

# Early Light Academy

## 8th Grade Course Catalog 2026-2027

**.5 = one semester or half a year course**

**1.0 = a full-year course**

### Social Sciences Requirement

#### **U.S. History 8 (1.0) 8th**

This course covers events and issues from the Age of Exploration through post-Civil War Reconstruction and the Westward movement, emphasizing the 18th and 19th centuries. Topics covered will include, but are not limited to, exploration, colonization, the Revolutionary War, Constitutional issues, nation building, the Civil War, Reconstruction, and the Westward movement.

### Language Arts Requirement

#### **Language Arts 8 (1.0) 8th**

This course, based on the 8th Grade Utah English Language Arts (ELA) Core Standards, is designed for grade-level instruction reading comprehension, writing, methods of inquiry, and the processes, skills, and strategies for effective communication. The course will provide an opportunity for students to learn the differences and similarities between different forms of writing (argumentative, informational, narrative). Students will also be reading and analyzing a variety of texts from fiction to nonfiction. Using our school assigned reading program, we spend every class period working on tailored reading needs

#### **Language Arts 8 Basics (1.0) 8th (Placement Determined by Counselor)**

Language Arts 8 Basics provides specialized instruction aligned to the Utah 8th Grade English Language Arts Core Standards. This course focuses on strengthening foundational reading and writing skills, including sentence structure and fluency, reading comprehension, written expression, inquiry skills, and effective communication strategies.

Students read a variety of texts, including historical fiction, informational texts, and nonfiction. Using the school-assigned reading program, instruction is tailored to support individual reading needs and promote academic growth.

## Language Arts 8 Honors (1.0) 8th

*Prerequisite: Application required and available online*

This course, based on the 8th Grade Utah English Language Arts (ELA) Core Standards, is designed for students who qualify for more advanced instruction in reading comprehension, writing, methods of inquiry, and the processes, skills, and strategies for effective communication. The course will provide an opportunity for students to learn the differences and similarities between different forms of writing (argumentative, informational, narrative). Students will also be reading and analyzing a variety of texts from fiction to nonfiction. Using our school assigned reading program, we spend every class period working on tailored reading needs

## Reading Interventions 8 (1.0) 8th (Placement Determined by Counselor)

This class provides specialized instruction and focuses on 8th grade Utah English Language Arts (ELA) core standards and emphasizes comprehension, phonics, inferences, sequencing, vocabulary and editing written work. The text can include historical fiction, informational, nonfiction, or fiction.

## ELL Language Arts (1.0) 7th, 8th, 9th (Placement Determined by Counselor)

This class supports multilingual learners in grades 7–9 as they build reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills aligned with the Utah English Language Arts Core Standards. Instruction is designed to support growth in academic language and prepare students for success on the WIDA assessment through scaffolded reading, writing, and vocabulary development. Students engage with a variety of fiction and nonfiction texts while strengthening comprehension, sentence fluency, and effective communication skills across content areas.

## **Math Requirements (1 Math and 1 Lab)**

### ELA's Math Philosophy

The Junior High Math department has transitioned to a personalized competency based learning model of instruction. What this means is that all students are placed into their grade level math class and a baseline pace is set for students to show competency on their grade level math standards during the school year. While whole class instruction is still a part of the math class, the majority of student / teacher interaction happens in small groups and in individual conferences with the teacher based upon their personal math progress. Students who want to exceed the established pace are allowed to progress faster as long as they are showing

competency in the grade level standards. This allows students to not just complete their grade level content in their math class but to also progress into higher grade levels. Thus, a student would potentially be able to leave ELA having completed math levels beyond the traditional 9th grade level of Secondary Math 1.

### **8th Grade Mathematics (1.0) 8th**

In 8th Grade Mathematics, students will cover these topics:

- Real number operations (exponents, roots and scientific notation)
- Manipulating and solving multi-step one variable equations
- Formulating bivariate data (meaning an equation with 2 variables) into a linear equation and solving linear equations/systems of linear equations.
- Using functions to describe quantitative relationships.
- Analyzing two- and three-dimensional space and figures using distance, angles, similarity, and congruence.
- Understanding and applying the Pythagorean Theorem.
- Finding the volume and surface area of cylinders and cones, and the volume of spheres.
- Analyzing scatter plots and determining data distributions.

### **8th Grade Mathematics Honors (1.0) 7th and 8th**

*Prerequisite: 7th grade math or placement test.*

ELA's honors courses are accelerated courses and are geared for students who want to progress through grade level mathematics courses quicker than one school year. Students who participate in Accelerated classes all three years while at ELA have the potential of leaving ELA having completed Secondary Math 2.

### **Secondary Math I (1.0)**

*Prerequisite: 8th grade math or placement test*

The fundamental purpose of this course is to formalize and extend the mathematics that students learned in the middle grades. The critical areas, organized into units, deepen and extend understanding of linear relationships, in part by contrasting them with exponential phenomena, and in part by applying linear models to data that exhibit a linear trend. This course uses properties and theorems involving congruent figures to deepen and extend understanding of geometric knowledge from prior grades. The final unit in the course ties together the algebraic and geometric ideas studied. The Mathematical Practice Standards apply throughout each course and, together with the content standards, prescribe that students experience mathematics as a coherent, useful, and logical subject that makes use of their ability to make sense of problem situations.

## Secondary Math I Honors (1.0)

*Prerequisite: 8th grade math or placement test. Application required and available online.*

ELA's honors courses are accelerated courses and are geared for students who want to progress through grade level mathematics courses quicker than one school year. Students who participate in Accelerated classes all three years while at ELA have the potential of leaving ELA having completed Secondary Math 2.

## Secondary Math II (1.0)

*Prerequisite: Secondary Math I or placement test*

Secondary Mathematics II builds upon concepts from Secondary Mathematics I, with a strong focus on quadratic expressions, equations, and functions. Students explore the relationships between quadratic, linear, and exponential functions while extending their understanding of number systems to include real and complex numbers. Probability and data analysis are examined through conditional probability and counting methods, supporting decision-making skills. Geometric principles are deepened through the study of similarity, right triangle trigonometry, and the Pythagorean Theorem. Students also explore the algebraic and geometric properties of circles, including their equations and relationships with quadratic functions. Throughout the course, the Mathematical Practice Standards guide students in reasoning, modeling, and problem-solving, fostering a coherent and logical approach to mathematics.

## Math Beyond Secondary Math II (1.0)

*Prerequisite: Secondary Math II*

**These classes will be taught online through [Utah's SEOP program](#). While there are a number of schools you can choose from in the SEOP program, [Mountain Heights Academy](#) (MHA) is the school we have had the best outcomes with and who we recommend.**

The [MHA Course Catalog](#) gives information on their courses.

Registration is done on [the MHA website](#).

**IMPORTANT: MHA has not posted their registration deadlines for the fall yet. Be sure to check frequently so you don't miss the deadline. They DO NOT accept late registrations.**

**NCAA Issues-** The MHA website states "Mountain Heights Academy offers NCAA

accredited online courses for all Utah students in grades 7–12.” If this is a concern for you, please direct your questions to the MHA admissions department.

### **Math Lab (1.0) 7th, 8th and 9th**

This is the companion class to all math classes at ELA. This class will run similarly to the math classes and students will both reinforce standards taught in their math classes.

### **8th Grade Mathematics Basics & Lab (1.0) 8th (Placement Determined by Counselor)**

This class provides specialized instruction and focuses on formulating and reasoning about expressions and equations, including modeling an association in bivariate data (meaning an equation with 2 variables) with a linear equation, and solving linear equations and systems of linear equations; grasping the concepts of a function and using functions to describe quantitative relationships; and analyzing two- and three dimensional space and figures using distance, angle, similarity, and congruence, and understanding and applying the Pythagorean Theorem. This class will also focus on basic number operations.

## **Science Requirements (Full Year Science and Full Year Lab)**

### **Integrated Science 8 (1.0) 8th**

The eighth grade science course focuses on science and engineering as a way to practice science in a classroom setting. It is a tour through many topics in science. We will explore how matter is arranged into either simple or complex substances. We emphasize how substances store and transfer energy, which can cause them to interact physically and chemically, provide energy to living organisms, or be harnessed and used by humans. We take a look at how matter and energy cycle and change in ecosystems through processes that occur during photosynthesis and cellular respiration. Additionally, we consider the way that substances that provide a benefit to organisms, including humans, are unevenly distributed on Earth, due to geologic and atmospheric systems. Some resources form quickly, allowing them to be renewable, while other resources are nonrenewable. We examine evidence which reveals that Earth's systems change and affect ecosystems and organisms in positive and negative ways.

### **Science 8 Lab (1.0) 8th**

This class is embedded within Integrated Science 8. With science held daily, this portion of the class integrates the experiments and hands-on activities that occur as a part of the science class. This is a required part of science in 8th grade.

### **CTE Requirement**

### **Digital Literacy (0.5) 8th (required)**

Students learn the skills necessary to use computers comfortably, while improving learning, productivity, and performance. This course offers a thorough introduction to computers, networks, and computer peripherals such as printers, digital cameras, and more, including understanding an operating system, working on a laptop versus a desktop, printing and understanding five traits that almost all applications share. In addition, basic procedures with software applications, email, the Internet and Internet security, privacy, and ethics are covered.

## **Physical Education Requirement**

### **PE 8 (0.5) 8th (required)**

This is a physical education course with emphasis on skills, knowledge, and participation in a variety of team sports, conditioning, and recreational activities. This will be a co-ed class.

## **Health Requirement**

### **Health I (0.5) 8th (required)**

This course develops the skills needed to improve the quality of life by helping students to cope with and solve problems, develop positive self-image, and make healthy decisions. The students will explore positive lifestyles, disease prevention, emergency procedures, media literacy, and alcohol and drug abuse prevention. This will be a co-ed class.

## **PHOENIX Advisory – Leadership/Homeroom**

### **Phoenix Advisory (0.25) 7th, 8th, and 9th (required)**

\$ Fee required

Students will earn elective credit for this course. Students attend this class Monday thru Thursday. It covers character education and leadership. Some of the curriculum that may be used: Leader in Me, Love and Logic, Suite 360, and Resilience curriculum. This is a required course at ELA. Students will have the same advisory teacher from 7th through 9th grade.

## ***ELECTIVE COURSES***

## **Fine Arts Electives- at least 0.5 is Required for All 8th Graders**

### **Tenor/Bass Choir I** (0.5 or 1.0) 7th, 8th, & 9th

\$ Fee required

Don't miss out on the Tenor/Bass Choir! This class will be packed with energy and FUN! Yes, choir is FUN! We will sing songs from all over the world, from Bach to Rock! We will build powerful, amazing, healthy voices that can't be stopped! You will not have another class like it!

### **Soprano/Alto Choir I** (0.5 or 1.0) 7th, 8th, & 9th

\$ Fee required

ELA's Treble Choir is an amazing opportunity for ELA girls to kick it up a notch! We will work to create amazing, strong, healthy voices and great musicianship! You are not going to want to miss signing up for this class!

### **Choir II Spotlights** (1.0) 8th & 9th Co-ed

*Prerequisite: Choir I Preferred*

\$ Fee required

If you want to be involved in an amazing advanced class, this is a must for your schedule! In Spotlight Singers we study the care and cultivation of a beautiful vocal tone, aesthetic sensitivity, increasing the ability to read music, building technical vocal skills, team spirit, and responsible rehearsal habits. Spotlights consistently earns superior ratings at our festival and attends the State Festival in the spring.

### **Theatre II** (0.5 or 1.0) 8th

\$ Fee required

In this class, students will improve their acting prowess through the study of advanced improv, musical theatre, a play production, POW! (Phoenix Original Works) and more!

### **Intermediate Stage Crew** (0.5) 8th & 9th

*Prerequisite: Attend Tech Olympics the January of the school year prior*

\$ Fee required

In this class, you will learn the art of technical theatre (lights, sound, costumes, stage management, etc.). Prepare to work hard and have the time of your life! No after school hours are required.

### **Advanced Running Crew** (1.0) 8th & 9th

*Prerequisite: Attend Tech Olympics the January of the school year prior*

\$ Fee required

In this class, you will continue to learn the art of technical theatre (lights, sound, costumes, stage management, etc.). ELA Crew will be running all technical events happening in the theatre areas of ELA. Ten hours of crewing outside of class are required each quarter for this class.

Prepare to work hard and have the time of your life!

### **Orchestra I- Beginning** (0.5 or 1.0) 7th, 8th, & 9th

\$ Fee required

Are you ready to make some great music with your peers? This course is for students who are interested in playing the violin, viola, cello, or upright bass. You will learn to read music and play your instrument of choice with great technique. If you only take this class for half a year and are a beginner, sign up for Semester 1. We present one evening performance at the end of each term as part of this course. We will have one field trip as part of this class. Practice time outside of school is required. An instrument for use at home and school is required. A few school instruments are available for rent (email the instructor for details).

### **Orchestra II- Intermediate** (1.0) 7th, 8th, & 9th

*Prerequisite: Orchestra I, Elementary Orchestra, or Private Lessons*

\$ Fee required

This ensemble is for students who have played the violin, viola, cello, or upright bass in Elementary Orchestra, Orchestra I or have studied privately for at least a year. **Entrance is determined by audition.** There are at least four evening performances outside of class that are part of this course. We will go on at least one field trip as part of the class. Practice time outside of school is required. An instrument for use at home and school is required.

### **Ukulele** (0.5) Semester 1 Only, 7th, 8th, & 9th

\$ Fee required

Want to learn an instrument that you can take almost anywhere? This course is for students who are interested in playing the ukulele. We will learn to play chords, various strumming patterns, fingerstyle, ensemble playing, and how to accompany ourselves while we or others sing. Help is also given for those who want to write their own songs. We will have one in-class performance at the end of the semester. Practice time outside of school is highly encouraged. An instrument and tuner for use at home and school is required. This class can only be taken one time.

### **Guitar** (0.5) Semester 2 Only, 8th & 9th

\$ Fee required

This class, created for beginning guitarists, invites you to come and stretch your budding musical talents! We will cover basic chords, strumming patterns, fingerpicking, ensemble playing, and how to accompany ourselves or others. Help is also given for those who want to write their own songs. This is a great next step after learning ukulele. Acoustic instruments only. Practice time outside of school is required. An instrument, picks, and tuner for use at home and school is required. Capos are encouraged but not required. This class can only be taken one time.

### **Drawing I** (0.5) 7th, 8th, & 9th

\$ Fee required

This class will provide students with basic art skills and techniques across a variety of drawing media. It will also provide art experiences that will develop visual competence, expertise of skills in two-dimensional art in value and in color, and awareness of historical art movements.

### **Drawing II** (0.5) 8th, & 9th

*Prerequisite of Drawing 1*

\$ Fee required

This class will build upon the roots of Drawing I. Students will push the creative and technical components of making a drawing with emphasis on line, form, space, composition, value, color, and design. Students will widen their understanding of different mediums and begin to understand how they might be introduced into their own personal work. This class consists of drawing projects, class projects, class critiques, daily drawing and one on one direction.

### **Painting I** (0.5) 7th, 8th, & 9th

\$ Fee required

This class is a basic studio course focused on media and techniques of painting. Activity will emphasize the study of color, structure, creativity and aesthetic values in general. A command of techniques and materials, both traditional and experimental, will be taught.

### **Painting II** (0.5) 8th, & 9th

\$ Fee required

*Prerequisite: Painting I*

This class is an intermediate studio course focused on more creative expressions of acrylic and watercolor painting. Activity will emphasize career applicable painting prompts that demand the use of more advanced painting techniques that build on the content taught in painting 1. Experimentation with mixed-media and oil painting techniques will also be explored and incorporated into the creation of a student portfolio that we create over the course of the semester.

### Photography I (0.5) 7th, 8th, & 9th

\$ Fee required

This course covers basic concepts and practice in digital photography. Access to a camera is required to complete work outside of class. Point and Shoot cameras are available for in class use, but there are no cameras available for check out. The course covers Composition Rules such as Leading Lines, Rule of Thirds, Contrast, and more. Students will also learn and experiment with several of the major photographic styles including: Portraiture, Still Life, Landscape, Abstract, and Photojournalism. The last unit of the course is a brief introduction to the use of DSLR cameras and the use of manual camera controls. **No repeats.**

### Photography II (0.5) 8th, & 9th

\$ Fee required

*Prerequisite: Photography I*

This course builds upon skills learned in Photography 1. The course is designed around the use of DSLR cameras. Access to a personal DSLR camera is strongly recommended. Limited cameras are available for check out. Students will learn basic Photoshop skills, differences in file formats, and will become proficient in manual camera controls. Students will use these skills to experiment and approach artistic problems creatively. Projects will focus on prompt based work so students can express their unique artistic voice. **No repeats.**

## CTE/Computer Tech Electives

### Photo III/Photojournalism (0.5 or 1.0) 8th & 9th

*Prerequisite: Photography I and/or II*

\$ Fee required

The course is designed around the use of DSLR cameras. Access to a personal DSLR camera is strongly recommended. Limited cameras are available for check out. Apply the photography skills you gained in Photography 1 and 2 to take portraits and action photos for the yearbook. We will tell the story of ELA's students, athletics, events, and culture in stunning images. We will also complete advanced photography projects and create a portfolio of work as well as building upon the Photoshop skills learned previously to complete more advanced photo manipulation. **This class is repeatable.**

### Media Arts/Phoenix Feed (0.5 or 1.0) 7th, 8th, & 9th

\$ Fee required

In this course students will learn basic video production skills including storyboarding, video recording, studio lighting, and basic video editing, etc. They will use these skills to create the

school news video, The Phoenix Feed as well as to create personal video projects. **This class is repeatable.**

### **Robotics Technology** (0.5) 8th & 9th

\$ 10 Fee required: *Programming experience required.*

An introductory course focused on robotics technologies and what it means to be living in an automated world. Students will gain an understanding of how robotics impact the environment, society, and the economy. Students will develop a foundation in essential abilities and attitudes in connection with math and science skills that will in turn expand their opportunities in the world of automation. Students will be introduced to software design, coding structures and creating computer programs for a robot to perform physical tasks. **No repeats.**

### **Creative Coding** (0.5) 7th & 8th

\$ Fee required

Creative coding is an introductory computer science course that empowers students to create authentic artifacts and engage with computer science as a medium for creativity, communication, problem solving, and fun. We will start by exploring computer science as a way humans try to solve problems. We will then learn to create using the programming languages that power the internet as well as those that power games and animations. **No repeats.**

## **Physical Education Electives**

### **Group Sports** (0.5) 7th, 8th & 9th

\$ Fee required

This course is designed to practice skills needed for a variety of sports which require group participation and cooperation. Some sports might include basketball, soccer, volleyball, hockey and many more. **No repeats in the same year.**

### **Kickboxing** (0.5) 7th, 8th & 9th

\$ Fee required

Kickboxing is a group fitness class that combines martial arts techniques with fast-paced cardio. A basic boxing workout that involves a combination of punches and kicks performed at a quick pace to boxing bags and pads. You will learn proper form for the famous jab, hooks, crosses, uppercuts, back kicks, front kicks and more. **No repeats in the same year.**

### **Weight Training** (0.5) 8th & 9th

\$ Fee required

This course is designed as an introduction to proper weightlifting techniques and includes the development of individual programs that develop body tone, muscle strength, and physical conditioning. **No repeats in the same year.**

### **Total Body Fitness** (0.5) 7th, 8th, & 9th

\$ Fee required

This class is a total body aerobic and strength conditioning workout. This interval-based class combines full-body strength training with high-intensity cardio bursts designed to tone your body, improve your endurance, and clear your mind before you start your busy day! This class includes circuit training and stretching for a complete workout. All levels are welcome! **No repeats in the same year.**

### **Yoga** (0.5) 7th, 8th, & 9th

\$ Fee required

This class introduces foundational yoga postures, teaches you how to breathe, and helps you feel more comfortable in the yoga practice. Students will be introduced to yoga postures through step-by-step verbal description and demonstration. Emphasis is placed on student understanding, safety, and stability within each pose. This class will help you relax the physical body while helping to quiet the mind and calm the nervous system. Leave relaxed, content, and ready to take on the day! Open to students of all levels. **No repeats in the same year.**

### **Beginning Tumbling** (0.5) 7th, 8th, & 9th

\$ Fee required

This course offers instruction in basic tumbling skills including: handstands, cartwheels and round-offs. Strength and flexibility will be emphasized. This is designed for a beginning level for students who haven't mastered these skills yet. **No Repeats in the same year.**

## **Other Electives**

### **Creative Writing I** (0.5) 7th, 8th, & 9th

This course is designed as an introduction into the world of creative writing. We will discuss the different types of creative writing as well as what it takes to get published. Students will write multiple short stories and do other activities that promote creativity and fluency in writing. This class is for those who are interested in developing their writing skills as a creative outlet.

## **Creative Writing II (0.5) 7th, 8th, & 9th**

*Prerequisite: Creative Writing I*

This course is designed to build upon the foundational writing skills acquired in earlier years and deepen students' understanding of various forms of creative expression. Through a combination of writing exercises, workshops, and literary analysis, students will explore different genres, styles, and techniques in creative writing. The course will emphasize both the development of individual voice and the importance of revising and editing for clarity and impact.

## **Yearbook/Graphic Design (0.5 or 1.0) 8th & 9th**

*Application/interview required*

\$ Fee required

This course will teach students basic journalism skills such as but not limited to: note-taking, planning, interviewing, story writing, editing, etc. They will also learn team building and leadership skills while collaborating on various yearbook projects. Graphic Design skills will be taught in order to create a visually strong presentation of our school's memories. Students will learn basic principles of design, color theory, and digital calligraphy. Lastly, they will learn basic life skills such as meeting deadlines, writing skills, and social skills.

## **Fashion Design Studio (0.5) 7th, 8th, & 9th**

\$ Fee required

This course explores how fashion influences everyday life and introduces students to the fashion industry. Topics covered include fashion fundamentals, elements and principles of design, textiles, consumerism and fashion related careers, with an emphasis on personal fashion application.

## **Study Skills (0.5 or 1.0) 7th, 8th, & 9th**

This course supports core academic study and teaches study skills. It also enhances students' ability to look at their grades, make short-term goals, and work on assignments they need to complete. This course is designed to provide academic support to students in their core content coursework.

## **Peer Mentor (0.5) 8th & 9th**

*Application and approval needed*

Peer Mentoring is designed for students who wish to enrich their learning experience through the process of assisting other students in mastering course content. Students who apply for this course are pre-screened according to their academic proficiency and attitudes toward the

mentoring process. Additionally, students selected to participate in this course are expected to maintain a high level of conduct and develop/demonstrate effective communication and interpersonal skills, along with basic teaching strategies. Qualified students are assigned to a content specific class to help the teacher with tutoring services. Peer mentors will be fully trained on peer mentoring skills, rules and procedures, data collection, and other teaching skills.

### **Student Aide** (0.5) 8th & 9th

*8th graders will be placed if there are still spots AFTER 9th graders have had a chance to sign up. Students do not select the teacher.*

A student aide is a helper to a teacher or other staff member. Duties will vary including making copies, assisting other students, organizing or any errands needed by teachers. Students must have good attendance and be on time because a teacher is counting on you to be there. Successful student aides are patient, responsible, and kind. Students may have written reflections throughout their course, in addition to being an aide. This course is pass/fail. A pass earns credit, but does NOT count in the GPA. **Students are limited to being an aide for only one semester to allow them to explore our many electives. Do not sign up unless you are willing to assist any teacher.**

### **Directed Studies** (1.0) 7th, 8th, & 9th (Placement Determined by Counselor)

This class provides specialized instruction. It spends part of each class period learning social and life skills. The rest of the period the students work independently on classwork from other classes with the support of the teacher and aides. It helps students to learn study skills, and implement it into their daily class work.