Science for 6th grade is a passport to learn about the earth, ecology the environment and God's continual plan for our lives. Some topics covered during the 6<sup>th</sup> grade year are earth's surface and organisms, minerals and rocks, and earth's biomes and ecosystems. The Science Fusion curriculum is used to develop skills such as analyzing, making predictions, providing explanations, drawing correlations and conclusions, conducting research, writing and producing oral presentations in order to understand the physical world around us according to God's plan.

- ◇ Grade: 6, Course Length: 1 year
- ◇ Textbook: Science Fusion by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt

## LIFE SCIENCE 7

Life science is the study of living organisms. Over the course of the year, students will examine cell structure and function, DNA and genetics, plants and animals, and the human body. The theories of creationism and evolution are incorporated throughout the year. Both are presented, analyzed, and evaluated by examining the ideas, evidence, and validity of scientific beliefs and biblical truths. Students will also have the opportunity to perform a dissection.

- ◇ Grade: 7, Course Length: 1 year
- ◇ Science Fusion by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt

## PHYSICAL SCIENCE 8

Over the course of the year, students will examine the properties and characteristics of matter, the elements of the Periodic Table on an atomic level, compounds, bonds, forces, and motion. Students will also explore topics relating to space, including the sun, the solar system, and the universe. The Scientific Method and theories of creationism and evolution are incorporated throughout the year. These theories will be presented, analyzed, and evaluated by examining the ideas, evidence, and validity of both scientific beliefs.

- ◇ Grade: 8, Course Length: 1 year
- ◇ Science Fusion by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt

# HISTORY

# Course Description

## ANCIENT HISTORY 6

History for 6th grade will take students on an in-depth tour of the ancient civilizations of Mesopotamia, Egypt, Israel, Indus Valley, China, Greece, Rome, and the Byzantine Empire. Our goal is to increase historical knowledge while providing students with the means of making connections to both the past and the present, to see how it relates to the world around us through a Christian perspective.

- ◇ Grade: 6
- ◇ Course Length: 1 year
- ◇ Textbook: myWorld Textbook and Journal by Pearson

## WORLD HISTORY 7

This course is designed for students to learn how to conformed to Christ's image by studying the story of people and their relationship to God. This story includes people and cultures from the Dark Ages to the present in all parts of the world. The course brings history, geography, and culture together in an introduction to world history.

- ◇ Grade: 7
- ◇ Course Length: 1 year
- ◇ Textbook: myWorld Textbook and Journal by Pearson

## AMERICAN HISTORY 8

This course is a comprehensive survey of United States history, intended to give the junior high student a solid foundation of knowledge about the heritage of this country. Students will be able to see the hand of God in action in this American history course - it is ultimately intended to inspire them to conform to Christ's image in their own lives.

- ◇ Grade: 8
- ◇ Course Length: 1 year
- ◇ Textbook: myWorld Textbook and Journal by Pearson



**FOREIGN LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS (Grades 6-8)**

At LACS, we believe the study of foreign languages completes and improves a student's education while providing the foundation for further personal enrichment scholastic achievement and future economic opportunities. It also sharpens intellect, teaches reasoning and deduction, and hones in logic. Students that are introduced early to a bilingual world can become proficient over time. Research shows that learning a second language boosts problem-solving, critical-thinking, and listening skills, in addition to improving memory, concentration, and the ability to multitask. Children proficient in other languages also show signs of enhanced creativity and mental flexibility. As a result, Spanish is taught in our Elementary, Middle and High Schools. American Sign Language is taught in our Middle School.

**Spanish**

Our Middle School Spanish class follows a curriculum that is used in many Spanish I High School classes. All Spanish lessons are enriched with cultural activities and traditions, including art and music. Games, geography, and very fun and engaging special projects and activities are part of the Spanish curriculum.

**SPANISH A**

This course offers students a basic introduction to the Spanish language. Students learn essential vocabulary related to school, classes, schedules, friends, likes, dislikes, food, and other everyday language experiences. Students learn proper pronunciation and the grammar necessary for understanding and using basic Spanish. The course provides instruction and practice in reading, writing, speaking, and listening to Spanish.

- ◇ Course length: 1 year
- ◇ Text: Realidades A, McGraw Hill/Wright Group, 2003

**SPANISH B**

Spanish B continues a student's knowledge by adding cultural studies and more opportunities to use the Spanish language. This year students will learn words related to food, pastimes, family, shopping, traveling, entertainment, and technology. More time will be spent speaking together in Spanish as students expand their vocabulary and knowledge of the language. Oral participation is a large part of the grade in this class.

- ◇ Course length: 1 year
- ◇ Text: Realidades A and B, McGraw Hill/Wright Group
- ◇ Prerequisite: successful completion of Spanish A

**ASL (American Sign Language)**

The Middle School ASL program exposes students to the basics of American Sign Language. Through a combination of the Start ASL offline course and in-person instruction, students learn essential vocabulary, dig deep into proper ASL grammar, and explore Deaf history and culture. Throughout the course, students gain valuable insight into the perspectives, struggles, and victories of the vibrant Deaf community. Students are provided with videos by ASL professionals, which enable them to learn the ASL signs correctly and quickly. Games, conversations, and musical presentations give students opportunities to practice and refine their signing. A highlight for students is a field trip to the California School for the Deaf in Fremont, where they are able to get a firsthand look at Deaf education and interact with a Deaf tour guide. Spanish A is required for Spanish B and American Sign Language A is required for American Sign Language B.

## GRADE 6

### **Redemption – God’s Design**

This Bible course concentrates on preparing students for God’s perfect plan for mankind. This 'real life' course material helps students understand the concept of submitting to His plan, and why. Students are taught that the Bible accounts are fact and the Bible is used as the final authority in all guided discussions. Throughout this course, students are encouraged to apply Bible knowledge to their daily lives all while providing a systematic plan for the practice of daily Bible skills. The lessons in this course are supplemented with optional connections to other subjects including history, geography, math, science, English, writing, speech, drama, and music.

- ◇ Course length: 1 year
- ◇ Materials: New King James Bible, Bible concordance, Bible cross reference, Bible dictionary, Redemption – God’s Design

## GRADE 7

### **The Life of Christ from the Gospel of John**

Seventh Grade Bible students examine the visible and personal Jesus, through the Gospel of John in order to encourage devotion and obedience to God. The essential question is, "Who do you say Jesus is and how does He influence you?" The purpose of the class is to challenge students to demonstrate that believing in Jesus Christ changes their lives in amazing ways. The student finds life, real life, eternal life, a whole new kind of life that is satisfying and honoring to God. The content of the class includes background information on the life of Christ and focused analysis of each chapter of the Gospel of John.

- ◇ Course length: 1 year
- ◇ Materials: NKJV Bible and The Life of Christ from the Gospel of John by Frank Hamrick

## GRADE 8

### **The Spirit-filled Life of the Believer from the Acts of the Apostles**

Eighth Grade Bible students learn principles of Spirit-filled living from the history of the early church as recorded in Acts in order to be on mission for and with God. The student is challenged to find practical daily ways to answer the essential question, "How do I boldly live for Christ?" The purpose of the class is to evaluate how Jesus continues his work in the life of believers, including the individual student. Acts presents the church at its finest under attack, but unstoppable. The student will find courage in Christ, even as the Christian today is under attack, yet the Kingdom of God unstoppable.

- ◇ Course length: 1 year
- ◇ Materials: NKJV Bible and To the Ends of the Earth an In-depth Study of the Book of Acts Student Workbook by Jay G. Borkett

# Course Description

## **MUSIC** (Grades 6-8)

The goal for Middle School Music is to assist students to find their personal love and joy of music and to become life-long music advocates, to develop a deep appreciation of music and musicians, while fostering and building skills necessary to participate in more advanced future music opportunities. As students unlock their God-given musical talents and join with others in ensemble, quickly community is built and students are a part of a powerful experience.

### **Singing Skills**

- Proper vocal technique: Breath support from diaphragm, energize the face, open the throat, shape the vowels, project the sound, ending consonants.
- Matching pitches, understanding vocal range, tone and blend.
- Understand and read vocal parts and pitch notation in music.
- Sing in two parts, melody, harmony, rounds, ostinatos and partner songs.

### **Rhythm Skills**

- Multiple time Signatures. Recognize whole, half, quarter, eighth, sixteenth and dotted note and rests duration in 2/4, 3/4, 4/4 meters. Recognize standard notation and symbols for music.
- Read and play percussion patterns using body percussion, buckets, drums, and variety of percussion instruments.
- Perform percussion cadences for events at LACS and in the community.

### **Music Genres**

Each month the students will explore the varying sounds of different music genres including: *Classical, Blues, Jazz, Folk, Latin, Country Western, Rock, Hip-Hop/Rap.*

### **Performances**

Weekly chapel services, Friday flagpole, Christmas Chapel, Spring Musical, International Day, Talent Show and various events.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION** (Grades 6-8)

Physical Education provides an atmosphere where students will learn to exhibit Christian character through all aspects of activity. Students will develop movement skills enabling them to participate confidently in physical activity. They will also be instructed in good sportsmanship and taking personal responsibility. The goal of the program is to help students develop into well-rounded individuals who have the health, energy, and stamina to pursue every opportunity to its fullest.

## **ART Studio**

Close your eyes and imagine you're standing in an art studio—the smell of paint, the feel of the brush, and the infinite creative possibilities that linger in the air. This is where art is born, and in Studio Art, you'll learn how to bring your art to life.

## **GARDENING & COOKING BASICS**

Students learn the ins and outs of different types of planting and gardening and learn how to plan and design. Students are taught how to prepare and cook what has been grown in the garden.

## **INTRODUCTION TO JOURNALISM**

Students conduct interviews, write short articles about interesting events and take photos accompany your writing in this weekly elective.

This election is an extension of writing instruction in the core classes for writers of all levels.

Students explore a variety of ways writing is used in the world today. They have the opportunity to solidify and improve their fundamental writing skills in a way that is tailored to individual student needs and goals. Students also have the opportunity to use their writing as a means of creative expression.

## **KNITTING**

In this class, you will learn the basics of knitting. You will complete a series of small projects with simple stitches. By the end of the course, you will be wearing a hat and scarf you created yourself.

## **LEARN TO PLAY UKULELE**

Students progress through a full curriculum of skills, chords and strum patterns to over 30 songs including familiar folk songs like "You Are My Sunshine" to popular songs such as "Cups" by Anna Kendrick or "Count On Me" by Bruno Mars.

## **MATH LAB**

Students have the opportunity to work on basic math facts, computation and problem solving skills. They will have the opportunity to review and preview skills being covered in their current math class.

## **SPEECH AND DEBATE**

Students learn skills like **public speaking, cross-examination, and basic research** in order to construct sets of arguments and defend their position.

## **THE TECH CHALLENGE**

This signature program of The Tech invites teams of students in Grades 4-12 to use the engineering design process to solve a real-world problem. Participants spend months collaborating and becoming deeply engaged in the challenge while documenting their progress and designs. The program culminates in an inspiring two-day showcase in April where teams put their solutions to the test in front of judges.

## **WEB PROGRAMMING**

This elective focusses on developing three applications throughout the school year. Students learn web programming (html/css/javascript). This is a practical path teaching students the essential concepts necessary to drive software development and production of ideas. Students learn to develop features collaborate with colleagues, have the features tested and debugged. This provides students with the opportunity to gain experience presenting their product, to clearly communicate their ideas as well as to bring support and agreement.

The series consists of three classes - Build your own flashcard, Build your own Photoshop, and Build your own card maker. Upon completion of card maker, students can also launch community outreach through which they send cards to other community members they want to send messages.

## **TRAIL TREKKING**

This is a course where students engage in various sports and Spartan challenges, offering opportunities to grow in athleticism and coordination, improve physical fitness, and learn about health and safety in pursuing athletic goals. Students are encouraged to enter Spartan Races.

**CHAPEL – WEEKLY CONNECTION**

- Los Altos Christian Middle School has Chapel on Tuesday at 1:50 P.M.
- Mentorship Program
- Academic Electives:
  - ◇ 6<sup>th</sup> Grade: Study Skills & Organization
  - ◇ 7<sup>th</sup> Grade: Speech/Community Service
  - ◇ 8<sup>th</sup>: High School Preparation

**Organizational Skills**

This course offers students instruction in skills that will be important to future academic success. Each grade level will require students to participate in an academic elective that addresses another step in their development as a student and a contributing member of the school. In sixth grade, students will begin the year learning organizational skills that will help them be successful in the middle school environment, such as study habits, test taking, using school planners, managing long-term projects, etc. The second semester will be devoted learning effective habits, which help students make the most of their middle school years and prepare for high school. This is a character development class.

**Speech/Community Service**

These courses offer students instruction in skills that will be important to future academic success. Each grade level will require students to participate in an academic elective that addresses another step in their development as a student and a contributing member of the school. In seventh grade, students will begin the year learning public speaking skills. The second semester will help them explore opportunities to participate in community service.

**High School Prep/Discipleship**

These courses offer students instruction in skills that will be important to future academic success. Each grade level will require students to participate in an academic elective that addresses another step in their development as a student and a contributing member of the school. In eighth grade, students will spend the first semester in a high school preparation class. They will learn how to fill out high school applications and develop interview skills. The second semester will give students an opportunity to learn effective ways of listening, speaking about, and sharing their faith in a loving way with others.

## COMMUNITY SERVICE

Our philosophy of community service is based upon God's Word. Our scriptural reference is clearly stated in Mark 10:45

*"For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many."*

### **Community Service at LACS provides the opportunity for the student:**

- to model Christ-like behavior through serving another
- to receive the blessing that comes from giving in the Name of Jesus
- to develop the lifelong spiritual discipline of serving Christ
- to prepare for High School where students develop a resume useful for college and career pursuits
  - ◇ **6TH GRADE:** 4 hours per semester | 8 per year
  - ◇ **7TH GRADE:** 8 hours per semester | 16 per year
  - ◇ **8TH GRADE:** 8 hours per semester | 16 per year

## **CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENT SUCCESS**

Co-curricular activities play an important role in the college application process, and in many vital areas leading up to graduation. Studies show there is a strong positive correlation between co-curricular activities and student attendance, GPA, overall test scores, educational goals, and future SAT scores. Remember, the PSAT starts in 10th grade.

We believe that academic and social success starts at a young age and builds through middle school, so we encourage all of our students to participate in co-curriculars to continue building a platform for college in the near future.