

Bak Middle School of the Arts

Course Descriptions for 2025/2026

6th Grade Art Major Classes and Elective Selections

Required art major classes are in bold print.

Communications

Communications Studies - Mandatory course for Communications majors

This introductory class is required for all 6th grade communications majors and is divided into four sections: one nine weeks of foundations in **video production** where students will learn the basics of camera operation, shot composition and storyboarding; one nine weeks of **broadcast journalism** where students will learn how to effectively communicate a message in the TV and radio news medium; one nine weeks in introductory **speech**; and one nine weeks in **computer technology**.

Introduction to Journalism - Mandatory course for Communications majors

In the evolving media landscape, journalists are expected to be multimedia storytellers. This course prepares students with the basics of journalism, including objectivity, accuracy, credible sourcing and strong, balanced writing, as well as how to tell stories visually through photojournalism. Students will cover media law and ethics, news literacy and the many styles of news writing, including features, editorials, reviews, sports and more. Students interested in joining the newspaper or yearbook staff in grade 7 or 8 are selected from this course.

Dance

Dance I – Mandatory course for Dance majors

Prerequisite - Dance major. Two yearlong periods of dance are required for all 6th grade majors. These will include classes in both ballet and modern dance. Classes will focus on ballet and modern techniques with exposure to anatomy, dance history, and movement analysis. Students will be placed in levels according to experience and ability.

Band

All band majors will be placed in an ensemble and techniques class.

A major ensemble* based on their audition:

*Intermediate Band, *Concert Band, or *Advanced Band

Technique Class – (Brass, Percussion, & Woodwinds)

Students will be expected to furnish a suitable instrument for class. The content will include refined reading of intermediate music and development of consistent performance techniques.

Music Theory – potential yearlong elective

This course may be offered to 6th grade Band majors in Concert or Advanced Band. This course provides the opportunity to study theoretical music principles in depth and apply them to creative activities. Music theory fundamentals and related applications are addressed.

Piano

Piano – Intermediate I

This course is required for all 6th grade Piano Majors and provides students with introductory experiences on the keyboard in performance skills and interpretation of simple notation. The content includes the development of music fundamentals, keyboard performance techniques and interpretation of musical notation.

Note: 6th grade piano majors will be placed in an additional semester of piano as one of their electives.

Strings

All strings majors will be placed in one of the following:

Intermediate I Strings

Prerequisite – Acceptance into the strings program at Bak MSOA. Students will be expected to furnish a suitable instrument for class. School instruments may be rented based on director's recommendation and availability. This course provides students with instruction in the development of technical skills on orchestral stringed instruments. Content includes development of fundamental skills in reading musical notation, music theory and fundamental techniques.

Intermediate II or Advanced Strings

Prerequisite – Demonstrated proficiency and/or teacher recommendation. These courses provide students with instruction in the application of musicianship and technical skills through the study of varied string orchestra literature. Content includes interpreting medium level string music, ensemble performance skills, refining tone production, reading musical notation and aesthetic perceptions. Practice outside of class is expected and private lessons are encouraged.

Vocal Music

Chorus I

This course provides students with experience and applications of vocal production techniques and part-singing. The content includes enabling students to individually refine skills in vocal tone production, part-singing, choral performance techniques, musical literacy and music appreciation. This is a performance-oriented course and will require extra rehearsals and performances beyond the school day as announced by the director.

Music Theory – year long required elective

This course is required of all Vocal Music majors. This course provides the opportunity to study theoretical music principles in depth and apply them to creative activities. Music theory fundamentals are addressed.

Theater

Theater Level I - Mandatory course for Theater majors

Prerequisite: Theater major. Two periods of theater are required for all 6th grade theater majors. This course provides the opportunity for self-expression through dramatic activities. The content may include, but is not limited to, instruction in dramatic literature, movement, voice, improvisation, directing, set design and construction, obligations and elements of theater, theater history, musical theater, costuming, and make-up for the stage.

Visual Arts

Visual Arts Studies I - Mandatory course for Visual Arts majors

This course includes one semester of 2/D art and one semester of 3/D art. In the 2/D course, students are provided with the experiences necessary for understanding, appreciating and producing two-dimensional works of art. Experiences are provided in perception, description, and use of the compositional qualities and subject matter of two-dimensional works of art. In the 3/D course, students are provided with the experiences necessary for understanding, appreciating and producing three-dimensional works of art. Perceiving and responding to basic design concepts in three-dimensional works of art is emphasized.

Methods and Materials – Mandatory course for Visual Arts majors

Methods and Materials is a class to inform and help students get acquainted with the multitude of art making mediums. The focus of this class is the proper use, care, and maintenance of art supplies for a working artist. Students will explore traditional and experimental ways of using these mediums.

General Electives

All 6th graders should review all electives and prioritize five choices. This way students will be ready to complete their course selection sheet. Remember, one of your electives must be Beginning French or Beginning Spanish. Don't forget, your art major is not considered an elective because it is required.

Creative Writing – semester long elective

This is a semester-long class that provides students an outlet for self-expression through imaginative writing in poetry and fiction. Students will learn the importance of daily writing and revision to help develop their unique style and voice. Students will explore various genres, participate in writing workshops, and even self-publish their work. They will also learn to meet deadlines – like the literary professionals do – and engage in class critiques and peer feedback.

Intro to Digital Media – semester long elective

The content of this course includes, but is not limited to, the use of commercially available software programs like Word, PowerPoint, Excel, Google Docs, Google Email, Google Classroom, and Photoshop. Students will acquire basic knowledge that will help them improve their technology skills. This course is open to grades 6 & 7.

(Communication majors may not choose this elective.)

Introduction to Speech and Debate for non-majors – semester long elective

This semester course covers a variety of styles of public speaking and formal debate. Through research and practice students will become familiar with these styles through instruction, interactive activities and in class performance opportunities. This course is open to grade 6. ***(Communication majors may not choose this elective.)***

Tap - semester long elective, all grades

Beginning Tap - Offered to all majors and recommended for individuals who have never tap danced before or for a long time, this class will teach basic tap vocabulary, rhythms, style and execution. No previous experience necessary but tap shoes are required. Great class for anyone interested in musical theatre.

Intermediate/Advanced Tap – Offered to all majors, this class will review all basic tap steps as well as introduce advanced steps and combinations. This class is for experienced tap dancers only. Tap shoes are required.

Piano – semester long elective

Open to students in all art areas and grade levels. This course is designed to give students an opportunity to begin or continue their study of keyboard music and technique while in another major art area at MSOA. This course is open to grades 6, 7 and 8.

Visual Arts for non-majors – semester long elective

This course provides students with opportunities to develop a basic knowledge of the artistic expression of ideas through two and three-dimensional media. This course offers the opportunity to learn and apply various drawing techniques to non-visual majors. Students will work on alternative methods of creating the illusion of 3-dimensional images on 2-dimensional surfaces. Open to grades 6, 7 and 8.

(Visual Arts majors may not choose this elective.)

Intro to Theater for non-majors – semester long elective

In this comprehensive theatre course students will gain knowledge and experience as actors. Students will participate in a variety of acting exercises, theatre games and improvisations and apply what they learn to preparing and presenting monologues and scenes from plays. Students will also have the opportunity to develop their own skits and scenes based on their Improv work in class. Open to grades 6 & 7.

(Theater majors may not choose this elective.)

Robotics – semester long elective

This course aims to guide students in learning the basics of mechanical engineering, design, and computer programming, with an understanding of such concepts as:

- sturdy construction
- gear ratios
- gears
- motors, lamps, and sensors
- center of gravity
- levers
- engineering teamwork
- programming structures- loops, forks, subroutines

More importantly, the course aims for students to learn to think like engineers- to learn to break down complex problems into simpler, solvable blocks; to model and describe what they want something to do; to see failure as an **essential** opportunity to learn rather than as a judgment upon their ability.

Open to students in all art areas and grade levels.

Beginning French – semester long elective (Note: this course is **not** for the native speaker)

This sixth grade exploratory course in French will introduce students to basic vocabulary and culture. We will focus on a variety of topics including basic greetings, numbers, days, months, seasons, weather, the alphabet, body parts, likes and dislikes, family and colors. This course is intended to elicit interest in the language that will inspire future study.

Beginning Spanish – semester long elective (Note: this course is **not** for the native speaker)

This sixth grade exploratory course in Spanish will introduce students to basic vocabulary and culture. We will focus on a variety of topics including basic greetings, numbers, days, months, seasons, weather, the alphabet, body parts, likes and dislikes, family and colors. This course is intended to elicit interest in the language that will inspire future study.

Critical Thinking – year long elective

This elective is designed to build and strengthen academic skills and then put these skills into practice through activities, school assignments and homework completion. Participation in this class is especially suited to those students who are involved in activities outside of the school day and have a very busy schedule. Note: If you do not have technology at home, you should choose Critical Thinking as one of your electives. Open to all grades.

Media Center Aide – semester long elective

Students who wish to work in the media center **must have a note of recommendation from their 5th grade teacher. Without this recommendation, they will NOT be placed in this elective.** They must be students who are responsible, trustworthy and dependable. They must be able to take direction, learn new skills and follow through with the tasks they are given to do. Notes of recommendation may be brought to 6th grade registration and attached to the course selection sheet **OR emailed directly to Kathy.tyler@palmbeachschools.org**

Please do not do both. Be sure the student's first and last name is stated in the letter.

Required in 6th grade for all majors

Arts Exploration (one semester)

The purpose of Arts Exploration is to expand the knowledge and appreciation of all art programs offered at Bak. Students will develop team cooperation skills as they adventure into arts classes around the campus. Students will also receive valuable understanding of the media center through computer technology. Every sixth grader is required to participate in this class for one semester.

Physical Education (one semester)

Every 6th grader is required to participate in one semester of physical education during their 6th grade year. (In grades, 7 and 8 PE is chosen as an elective only.)

Offered to ESE students only - per IEP

Learning Strategies (year)

This course is offered to ESE students who have it noted on their IEP. Learning strategies provides extra support to ESE students in their academic and arts classes, as well as organizational skills and strategies.