



## **Section V. Program. Brief Curriculum Description**

At Education without Walls, we feel our biggest responsibility to our students is to keep future opportunities readily available, metaphorically opening doors and keeping them open. We understand that students' goals and interests evolve constantly, during and after their time at EWoW. Our goal is to ensure that we provide our students with a broad knowledge base to accommodate for any shift in focus they may experience. This includes not only academics, but also life skills.

In order to ensure these needs are met, we employ four philosophical pillars as well as a general map of classes students must complete before graduation. This document contains information on both.



## **Interest-Based Learning**

Interest based learning is the core tenant of our program. When students are given the freedom to learn about topics that truly interest them, they are more engaged, more attentive, and more likely to develop a love of learning. We encourage our students of all ages to think beyond the scope of classes we currently offer and request classes in any subject that interests them. We recruit staff and assemble a class schedule each year based on the requests of students and parents. This makes each student's learning experience personalized and ultimately, what allows us to carry out our stated mission.



## **Cross-Curricular Learning**

### **Middle School**

Within our middle school program, this cross curricular study applies to all subjects. Very often, the staff will pick one topic to cover. This allows our students to study the given ecosystems and

geography in science, culture in history, literature or writing systems in english, artistic heritage in art, and even apply some relevant conversation topics in their world language lessons. This overlap allows our students to connect with the material in a multitude of different ways and ultimately, create a stronger connection to the material. Our Middle School students spend one full day per week at the Pratt Nature Center's "A Year in The Woods" program. This functions as both their health and safety class and supports their cross-curricular instruction. On any given day, this program could include instruction in math, science, and early American history.

### **High School**

Within our high school program, our cross curricular offerings are developed through the interests of our students. When a student expresses an interest in a particular subject, we strive to incorporate as many areas of study as possible so students can get a holistic view of what they are studying. Some examples include:

Our science curriculum which is based on the German model for high school science, in which portions of biology, chemistry, and physics are taught congruently.

Our humanities classes, where students have the opportunity to study the historical context of literature and vice versa, they are able to make connections on a much deeper level than if they were studying each subject separately.

Our Japanese studies curriculum was requested by students looking to learn the language so they can enjoy manga and anime on a higher level. We incorporated Japanese history and art into their language class so they had the most in-depth class experience possible.



## **Increasing Levels of Depth**

In a traditional school, for the most part, once a given level of mastery is achieved in any topic, it may not be addressed again for the majority of their education. At EWoW, we take a very different approach. We feel that the most effective way to cover material is to cover a very broad range of topics and each subsequent year, repeat many topics in increasing complexity. Our 9th graders, for example, cover more topical ground than most educators would think is possible in one year. However, most of this learning is very conceptual. Then, in subsequent years, many of the same topics are covered in more detail. This repeated exposure allows students to better

retain what they have learned, and also understand the interconnectedness of topics that may otherwise seem entirely separate. This focus on covering a broad range of topics also enables our humanities classes to move away from an overly eurocentric range of study and broaden our learning horizons to many more cultures and regions.



## Community Campus

At EWOW, we want to support our students' specialty interests in any way we can. As our mission statement suggests, we have found that the best way to celebrate a students' individuality is to foster our community. Downtown New Milford is home to a litany of specialty offerings, from dance and acting, to blacksmithing, to herbal medicine, to computer science and robot design and beyond. We often outsource our classes to the community and facilitate our students taking classes at area specialty schools and, ultimately, earning high school credit for their work. This enables students to work with an incredibly wide range of instructors and experts in their field.



## Curriculum Map

Find our curriculum map below. All classes have full descriptions in our detailed curriculum. Not all students take all classes in exactly this order, as our grade sizes are quite small, but we ensure that every student completes the requirements laid out on this map by the time they graduate.

	<b>Middle School</b>	<b>High School Year 1</b>	<b>High School Year 2</b>	<b>High School Year 3</b>	<b>High School Year 4</b>
<b>Math</b>	Arithmetic/ Pre Algebra	Pre Algebra OR Algebra I	Algebra II	Geometry	N/A or Pre Calculus or Calculus AB
<b>Science</b>	Cross Curricular Instruction	Combined Science I -Beg. Bio -Beg. Chem -Beg. Phys	Combined Science II -Topics in Bio -Int. Chem -Int. Phys	Combined Science III -Topics in Bio -Adv. Chem -Adv. Phys	Specialty Science
<b>Social Science</b>	Geography & Map Making/ Cross Curricular Instruction	Rise of the Continents	World History	Topics in His OR Psychology OR Human Geography	US History and Civics
<b>English</b>	Cross Curricular Instruction	The Hero's Journey (English)	Literature and Language II	Literature and Language II	American Literature
<b>Fine Art</b>	Improvisation OR Arts & Crafts Applied to Cross Curricular Instruction	The Hero's Journey (Sequential Art)	Arts class (level assessed on an individual basis)	Arts class (level assessed on an individual basis)	Arts class (level assessed on an individual basis)
<b>World Languages</b>	Spanish and World Cultures	Language I and Sign Language one of these three years -----	Language II  -----	Language III  ----->	N/A or continued study
<b>Health and Safety</b>	Pratt Nature Center	Outdoor Education and/ or specialty sport class	Outdoor Education and/ or specialty sport class	N/A or Continued Outdoor and and/or Specialty sport class	N/A or Continued Outdoor and and/or Specialty sport class
<b>Electives</b>	Electives based on student interests	Rodenburg technique or other elective	Rodenburg technique or other elective	Adulting 101 or other elective	Senior ISP or other elective