

GRADES 6-8



The Middle School Conservatory at Harker | Grades 6-8



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The Conservatory at the Middle School

Harker is home to one of the most robust K–12 performing arts programs in the country. Whether your child is stepping on stage for the first time or diving deeper into a growing passion, we meet them where they are, offering room to hit their potential, express themselves and belong.

Middle school is all about trying new things, and The Conservatory offers students a place to take creative risks, build confidence, and find what lights them up in the classroom and productions.

Guided by experts, rooted in joy

Our performing arts faculty are professional artists and passionate educators who know how to bring out the best in every student. Students are challenged and supported in equal measure, no matter their skill level, and emphasis is placed on collaboration, inclusion and a joyful rehearsal process.

Building skills that last a lifetime

What students learn in The Conservatory stays with them forever, even if they choose not to continue performing arts. Skills like:

- Creativity and leadership are nurtured on stage and behind the scenes
- Confidence in speaking and performing in front of others
- Creativity in problem-solving and self-expression
- Communication and teamwork through ensemble work
- A sense of pride, joy and belonging

Whether your child is brand-new to the arts or ready to leap into the spotlight, we provide an environment where they can thrive at the highest level. And what begins here often becomes something extraordinary as they move into the upper school Conservatory. Whether they go on to perform in our award-winning musicals, play in our internationally renowned orchestra, or just carry that first applause in their heart, the performing arts program leaves a lasting impact and is an essential building block to your child's future goals.

Welcome!

For more information or questions, please contact Laura Lang-Ree, director of K-12 performing arts, at laura.langree@harker.org or 408.345.9641.

GRADE 6: Class Offerings

The following classes are electives held during the regular school day. Please note that some elective activities are yearlong commitments and continue to meet after school when they are no longer an elective class. The after-school schedule is compatible with concurrent participation in after-school sports and clubs.

GRADE 6 STRING ORCHESTRA

String Orchestra, which includes violins, violas, cellos and string basses, explores a range of chamber and orchestral repertoire while engaging in activities such as fundamental development, reading, learning songs by ear, and performing in concerts. Students may take both String Orchestra and Band. This course meets the prerequisite for Grade 7-8 String Orchestra and Grade 7-8 Jazz Band.

BAND

Band, which includes woodwind, brass and percussion instruments, explores a wide range of band styles from traditional to jazz to contemporary, while engaging in activities such as fundamental development, reading, learning songs by ear, and performing in concerts. Students may take both String Orchestra and Band. This course meets the prerequisite for Grade 7-8 Jazz Band and Grade 7-8 Full Orchestra.

DYNAMICS (GRADE 6 CHOIR)

Dynamics is designed for the student who loves high energy choral performing. Students sing, act and perform choreography, and are responsible for narrating several large-scale performances. Proper vocal production techniques, including support, breathing, stance, harmony and vocal projection, will be taught for singing and acting. Dynamics is a yearlong commitment.

GRADE 6 DRAMA

The drama elective is an introduction to the vocabulary and practice of theater and the dramatic arts. Through acting exercises, projects, improvisation games and play writing, students explore various elements of drama and performance. Students practice what they learn in large group activities as well as individual and partner scenes. This course is equally suitable for those students new to theater or those who have already discovered a passion for it.

GRADE 6 TECHNICAL THEATER DESIGN

Students learn the fundamentals of theatrical design from concept through presentation in this semester-long course. Using sketches, drawings, models, samples and live demonstrations, students create working designs for every aspect of theater, including lighting, sound, scenery, props, costumes and special effects. Specialty workshops, such as scenic painting, special effects makeup and costuming, add a practical, hands-on element to the class.

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GRADE 6: After School

In addition to the various performing arts electives that may be taken during the school day, Harker offers a variety of afterschool productions and classes that strengthen performance skills.

AFTER-SCHOOL DANCE AND DANCE JAMZ PRODUCTION

Our dance program gives students the opportunity to take a dance class in several different styles including jazz, modern, lyrical, ballet, hip-hop and a boys-only class.

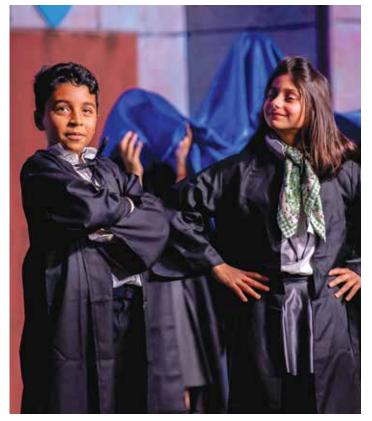
DANCE FUSION

Dance Fusion is an audition group comprising grade 4-6 boys and girls. The high-energy routines feature the styles of jazz, hip-hop and Latin, as well as partnering skills. Students selected are those who demonstrate good technique, stage presence, energy and commitment to dance. They need to maintain good academic and citizenship standing and be excellent role models for all students in the dance program.

AFTER-SCHOOL GRADE 6 PLAY

Grade 6 play is for students who love to act in a fast paced, thrilling play and develop their acting skills and to perform in a nonmusical production. Participants rehearse and produce a comedy or drama which is performed for family and friends at the end of the rehearsal process.





GRADE 7-8: Class Offerings

CONCERT CHOIR

Concert Choir is designed for grade 7-8 students who love high-energy choir performing. Students sing the highest quality of music written for choir – from Renaissance masters to composers of the 21st century – learn choreography and participate in a number of public and school performances. Proper vocal production techniques, including support, breathing, stance, harmony and vocal projection, will be emphasized. Concert Choir is a requirement to audition for Harmonics and Vivace.

HARMONICS

Harmonics is a highly skilled, audition-only choir for students who love to sing, act and dance. Students study jazz, musical theater and standard choral repertoire; music theory, acting and dance; and present dynamic performances at all three campuses throughout the year and on their annual tour.

ORCHESTRA

Orchestra is designed for young musicians who want challenging work as ensemble members and overall musicians. Students are introduced to advanced repertoire and receive a diverse musical education ranging from techniques in listening, rhythm, music theory and music history. The program feeds directly into the curriculum of the upper school orchestra program.

JAZZ BAND

Jazz Band is a course designed for wind, brass and rhythm section instrumentalists interested in performing classical and jazz repertoire. Following the National Standards for Arts Education, students will engage in a curriculum that prioritizes creativity, musicianship, playing technique and jazz history. Course objectives include reading selected repertoire, improvising in a variety of tonalities, meters and style, and learning repertoire by ear.8

VIVACE

Vivace is a traditional mixed choir of female and male voices that is chosen by audition only. Singers learn harmonies, techniques for correct vocal production and various musical styles. Vivace performs throughout the year both on and off campus.

RAZZMATAZZ

This fun and high-energy ensemble is open to all male identifying students who are currently enrolled in Concert Choir. Basses and tenors sing a wide variety of music from pop to barbershop and more!

ADVANCED ACTING/SCENE STUDY

This course is ideal for students who want to develop their acting skills using scenes and plays as their backdrop. Through games and trust-building exercises, the students work with a variety of partners to build the foundations of a collaborative learning environment. They learn basic performance skills including improvisation, pantomime, mask work, and how to use the body and voice expressively. Students discover how to develop characters through a variety of methods. The course culminates in more advanced acting projects. such as formal partner scenes, monologues, short physical comedy routines or a one-act play.

THEATER PRODUCTION AND DESIGN

Students learn the fundamentals of theatrical design from concept through presentation. Using sketches, drawings, models, samples and live demonstrations, students create working designs for every aspect of theater, including lighting, sound, scenery, props, costumes and special effects. Students gain hands-on experience by working on projects for major productions held on the middle school campus.

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GRADE 7-8: After School

In addition to the various performing arts electives that may be taken during the school day, Harker offers a variety of afterschool activities which strengthen performance skills. Students choosing one of these after-school activities to fulfill the fine and performing arts requirement must participate in the activity for the full commitment time noted in each description that follows.

DANCE AND DANCE JAMZ PRODUCTION

Dance Jamz is an annual production for students of all dance abilities. The dance program gives students the opportunity to take a dance class in several different styles of dance. Classes include jazz, modern, lyrical, ballet, tap, hip-hop and a boys-only class.

SHOWSTOPPERS

Showstoppers is an audition-only lyrical dance troupe with a focus on dance technique, stage presence and teamwork. Students need to maintain good academic and citizenship standing.

HIGH VOLTAGE

High Voltage is an audition-only hip-hop dance troupe focusing on dance technique, stage presence and teamwork. Students need to maintain good academic and citizenship standings.

MIDDLE SCHOOL SPRING MUSICAL

Each year the middle school produces a full-scale musical that provides performance opportunities for actors, singers and dancers to shine at the highest level!

CONSTRUCTION CREW FOR SPRING MUSICAL

Construction crew assists in building, painting and installing the set and equipment, and preparing the stage for the spring musical.

PRODUCTION CREW

The production crew is responsible for running the backstage operations of the shows. Crew positions include lighting, sound, follow spot operation and deck crew.

ARTS WORKSHOPS

The performing and visual arts department will offer a minimum of three workshops throughout the year covering a wide array of interests. Past topics have included hip-hop dance, clowning and stage combat.

FALL PLAY

Participants rehearse in the fall play rehearsal after school and produce a comedy or drama which is performed for their peers as well as an outside audience.

TECHNICAL THEATER CLASS

Weekly specialty workshops with industry professionals in such areas as prop-making, scenic art, special effects makeup, stage combat, costume construction and more. The class also includes Junior Mythbusters experiments and MacGyver contests.

Arts Incentive Program

The Conservatory at the middle school honors students at our end-of-year awards ceremony in May through our Arts Incentive Program. The Arts Incentive

Program recognizes students who go above and beyond in classes, ensembles, workshops and productions.

Top subject students in technical theater, theater, dance, musical theater, and vocal and instrumental musical will also be honored. Detailed information is provided to students each fall.

Enjoy delving into
The Middle School
Conservatory at Harker!













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