



Christian Brothers Academy
COURSE CATALOG
MIDDLE SCHOOL | 2026-2027



A MESSAGE FROM THE President

As a Lasallian Catholic school, we strive to offer a transformative education that touches a student’s mind and heart through diverse programs meeting recognized standards of excellence.

The course selection process is an important step in a student’s academic career, which helps guide them to educational success and readiness for college. Students and parents are encouraged to review and discuss the course offerings as described in this Course Catalog.

Should you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to contact your son’s counselor in the Guidance Department.

Sincerely,

Dr. James Schlegel

OUR MISSION

Christian Brothers Academy, a college preparatory school in the Lasallian tradition, provides young men in grades five through twelve with a balanced education through challenging academic and broad co-curricular programs in a safe, faith-filled environment. Sponsored by the Brothers of the Christian Schools, CBA is committed to meeting the needs of the individual, developing his full potential and guiding him toward his role as a successful member of society. The teachings of the Catholic Church, the traditions of the Brothers of the Christian Schools and the principles of American citizenship form the foundation of the school’s educational philosophy.

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ART

ART 5

This course introduces art elements as well as color theory through various projects and materials.

ART 6

This course is designed to help the students build confidence in the basic art concepts while learning to master basic art skills. Students will learn how various artists used these concepts in their work.

ART 7

This course is designed to help students look at the everyday world around them realistically and abstractly. They will learn the emotional influence of the elements of works of art and recreate these emotions in their work. We will utilize different techniques such as graphic design, storyboarding, bookmaking, and many other approaches. We will continue to learn about key elements of visual design such as balance, contrast, color, and line, and apply them while creating your own visual story.

ART 8

This course places emphasis on architectural forms, including 20th century artists and design, as well as works created by other cultures. Projects will allow the students to express their individuality in their work. We will utilize different techniques such as graphic design, storyboarding, bookmaking, and many other approaches. We will continue to learn about key elements of visual design such as balance, contrast, color, and line, and apply them while creating your own visual story.

ENGLISH

ENGLISH 5

This course adheres to a project-based approach to learning that aims to engage students in the writing process and become confident and fluent writers. Through scaffolded journaling and the development of a variety of writing products, students learn to formulate, organize, and expand their ideas in writing. To help gauge progress and showcase artifacts of excellence, students create and maintain a web-based portfolio of selected writing products collected throughout the year. The ELA course for fifth grade students places an emphasis on the reinforcement and development of fundamental composition skills. Areas of focus include sentence mechanics, grammar, writing strategies, spelling, and vocabulary, as well as, an introduction to keyboarding and a review of handwriting skills.

READING 5

The Grade 5 reading program adheres to the idea that effective writers are also competent readers. Areas of focus include development and refinement of reading fluency skills, comprehension, and text analysis. Students will learn a range of reading strategies related to understanding an author's purpose and tone, theme, text structure, elements of story, point of view, and literary devices. Grade 5 students will explore and examine a broad selection of books and media that animate core CBA values and serve as anchor texts for several writing projects. Students chronicle progress through the program as part of the ELA portfolio.

ENGLISH 6

From a developmental and academic perspective, Grade 6 commonly serves as the culminating year of a student's lower

school journey within the larger CBA academic program. The Grade 6 program for ELA aims to ensure that students possess and command the writing, editing, and thinking skills they will need to successfully assume the rigors of ELA at the upper middle school level. In addition to skills refinement and application, the course is designed to orient students to some of the technologies used to produce clear and rhetorically effective writing products and media. The Grade 6 program culminates with a long term inquiry (LTI) project and the presentation and review of the student's ELA portfolio.

READING 6

The reading program for Grade 6 continues to focus on the development and refinement of students' fluency, comprehension, and text analysis skills. However, the program shifts slightly at Grade 6 to place greater emphasis on the development of close reading and text analysis skills. While much of the instruction aims to reinforce and refine basic fluency and comprehension skills, Grade 6 students begin to learn to read and interpret texts for meaning. By the end of Grade 6, students should be able to demonstrate grade level comprehension and fluency skills, apply basic skills for examining and producing a range of written and media-based responses to challenging or unfamiliar texts. As in Grade 5, students will continue to explore a selection of books that animate core CBA values and, in some cases, connect thematically or topically to previous and/or current works.

ENGLISH 7

This course begins with the skills of grammar and spelling rules. Vocabulary is coordinated as much as possible with the literature being studied. The writing section consists of student journals, essays, and

compositions. Reading comprehension is practiced through short stories, poems, and novels.

ENGLISH 8

This course begins with the rules of usage and mechanics being applied to solid sentence structure. The student's writing is closely monitored through essays, compositions, and local essay contests. Students explore the basics of a research paper and citing textual evidence to support inferences and analysis of selected texts. Classic literature is used as a means to enhance comprehension. The course is rounded out with weekly vocabulary quizzes.

ENGLISH 8 HONORS

This course begins with the two reading selections prepared over the summer. The novels have a short comprehensive assessment, but the major assessment is the essay. Using the two novels, we review the essay format that we use throughout the year with the class novels and short stories. Literary analysis involves the close reading of numerous genres while using textual evidence that supports inferences and analysis of the text. Throughout the year the Honors students track will study rules of grammar and mechanics and apply these skills to their sentence structure. Reading comprehension skills and a solid vocabulary base are enhanced in preparation for future standardized tests.

MATHEMATICS

MATH 5

This course uses place value to help gain number sense, strengthening multiplication and division skills, operations with decimals and fractions, algebraic expressions and equations, as well as geometric concepts including volume. Attention is given to fluency with basic math facts, problem solving, and real world applications of mathematical concepts.

MATH 6

This course covers the foundational topics of ratios and proportional relationships including percentages; operations with decimals and fractions; introduction to positive and negative numbers and the coordinate plane; algebraic expressions and equations; geometric concepts including area and surface area; and, statistical concepts including measures and displays. Students are able to complete performance activities to show what they know in a non-traditional way, giving attention to problem solving and real world applications of mathematical concepts.

MATH 7

The focus of this course is to continue to build the foundation necessary for the successful study of Algebra and Geometry. Students will concentrate on the following domains: integers and rational numbers, expressions, equations and inequalities, ratios and proportional relationships, percents, geometry (area, volume and surface area), and statistics and probability.

MATH 7 HONORS

This fast-paced accelerated course covers half of the 7th grade curriculum and the entire 8th grade curriculum. Topics include: ratios and proportional relationships including exponents, expressions, equations, linear and non-linear functions, inequalities in one and two variables, geometric concepts including angle and line relationships, Pythagorean theorem, transfor-

mations, congruence and similarity, volume and surface area; and, investigation into probability and statistics.

Students entering 7th grade may take Math 7 Honors with a teacher recommendation. Incoming 7th grade students new to CBA must take a diagnostic test to enter Math 7 Honors.

MATH 8

The focus of this course is to continue to build the foundation necessary for the successful study of Algebra and Geometry. Students will concentrate on the following domains: integers and rational numbers, expressions, equations and inequalities, linear and non-linear functions, linear relationships, congruent and similar functions, Pythagorean theorem, transformations, angle relationships, surface area, volume, statistics, and probability.

ALGEBRA I HONORS

4183 | Grade: 8 | Credit: 1

This one-year Regents-level course follows the standards set forth by the New York State Education Department. The curriculum focuses on algebraic problem solving, understanding linear, quadratic, exponential, and rational functions, and statistics. Algebra I satisfies one of the three-year Mathematics requirements for a Regents Diploma and prepares students for the Algebra I Regents Exam.

Students entering 8th grade may take Algebra I if they have an 85% average (or higher) in Math 7H, along with a teacher recommendation. Incoming 8th grade students new to CBA must take a diagnostic test to enter Algebra I Honors.

MUSIC

MUSIC 5

Students will gain a better understanding of concepts in music and have the ability to define and discuss related terms. The teacher will provide listening and playing examples from classical styles as well as more modern styles such as jazz, rock, pop, etc. Live musicians and instruments may be used if musicians are available. Students will also gain a better understanding of the history of music and composers and also be provided with listening examples from respective categories as well as descriptions of each style. Students will gain a broad knowledge of different genres and be given listening examples illustrating which style composers contributed to in music history.

MUSIC 6

Sixth grade students will be expanding the definition of music. They will create music using found objects as well as learn to write simple musical scores. In addition, students will explore music through the visual arts. We will focus on working in groups, creativity and imagination, and following directions.

CONCERT BAND

The Concert Band is an entry-level band. It is designed to foster the development of the skills required to play traditional band instruments. The concert band rehearses every other day and is open to all CBA students.

SYMPHONIC BAND

The Symphonic Band is geared toward entry-level players up to NYSSMA Level III. This group rehearses every other day and performs at music department concerts, at Open House, and other school functions. Audition required.

WIND ENSEMBLE

The Wind Ensemble is for musicians performing at or above the NYSSMA level IV. This group rehearses every other day and performs at numerous school functions and concerts. Students wishing to participate in the Wind Ensemble must have a teacher recommendation from a CBA music teacher. Audition required.

JAZZ ENSEMBLE

Jazz Band is an audition-based ensemble. This group explores jazz music and improvisation, performs at all music concerts, and rehearses every other day. Audition required.

STUDENT INSTRUMENT LESSONS

CBA offers free instrumental group music lessons for all band instruments. Students enrolled in one of the three bands are all eligible to participate in school lessons. Students who are looking to begin school lessons at CBA should start by filling out the Prospective Musician Lesson Form (cbaalbany.org/music).

PHYSICAL EDUCATION/HEALTH

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Grades: 5-8

The Christian Brothers Academy Physical Education Program is designed to assist the student in developing his full potential. Each student is encouraged to develop a bridge between recreation and healthy living habits which will be a lifetime foundation for self-fulfillment and achievement; for caring and gaining a responsible place in society. Students are taught to value personal qualities of self-control, discipline, good sportsmanship, rules and regulations, and respect for others in life situations. Our goal is that each student possess a personal sense of self-confidence, social grace, pride toward life and self, and the desire to pursue excellence in his endeavors.

HEALTH 7

Students study the effects of heredity, environment, culture, feelings, and the needs of their personality and self-concept. They learn ways to improve mental health by reducing stress. They investigate the importance of being healthy and the need to have a plan for one's health involving the continued study of nutrition, substance abuse, and personal safety.

HEALTH 8

Students learn how self-knowledge and self-concept are related to their ability to mature, set goals, and reach those goals. They learn ways to reduce the effects of stress and improve mental health. Students study the structures and functions of the various systems of the body, as well as their healthy maintenance and the causes and treatment of their dysfunction.

SCIENCE

SCIENCE 5

Grade 5 science incorporates a variety of different sciences. We look at how scientists work, the engineering process, body systems, matter, light and sound, as well as forces of motion.

SCIENCE 6

This earth science course is designed to give students an overview of common strands in earth science, including, but not limited to: geology (rocks, plates, tectonics, earthquakes, volcanoes, and erosion), water systems (ocean and freshwater), meteorology (weather systems, patterns, and fronts), and a brief tour of astronomy. With the use of hands-on and interactive learning, students are able to increase their understanding of their environment.

LIFE SCIENCE 7

Life Science is an introductory-level course designed to help students to explore basic biological concepts in a real world setting. Students are exposed to scientific principles with regards to discovery, analysis and critical thinking, and then move on to biological concepts shared by all living things. These include cell structure and function, biochemical makeup, and inheritance. In the second semester, students will investigate human systems. The year concludes with a look at diversity of living systems.

PHYSICAL SCIENCE 8

Physical Science is a two-semester course. The first half of the year is spent discussing properties of matter, composition, and energy. The second half of the year is spent exploring Newtonian Mechanics; including motion, simple machines, energy conservation, waves, and sound. Students use cross-curricular skills to explore real world problems.

EARTH SCIENCE HONORS

Grades: 8 | Credit: 1

Earth Science is a laboratory science course that

explores origins and the connections between physical, chemical, and biological processes of the earth system. Students experience the content of Earth Science through inquiry-based laboratory investigations and focus on topics associated with matter, energy, crystal dynamics, cosmic evolution and structure, cycles, geochemical processes, and the expanded time scales needed to understand events in the earth system.

Earth Science provides the knowledge, skills, and habits of mind needed for problem solving and ethical decision making about scientific and technological issues. Embedded standards for inquiry and technology and engineering are taught in the context of the content standards for the universe, energy in the earth system, cycles in the earth system, and geologic history.

In addition, the Honors course includes reading and writing assignments that will encourage and require a greater depth of understanding of Earth Science concepts; Honors lab activities and extensions that will require more sophisticated math, geometry, trigonometry, and algebra to help convey scientific information; and, mandatory projects that will reflect the depth of understanding expected of Honors students. Students will take the NYS Earth Science Regents exam at the end of the course.

Guidelines for entry include successful completion of Life Science 7 or 7H and a teacher recommendation.

LIVING ENVIRONMENT HONORS

Grade: 8 | Credit: 1

Instruction focuses on the eight basic topics from the State Syllabus, ranging from the activities of living things to identifying and defining interrelationships among organisms. Themes describing unity and diversity of organisms are further developed into the structure and function of anatomy and the transmission of traits from generation to generation. Evolution and ecology describe patterns of the origins of organisms as well as their interdependencies.

As part of this course, the students must complete 1,200 minutes of laboratory work and must have a complete file of their satisfactory written reports for each lab. Students will take the NYS Regents exam at the end of the course.

Guidelines for entry include successful completion of Earth Science.

SOCIAL STUDIES

HISTORY 5

This course is based on the history and geography of the world. Students will develop a way of looking at the world that blends an understanding of location, resource use, landscape change, and human use of the world, while also comparing cultures, governments, and economic systems of modern nations.

HISTORY 6

This course in World History is designed to provide a look at the advances in world civilization from 5000 BC to the Age of Exploration. The study is generally confined to the Eastern Hemisphere. Areas of focus are the Neolithic Period, Ancient Mesopotamia, Egypt, Greece, India, China, Rome, Africa, Medieval Europe, and the Emerging Renaissance. Geography, multiculturalism, cultural diffusion, religion, and global interdependence rank as key themes for this course.

HISTORY 7

This course covers the history of the US from pre-Revolutionary times to 1860. Topics covered include: the geography of the Americas, Native Americans, European Colonization, the American Revolution, the development of our New Nation, the Jeffersonian Era, Growth and Expansion of the American Nation, the Jacksonian Era, the North and the South, and the Reform Era. Student learning will take place through a variety of instructional methods including: historical novels, research-based assignments, cross-curricular projects and presentations, and technology-based instruction.

HISTORY 8

This course is designed to cover United States History from 1860 to the present. Topics covered will include: the Civil War, Industrialization, Imperialism, World War I, The Great Depression, World War II, and the Cold War Era including the study of the Civil Rights Movement, Counterculture, Vietnam War, US Conflicts in the Middle East and the various changes in US foreign and domestic policies as well as cultural perceptions. Student learning will take place through a variety of instructional methods including: historical novels, research-based assignments, cross-curricular projects and presentations, and technology-based instruction.

HISTORY 8 HONORS

This course is designed to cover US History from 1860 to the present. Topics covered will include: the Civil War, Industrialization, Imperialism, World War I, The Great Depression, World War II, and the Cold War Era including the study of the Civil Rights Movement, Counterculture, Vietnam War, US Conflicts in the Middle East and the various changes in US foreign and domestic policies as well as cultural perceptions. Student learning will take place through a variety of instructional methods including: historical novels, research-based assignments, cross-curricular projects and presentations, and technology-based instruction. History 8 Honors includes an increased number of outside readings including books, primary and secondary sources, as well as academic articles. The Honors students participate in detailed discussions and complete writing assignments that focus on contemporary issues as well as the historical patterns of our society.

SPANISH

SPANISH 5

This course will serve as an introduction to Spanish culture and language. Fifth grade Spanish aims to introduce students to Spanish-speaking countries and cultures, rules of pronunciation, basic comprehension, and some reading and listening skills. Students will study other cultures, the importance of language learning, Spanish vocabulary, and simple grammatical structures of the Spanish language.

SPANISH 6

Sixth grade Spanish is designed for students to begin to learn how to speak and write Spanish. In addition, they will build listening skills. Students will learn vocabulary, grammar, and cultural aspects of the Spanish language and the countries around the world that speak it.

SPANISH 7

Seventh grade Spanish is the first half of Spanish I and aims to build the student's oral and written proficiency, as well as to begin to develop reading and listening skills. Students will learn new vocabulary, as well as grammatical structures needed to speak and write in Spanish, as they explore different Spanish-speaking cultures.

SPANISH 8

Eighth grade Spanish is the culmination of Spanish I - in accordance with the three-year sequence of the New York State plan for second language study. While studying various Spanish-speaking countries, students will further develop oral and written proficiency, as well as reading and listening skills. Students will learn new vocabulary and grammatical structures as well as build on those they have already mastered from their previous experiences in Spanish class.

THEOLOGY

THEOLOGY 5

The objective of this class is to develop a basic understanding of God's word. Activities include: experiencing God's word through Bible stories, focusing on the Golden Rule, learning how we are all created in God's Image, exploring ways to grow in faith through prayer and service, the sacraments, and gaining a basic understanding of parts of the Mass. Students will study the lives of the saints as positive role models, such as St. John Baptist de la Salle. This course is the basic foundation for our Lasallian school.

THEOLOGY 6

The focus of this class is to become familiar with the People of God and His Word. Our year begins with the basic principles of the Bible. We then cover the Four Pillars of Catechism, What Catholics Believe, How Catholics Worship, How Catholics Live, and How Catholics Pray. During this time, we also focus on Feasts and Seasons of the Liturgical Year. We will study the lives of the Saints, as well as the example of Jesus, as models for living a moral life.

THEOLOGY 7

The objective of this class is to develop a better understanding of the concepts of faith. Activities include: becoming aware of relationships with God, self, and others; developing an awareness of Jesus Christ as a real person and as a model; analyzing how modern works use themes, patterns, and character types from traditional Bible stories; applying the corporal and spiritual works of mercy into daily life; analyzing social justice issues; understanding the influential role of Christians; and, looking at the Gospels as sources of value principles.

THEOLOGY 8

This course is intended to develop an understanding of the basic concepts of the church. Activities include: looking at "freedom" as the possibility of being unique; formulating an understanding of responsibility; understanding

the Church as Community, People of God, Pilgrim, Institution, and Prophet; looking at the role of the Sacraments in the life of the community; developing verbal/non-verbal communication and evaluation skills in the group; studying the role of individuals and their place in family, church, local communities, and the world; examining the life of Jesus; applying the corporal and spiritual works of mercy into daily life; analyzing social justice issues; and, understanding the influential role of Christians.