



# 7th Grade Curriculum Statements 2018-2019

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## Language Arts

**Teacher:** Kara Combs

**Class Time:** Five classes per six-day rotation

**Class Size:** 12-19 students

### **Skills & concepts for writing, vocabulary, and public speaking:**

- To listen actively
- To express oneself clearly in writing
- To recognize qualities of good writing (both process and product)
- To craft texts in a variety of genres (poems, essays, personal narratives, etc.)
- To use literary techniques, such as vivid verbs and alliteration
- To revise to improve content
- To edit and proofread for grammar, spelling, punctuation, capitalization
- To build vocabulary
- To speak expressively, persuasively, and confidently when making oral presentations

### **Skills & concepts for literature:**

Throughout the year, students learn to appreciate the close relationship between literature and human life. The literature program includes books set in several regions of the world and during different historical time periods. By the end of the year, students should be able to understand these essential questions:

- How do our connections to others change us?
- How can literature change us?
- How can we change the world?

### **Texts & Materials:**

- **Grammar/Mechanics:** *Hands-On English*, by Fran Santoro Hamilton, is the primary textbook. Mini-lessons from this and a variety of iPad apps, websites, and other sources are incorporated into writing units throughout the year.
- **Vocabulary:** Students use the workbook *Vocabulary for Achievement, Second Course*. They also glean new vocabulary from literature.

**Literature:** Many short stories, novels, and poems are assigned for the entire class to read, such as:

- *Persepolis* by Marjane Satrapi
- *The Outsiders* by S.E. Hinton
- *I Will Always Write Back* by Caitlin Alifirenka and Martin Ganda
- "Flowers for Algernon" (short story and play)
- *The Ladies No. 1 Detective Agency* by Alexander McCall Smith
- *Cool Salsa: Bilingual Poems on Growing Up in the United States* edited by Lori M. Carlson

Students also participate in a Young Adult reading program with the assistance of the school librarians.

### **Units & Activities for writing and vocabulary:**

**Composition:** The aim of the composition program is to enable students to generate fresh ideas for writing and to express themselves clearly, logically, and creatively. Types of writing include narratives, essays, persuasive speeches, reviews, letters, and poetry. Students often critique one another's papers

(peer review), and revision is stressed. Students are expected to hand in all drafts along with their final copies so that they can see how their work evolved.

**Grammar/Writing Mechanics:** Students are expected to use standard mechanics for all writing assignments. *Hands-On English* is a primary reference book. For spelling, students will be expected to learn and use 100 specific words that follow a variety of spelling rules and patterns.

**Vocabulary:** Each lesson in the vocabulary textbook features ten words that focus on a topic (e.g., dialects) or a root (e.g., '-duce). There is a quiz after every two lessons. In addition, students learn terms in their class novels as they focus on using context clues to decipher meanings.

**Kara Combs**

7th & 8th Grade Language Arts/Director of Service Learning

- Began teaching at Green Acres in 2006
- Started teaching in 2001
- Hometown: Rockville
- High School: Wheaton High School
- Undergrad: Shepherd University, B.S. Recreation and Leisure/Sports Management
- Graduate School: Trinity College, MAT, Education
- Hobbies & Passions: Basketball, Reading, Playing with my kids
- Contact Info: [karac@greenacres.org](mailto:karac@greenacres.org) and x140



## Social Studies

**Teacher:** Stephen Michel

**Class Time:** Four classes per six-day rotation

**Class Size:** 16 students

**Skills and Concepts:**

*Some Essential Questions...*

- What does it mean to be an “American”?
- What rights, if any, does everyone have just by being born?
- How could fighting in a war change someone’s life?
- What does it mean to be “free”? What about “equal”?
- How does point of view change the story of history?
- Does society need to have people who are “haves” and “have-nots”?
- How does the media affect our views about the government?
- Should the USA become involved in foreign conflicts?

*Skills: Students will...*

- Connect history to the present
- Analyze and use primary and secondary sources
- Identify what makes a source credible and reliable
- Determine the adequacy and/or relevancy of information
- Utilize evidence and examples to support ideas
- Read and analyze data on maps, charts, and other visual tools
- Use economics as a means to understand history

- Read and discuss current events news articles
- Collaborate during class discussions and listen actively
- Take effective notes
- Organize thoughts and put them into an outline or graphic organizer
- Check for consistency of information, standard grammar, and mechanics in writing
- Develop their ability and confidence in public speaking (individually and as a group)
- Write essays and a research paper
- Use technology to present information and ideas clearly and efficiently.

**Selected Texts and Supplementary Materials Used:**

- *A Young People's History of the United States*. Howard Zinn, adapted by Rebecca Stefoff
- *The Nystrom Atlas of United States History*
- *History of US, vol. 7-9*. Joy Hakim.
- *We Were There Too! Young People in U.S. History*. Philip Hoose
- *The Century for Young People*. Peter Jennings and Todd Brewster

**Units of Study**

- *US Civics overview*
- *Lead up to the Civil War*
- *Civil War*
- *Reconstruction*
- *Westward Expansion*
- *The Gilded Age*
- *Spanish American War*
- *Progressive Era*
- *World War I*

**Major Activities and Assessments**

- *Document-Based Writing*
- *Library based research project on the Civil War*
- *Analyzing the Film Glory*
- *Gilded Age Research Project*
- *Treaty of Versailles Simulation*
- *Progressive Senate Campaign Simulation*
- *Current Events Presentations and Discussions*

**Stephen Michel**

5th & 6th Grade Drama/7th Grade Social Studies and Advisory

Assistant Director of Service Learning for 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> Grade

- Began teaching at Green Acres in 2015
- Started teaching in 2010
- Hometown: Washington, DC
- High School: St. Andrew's Episcopal School
- Undergrad: Hamilton College, B.A., Concentration in Theater, Minors in Education and Psychology
- Graduate School: Bank Street College of Education, M.S. Ed. in Childhood Education
- Hobbies & Passions: Theater, Board games, Movies, Graphic Novels, Running
- Contact Info: StephenM@greenacres.org and x150

## **Advanced Algebra** **(Year one of two-year course)**

**Teacher:** David Sheridan

**Class Time:** Five classes per six-day rotation

**Class Size:** 13 students

### **Skills and Concepts:**

- Expressions: numerical versus algebraic; evaluation of expressions to solve real-world problems
- Proper written techniques and processes of algebra
- Solving multi-step algebraic equations and solving "real-world" problems by using algebraic models
- Representing functions visually as graphs, rules, or tables
- Integers, real numbers, rational numbers; properties of numbers and order of operations; exponents and powers
- Problem-solving work with Mathcounts and the Maryland Math League Contest
- Modeling applications with linear equations; solving linear equations and formulas
- Graphing linear equations and functions; investigating slope as the rate of change and its use in multiple fields
- Identifying functions, domain/range, independent/dependent variables
- Solving and graphing linear inequalities
- Solving systems of equations by graphing, substitution, and elimination
- Simplifying and evaluating powers; graphing and modeling data with exponential growth and decay
- Calculating probability and odds; determining combinations and permutations
- Using a graphing calculator, and math tools on the iPad
- Several projects to illustrate practical applications of algebraic modeling

### **Texts and Supplementary Materials Used:**

- *HMH Fuse, Algebra 1*
- All accompanying material: lesson masters, enrichment, quizzes, tests, and graphics
- Topical material from magazines and newspapers
- Illustrative manipulatives
- Various online resources

### **David Sheridan**

7th Grade Math, Advanced Algebra, and Advisory/8th Grade Advanced Algebra and Algebra

- Began teaching at Green Acres in 2006
- Started teaching in 1995
- Hometown: Presque Isle, Maine
- Undergrad: Pomona College, BA, History
- Graduate School: UMUC, MS, Technology Management; UMUC, MBA
- Hobbies & Passions: Motorcycle, Hot peppers, Cooking vegan food
- Contact Info: [davids@greenacres.org](mailto:davids@greenacres.org) and x174

## Pre-Algebra

**Teacher:** Victor Stekoll

**Class Time:** Five classes per six-day rotation

**Class Size:** 11 students

### Skills and Concepts:

- Numerical versus algebraic expressions and how they are used in problem-solving
- Math vocabulary, converting between written and symbolic math
- Review of multiplication and long division; performing calculations with large numbers (as needed)
- Integer operations, focusing on computations with negatives
- Solving equations, using proper written processes to solve equations and check solutions
- Practical application of modeling with algebraic equations
- The real number system and subsets of numbers
- Performing mathematical operations with fractions, ratios, rates and proportions
- Factoring and using factors in problem-solving, GCF, LCM
- Evaluating and simplifying powers
- Using ratios and percents for comparisons and to model changes; finding percents with proportions and equations
- Learning the relationships between algebra and geometry; applying algebraic concepts to understand geometric relationships
- Using the coordinate systems
- Using charts and graphs to represent data and visualize arrays of information
- Graphing linear equations and investigating slope as rate of change
- Using scientific calculators
- Using graphing calculators

### Texts and Supplementary Materials Used:

- *On-line version of Holt McDougal, Pre-Algebra, 2012*
- All accompanying material: lesson masters, enrichment, quizzes, tests, and overheads
- Illustrative manipulatives
- Various online resources

### Victor Stekoll

7<sup>th</sup> Grade Math, 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Photography/8<sup>th</sup> Grade World Studies, Advisory, and Photography

- Began teaching at Green Acres in 1984
- Started teaching in 1978
- Hometown: Houston, Texas
- Undergrad: University of North Texas, Communications and Social Science
- Graduate School: American University, International Communication and Development
- Hobbies & Passions: Bicycling, Gardening, Music Appreciation, Photography, Travel, Outdoor Activities
- Victor has lived in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Italy and speaks Italian and Spanish.
- Contact Info: victors@greenacres.org and x166

## Math

**Teacher:** David Sheridan

**Class Time:** Five classes per six-day rotation

**Class Size:** 8 students

### Skills and Concepts:

- Order of operations, evaluating numerical expressions
- Mathematical properties
- Writing and simplifying algebraic expressions
- Negative numbers; operations with negative integers
- Solving single-step equations with integers
- Rational numbers
- Mathematical operations with fractions and decimals
- Equations with fractions
- Ratios, rates, proportions
- Applications of proportions with similarity and scale
- Using and plotting points on the coordinate plane
- Rate of change and linear relationships
- Percent, fraction, and decimal conversions
- Percent of change
- Application of percents
- Graphically representing and analyzing data

Focus throughout the year:

- Building numerical and procedural fluency.
- Application of math in the world around us.
- Developing and growing problem-solving practices.
- Emphasis on proper written techniques and format for math

### Texts and Supplementary Materials Used:

Holt McDougal Mathematics Grade 7

Supplemental materials from textbook and online textbook resources, including lesson masters, enrichment, quizzes, tests, and graphics

Mathcounts practice materials

### David Sheridan

7th Grade Advanced Algebra, Math, and Advisory/8th Grade Advanced Algebra and Algebra

- Began teaching at Green Acres in 2006
- Started teaching in 1995
- Hometown: Presque Isle, Maine
- Undergrad: Pomona College, BA, History
- Graduate School: UMUC, MS, Technology Management; UMUC, MBA
- Hobbies & Passions: Motorcycle, Hot peppers, Cooking vegan food
- Contact Info: [davids@greenacres.org](mailto:davids@greenacres.org) and x174

## Science

**Teacher:** Merita Zajmi

**Class Time:** Four classes per six-day rotation

**Class Size:** 15-16 students

**Overview:** The goal for the seventh grade science curriculum is to engage students in scientifically-oriented questions and to guide them to formulate explanations after summarizing their own observations. Students will also work on discovering ways to access information needed to form reasonable and logical arguments on the topic. For most of the activities, students will work in teams. They will brainstorm ideas, identify problems, and find solutions.

**Skills:** Ask questions, conduct research, develop predictions, design controlled experiments with more than one variable, perform tests with multiple trials, record observations, display results in charts and graphs, draw conclusions, build theories, and communicate the results of their findings.

**Topics for inquiry this year include:**

**Chemistry:** Students will study matter, its properties and changes. Identify types of mixtures and solutions through food chemistry experiments. Students will learn about the makeup of atoms, elements, and substances. They will investigate the essential elements in various foods and vitamins.

**Physics:** Students study the forces around us that contribute to motion. Students use the engineering design process to build models based on the concepts being explored.

**Astronomy:** Students will use simulations to grasp how movements of the earth create seasons, why the sky appears to move, how day and night are created, etc. Students will explore our solar system as part of the universe.

**Biology:** Students will use cell templates and microscopes to study different cells. Students will investigate cell processes like photosynthesis, respiration, fermentation, reproduction, etc.

**Ecology:** Students will learn about wetlands, beach erosion, maritime forests, microorganisms, food webs, and living animals and their habitats. Students will study the growth of populations and what impacts this growth in a living world. Students will conduct experiments and complete their research as they spend four days of outdoor learning at Chincoteague Island in Virginia.

### Merita Zajmi

7th Grade Science/8th Grade Science and Advisory

- Began teaching at Green Acres in 2007
- Started teaching in 1992 and then again in 1999
- Hometown: Shkoder, Albania
- Undergrad: University of Shkodra, Albania, School of Education, Mathematics and Physics Education
- Hobbies & Passions: Reading, Cooking, Spending time with family and friends
- Mother of two Green Acres Alumni and Kir (currently in 6th Grade).
- Contact Info: meritaz@greenacres.org and x139

## Spanish

**Teacher:** Julie Pflieger

**Class Time:** Four classes per six-day rotation

**Class Size:** 16 students

### Skills and Concepts:

- **Awareness** of and **appreciation** for the Spanish language and Hispanic culture, including development of the ability to compare and contrast grammatical and cultural knowledge.
- **The four areas of language:** listening, speaking, reading, writing; development of strategies for polishing these skills and becoming more effective language learners.
- **Vocabulary:** review of greetings, numbers, days and dates, weather, telling time, geographical terms, likes and dislikes, classroom activities, extracurricular activities, daily routines, shopping, running errands, driving terms, childhood events, celebrating holidays, natural disasters, accidents, events in the emergency room.
- **Grammar:** Review of definite and indefinite articles, nouns, noun-adjective agreement, subject pronouns, subject-verb agreement, asking and answering questions, possessive adjectives, object pronouns, informal commands, comparisons and superlatives, demonstrative adjectives and pronouns, idiomatic expressions.
- **Verbs:** present tense (regular -ar, -er, and -ir verbs, stem-changing and irregular verbs), present progressive, regular preterite (simple past) tense.
- **Culture:** introduction to the Spanish-speaking world through video stories. Geography, famous Spanish personalities.

### Texts and Supplementary Materials Used:

- E-textbook: *Realidades 2*, Pearson (first 8 chapters.)
- Online practice workbooks to accompany *Realidades 2*, found on [www.realidades.com](http://www.realidades.com)
- Audio and video materials to accompany *Realidades 2*
- Maps, newspapers, magazines, music, videos, games in Spanish
- Teacher-made worksheets and presentations

### Methods of Evaluation:

- Homework
- Quizzes
- Conversational and listening practice
- Projects and writing assignments
- Use of Spanish in class

### Julie Pflieger

7th Grade Spanish and Advisory/8th Grade Spanish/Peru Trip Coordinator

- Began teaching at Green Acres in 2016
- Started teaching in 2015
- Home Country: Cuba
- Undergrad: Mt. Vernon College, BA in Elementary Education and Psychology
- Hobbies & Passions: Traveling, Hiking, Fishing
- Contact info: <mailto:juliep@greenacres.org> and x130

## Physical Education

**Teachers:** Larry Jodrie (Lead), Derek Edwards, and Lauren Essig

**Class Time:** Four classes per six-day rotation (one held jointly with the 8<sup>th</sup> grade)

**Class Size:** 32 students

### Skills and Concepts:

- Individual skills taught in the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grades are reviewed once again, but are done at near game speed with defensive pressure applied by a partner.
- Intermediate individual skills are introduced with defensive pressure applied by a partner at near game speed.
- Higher levels of tactical applications are used during live and dead ball situations.
- Students review rules learned in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade and introduce more advanced rules in each sport.
- One vs. one, two vs. one, two vs. two, and seven vs. seven situation play to give students an opportunity to use their individual skills in simulated game conditions.
- Review the concept of “width” and “depth” as they relate to using skills in game situations.
- Introduction of intermediate tactical concepts such as the “principle of overload,” (trying to outnumber the defense in a particular zone), and using passes and player cuts to “clear out” an area to provide scoring opportunities for teammates.
- Combining footwork and movement patterns learned in the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade to add to students’ repertoire of individual offensive and defensive moves—for example, combining a jab step with a crossover step.

### Text and Supplementary materials used:

- Bulletin boards using photos, diagrams, checklists, and color-coded rosters.
- Handouts describing rules and regulations of the sport, as well as a brief history, and quizzes.
- Videotapes. DVDs and iPad applications of skill demonstrations and game footage.

### Units and Activities

- **Year-round:** Physical fitness activities including stretching, jogging, jumping rope, and President’s Physical Fitness testing, large-group games (dodgeball, tag, etc.)
- **Fall:** Soccer, touch football, ultimate frisbee, volleyball, floor hockey
- **Winter:** Basketball, floor hockey, gymnastics, table tennis, new games
- **Spring:** Softball, track & field, team handball

### Larry Jodrie

PreK-8th Grade Physical Education

- Began teaching at Green Acres in January 1987
- Started teaching in 1978
- Hometown: Gorham, New Hampshire
- Undergrad: Plymouth State University; Bachelor of Science in Physical Education
- Graduate School: University of Louisville, Masters of Arts in Teaching; Physical Education
- Hobbies & Passions: Golf, Hiking, Fishing, Reading, Avid Sports Fan, Coaching Basketball, Collecting Coins, Stamps and Baseball Cards, Travel
- Contact Info: larryj@greenacres.org and x142

**Lauren Essig**

Middle School Sports Coach/PreK, K, and 1st Grade Physical Education

- Began teaching at Green Acres in 2016
- Started teaching in 2005
- Hometown: Rockville
- High School: Rockville High School
- Undergrad: University of Delaware, BS, Physical Education
- Graduate School: George Washington University, MS, Exercise Physiology
- Hobbies & Passions: Running/Exercising, Spending time with my family, Vacationing
- Contact Info: LaurenE@greenacres.org and x146

**Derek Edwards**

Physical Education/Athletic Director

- Began teaching at Green Acres in 1996
- Started teaching in 1991
- Hometown: Pittsburgh/New York
- Undergrad: University of Maryland BA U.S History
- Hobbies & Passions: Reading, Athletics, Cooking, Current Events, Outdoors, Eating, Coaching
- Contact Info: dereke@greenacres.org and x104



## Drama

**Teacher:** Liz Bullock

**Class Time:** Two classes per six-day rotation for one semester

**Class Size:** 11 students (7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade)

**Skills and Concepts:**

- **Concentration:** Focusing on a given task, activity, or characterizations and maintaining that focus.
- **Collaboration:** Working with classmates toward a mutual, creative goal while incorporating ideas and talents of others with one's own.
- **Non-Verbal Expression:** Communicating ideas and emotions clearly through the use of gesture, movement, and facial expression.
- **Verbal Expression:** Communicating ideas and emotions clearly and articulately through the use of spoken language.
- **Critical Analysis:** Evaluating a dramatic work, looking for historical context, character subtext, and other insights which will inform a production of the work.
- **Characterization:** Creating holistic portrayals using various acting techniques such as characters histories and analyses.
- **Dramatic Writing:** Writing creatively for performance purposes in accordance with the guidelines of a given assignment.
- **Cooperative Interaction:** Contributing to group efforts, listening courteously and attentively to others, appreciating the talents of others, appreciating drama and other art forms, supporting each other through constructive feedback, assuming roles of leader and follower, showing respect for the teacher and fellow students.

**Text/Supplementary Materials Used:**

- Published plays, scenes, and monologues from various periods
- Sources regarding historical and social contexts
- Props, music, costumes

**Liz Bullock**

5th Grade Science/6th Grade Math and Advisory/7th and 8th Grade Drama and Musical/Sustainability Coordinator

- Began teaching at Green Acres in 2012
- Started teaching in 2012
- Hometown: Bethesda, MD
- Green Acres Graduate
- Undergrad: Clark University, BA in International Development and minor in Spanish
- Graduate School: Clark University, Master's Degree in Environmental Science
- Hobbies & Passions: Ultimate Frisbee, Yoga, Playing with her pet parrot and dog, Environmental and Ocean Science
- Contact Info: lizb@greenacres.org and x168



## **Music**

**Teachers:**

- Jeremy Levine: Songwriting, Musical
- Chip Carvell: Guitar, Musical
- Liz Bullock: Musical

**Class Time:** Two classes per six-day rotation for one semester

**Group Size:** Songwriting: 4 students; Guitar: 3 students; all 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students participate in the musical

### **Songwriting**

Students will compose and perform their own original music. Working in small groups as well as alone, students will learn the basic principles of music theory, and apply these concepts to create their own music. Students will have the opportunity to perform their music at the end-of-semester Mods Night.

**Skills include:**

- Practicing basic instrumental technique on keyboard, guitar, percussion
- Recording in GarageBand
- Learning and applying music theory concepts like scales and chords
- Studying professional music recordings and extrapolating concepts to students' compositions

### **Guitar**

Each student will receive instruction in guitar at a beginning or advanced beginner level. Songs selected by the students and teacher will be used to develop targeted skills selected by the student and teacher and based on assessment of current playing ability. Students will work toward playing in solo, duo, and

group settings. The mod will culminate with an evening performance for parents and will address essential questions including:

- How do elements of music affect the listener?
- How do individuals work together to make music?
- What differentiates sound from music?
- What can I do to make an ensemble sound better?

**Skills include:**

- Tuning the guitar
- Developing and using good technique for holding the guitar, fingering with the left hand and stroking or strumming with the right hand
- Playing melodies and chord sequences on the guitar
- Reading standard musical notation, chord charts, and tablature
- Playing solo and as part of an ensemble
- Performing music representing a variety of styles
- Practicing regularly between class sessions

## **Musical**

The Green Acres 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade musical tradition dates back to 1973. In addition to singing, acting and playing in the pit orchestra, students make up the crews, which include set, stage, technical, props, publicity and house crews. Some students also serve as crew chiefs, with teachers acting as advisors. All 7/8 students participate, and we strive to create a sense of student ownership.

**Skills include:**

- Introducing, Practicing, and Mastering musical theater performance and production
- Providing leadership and making artistic decisions
- Collaborative with other students and teachers to achieve a common goal

### **Liz Bullock**

5<sup>th</sup> Grade Science/6<sup>th</sup> Grade Math and Advisory/7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Drama and Musical/Sustainability Coordinator

- Began teaching at Green Acres in 2012
- Started teaching in 2012
- Hometown: Bethesda, MD
- Green Acres Graduate
- Undergrad: Clark University, BA in International Development and minor in Spanish
- Graduate School: Clark University, Master's Degree in Environmental Science
- Hobbies & Passions: Ultimate Frisbee, Yoga, Playing with her pet parrot and dog, Environmental and Ocean Science
- Contact Info: lizb@greenacres.org and x168

### **Jeremy Levine**

3<sup>rd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grade Music

- Began teaching at Green Acres in 2017
- Started teaching in 2014
- Hometown: Rockville, MD
- Green Acres Graduate

- High School: Walter Johnson High School
- Undergrad: Northwestern University – Bienen School of Music
- Graduate School: Graduate courses in ethnomusicology at the University of Illinois, Champaign/Urbana
- Hobbies & Passions: Hiking, yoga, composing original music
- Contact info: jeremyl@greenacres.org and x177

### **Chip Carvell**

PreK-2, 4, 7-8 Music

- Began teaching at Green Acres in 2017
- Started teaching in 1996
- Hometown: Glastonbury, CT
- Undergrad: Ohio Wesleyan University, B.A. in sociology/anthropology with a minor in music
- Graduate School: George Washington University, M.A. in Education and Human Development
- Hobbies & Passions: Music, running, movies
- Contact info: chipc@greenacres.org and x159



## **Ceramics**

**Teacher:** Shellie Marker

**Class Time:** Two classes per six-day rotation for one semester

**Class Size:** 5-10 students (7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade)

### **Skills and Concepts:**

- To explore the nature of clay and its properties
- To appreciate the role of diverse cultures and their contributions to the history of ceramics
- To appreciate the historical significance of ceramic art
- To demonstrate basic technical skills such as creating with coils, slabs, and pinching, associated with sturdy hand building
- To look at work with a critical eye and to respectfully discuss others' work
- To learn the application of glaze techniques and alternative surface treatments
- To use patterns and texturing to add depth and interest
- To discuss the areas of difference and commonality in functional ware and sculpture
- To access the imagination and process through art
- To foster creative problem-solving through students' interpretations of the assigned projects
- To learn and properly use ceramics vocabulary
- To understand the firing process of low-fire clay
- To know and use safe practices in the ceramics studio

### **Units and Activities (possible themes to explore):**

- Exploring the Purpose of Art and How It Reflects the World Around Us
- Art as Self-Portrait (how do we experience the world as individuals?)
- Art as an Expression of the World (world themes including poverty, race, human rights, climate change)
- Functional Ceramics vs. Sculptural/Decorative
- Ceramics from Non-Western Cultures (African, Asian, Middle Eastern)

- Historical Ceramics and their Function (Greek, Ancient Middle East, Native American)
- Glazing Techniques and Alternative Surface Decoration (underglazes, scraffito, acrylics, watercolors)
- Ceramics and Literature (interpreting a piece of literature through clay)

**Possible Projects**

- Clay bells, clay instruments
- Self-portraits/masks
- Greek friezes (art as storytelling)
- Slab built boxes
- Endangered animals in their habitats
- Native American coil pots
- Art Nouveau Tiles
- Medieval gargoyles
- Judy Chicago-inspired installations

**Shellie Marker**

5th and 6th Grade Art/7th and 8th Grade Ceramics, 7th Grade Advisor

- Began teaching at Green Acres in 2015
- Started teaching in 1996
- Hometown: Ocala, Florida
- Undergrad: University of Florida, Bachelor's Art Education, Bachelor's Fine Art (Ceramics)
- Graduate School: The George Washington University, Master's of Art History
- Hobbies & Passions: Yoga, Making jewelry, Hiking
- Contact Info: [RachelleM@greenacres.org](mailto:RachelleM@greenacres.org) and 182



**Art**

**Teacher:** Hallie Schmidt

**Class Time:** Two classes per six-day rotation for one semester

**Class Size:** 6-15 students (7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade)

**Skills and Concepts:**

- Formal critiques during fall semester - students will practice talking about their own work and providing feedback to their peers.
- Media
- Perspective
- Conceptual art
- Art and activism
- Set design
- Scale drawing and painting
- Painting using shading to create dimensionality
- Cooperation and responsibility for all aspects of this group project

**Units and Activities:**

- Fall mods will emphasize self-directed work; I will act as a facilitator and a resource for students as they work on a three-part series of their choice. Their responsibility is to choose a theme/concept that is significant to them, and can represent that theme using three different mediums. The first project requires students to choose a medium of their choice. After our first critique, I will introduce printmaking to the students holistically, so they cannot only practice different styles of printing, but also study current printmakers and the history of the medium itself. This similar formatting will be in place for our third project, which will be centered on mixed media. At the end of the semester, all of the student work will be displayed in a student-curated art show.
  - Three formal critiques throughout the semester: one final critique and art show in December
  - Entirely on students to pace themselves. I will have set deadlines and individual conferences throughout the semester but they will be accountable for completing their work on time.
- Spring: Painting sets for the 7th/8th grade musical. This is a largely student-driven cooperative project that spans many weeks prior to the musical and involves designing the set (generated by a combination of student ideas) Students take responsibility for all aspects of this project, including clean up.
- Student-selected projects, that could include examples such as ceramic sculpture, visionary art, or canvas painting.

**Hallie Schmidt**

7th and 8th Grade Art/Lower School Art

- Began teaching at Green Acres in January 2018
- Started teaching in 2018
- Hometown: Catonsville, Maryland
- Undergrad: University of Maryland, College Park
- Graduate School: MAT in Elementary Education at Johns Hopkins School of Education - expected May 2019!
- Hobbies & Passions: Hiking with my dog, traveling, swimming, painting
- Contact Info: hallies@greenacres.org and x155



## Photography

**Teacher:** Victor Stekoll

**Class time:** Two classes per six-day rotation for one semester

**Class Size:** 8-11 students (7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade)

**Skills and Concepts:**

- To appreciate the art of black and white photography
- To “Learn How to See with a Camera”
- To develop abilities at photographing interesting and appropriate subject matter and to look for shape, geometry, lines, shadows, reflections, and texture
- To understand the rules of composition and contrast range
- To understand the use of chemicals and their management

- To become familiar with enlargers and to learn how to “print.”
- To handle negatives in a way that will preserve them and keep them clean
- To manage digital images in organized folders
- To learn how to use Photoshop CS6 to enhance their images
- To begin to understand critiquing and the objective standards of photography
- To dry-mount prints on mount board cleanly and evenly

**Materials/Activities:**

- Canon film and digital cameras
- Nine high-quality enlargers with easels
- Ten computers with Photoshop CS6
- Numerous books and magazines on photography
- Teacher and student photographs for critique
- Photographic darkroom paper to make contact sheets, 5x7s, and 8x10s
- One summer assignment and one field trip
- Three professional judgments during the year

Students will take photographs using film and digital cameras during the summer and again on a photography field trip in the fall. They will work in total darkness to put their film in development tanks and then develop their film; they will make contact sheets and edit their images, choosing the ones they think are best to print. They will then learn how to print in the darkroom, first producing 5x7 prints, then 8x10 size and perhaps larger. Students will manage their digital folders on the school server and enhance their images using Photoshop CS6, printing out their best photos for display and competition.

At the end of the class, they will dry-mount their favorite black and white and color images and enter them into a photo judging juried by a professional photographer.

**Victor Stekoll**

7th Grade Photography/8th Grade World Studies, Algebra, Advisory, and Photography

- Began teaching at Green Acres in 1984
- Started teaching in 1978
- Hometown: Houston, Texas
- Undergrad: University of North Texas, Communications and Social Science
- Graduate School: American University, International Communication and Development
- Hobbies & Passions: Bicycling, Gardening, Music Appreciation, Photography, Travel, Outdoor Activities
- Victor has lived in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Italy and speaks Italian and Spanish.
- Contact Info: victors@greenacres.org and x166

## Engineering Arts

**Teacher:** Merita Zajmi

**Class time:** Two double classes per six-day rotation for one semester

**Class Size:** 10 students (7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade)

### **This year's project: Future City Project**

Students will identify an age-related challenge that exists in today's urban environments and engineer two innovative solutions that allow their future city's senior citizens to be as active and independent as they want to be.

This cross-curricular program gives students an opportunity to do what engineers do -- identify the problems; brainstorm ideas; design solutions; test; retest and build; and share their results.

### **Students will complete:**

- A virtual city design (using SimCity 5) meeting given criteria
- A 1500- word city research essay
- A project plan
- A scale model of the city that includes at least two innovative solutions
- A presentation to engineer judges at Mid-Atlantic Regional Competition in January

Regional winners represent their region at the Finals in Washington, DC in February

### **Students will:**

- Apply math and science concepts to real world problems
- Develop writing, public speaking, problem-solving and time management skills
- Research and propose solutions to engineering problems
- Learn how communities work and become more informed citizens
- Discover the Engineering Design Process and different types of engineering
- Build 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills

### **Merita Zajmi**

7th Grade Science/8th Grade Science and Advisory

- Began teaching at Green Acres in 2007
- Started teaching in 1992, then again in 1999
- Hometown: Shkoder, Albania
- Undergrad: University of Shkodra, Albania, School of Education, Mathematics and Physics Education
- Hobbies & Passions: Reading, Cooking, Spending time with family and friends
- Mother of two Green Acres Alumni and one current 5<sup>th</sup> grader
- Contact Info: meritaz@greenacres.org and x139

## Advisory

**Teachers:** David Sheridan, Julie Pflieger, Stephen Michel, Shellie Marker

**Class Time:** Two classes per six-day rotation (one 25-minute class, one 45-minute class)

**Group Size:** 7-8 students, some whole-grade activities

The overarching goals of the advisory program are to ensure that each student is known well, feels a part of the overall community, and finds ways to be academically and socially successful. The advisory program engages students in discussion and activities of important life issues generated by both students and advisors.

### Skills and Concepts:

- Advisory provides a time to address issues of importance to young adolescents and to ensure that they have accurate information about these topics.
- Advisory gives students a forum for exploring their values.
- During advisory, students have an opportunity to develop discussion abilities in a nonacademic setting.
- During advisory, students work cooperatively in small groups.
- The advisory period is used to plan for class trips and to evaluate them afterwards.

### Units and Activities:

- Study skills and organizational habits
- Diversity and the "Big Nine"
- Internet safety and cyber-citizenship
- Body image, media literacy, and conformity
- Conflict resolution and peer relationships
- Sexuality education, including examining cultural and gender stereotypes and pressures, developing healthy patterns of behavior, personal decision making, sexual orientation, birth control, and sexually transmitted diseases
- Substance abuse education
- Reflection and preparation for Student-Led-Conferences

### Texts and Resources:

- *The Green Acres Middle School Advisory Handbook*
- *Scholastic Choices*, a life skills magazine for teens
- Videos and materials from Discovery Education
- Guest Speakers

## **Administration and Student Support**

### **Kathy “Kate” DeVito Cohen**

Director of Academic Support Grades 1- 8/Learning Coordinator Grades 2- 8

- Began teaching at Green Acres in 2003
- Started teaching in 1983
- Hometown: Geneva, New York
- Undergrad: Russell Sage College, B.S. Special Education/Visual and Performing Arts
- Graduate School: Master Level Education and Special Education Credits from Russell Sage College, Fordham University, Trinity College and a J.D. from Case Western Reserve University
- Hobbies & Passions: Traveling, Entertaining, Attending varied live artistic performances
- Contact Info: katedc@greenacres.org and x181

### **Lara Marks Finder**

Registrar/Assistant to the Middle School Head/Substitute Co-Coordinator

- Began at Green Acres in January 2015
- Started teaching in 2002
- Hometown: New Orleans
- Undergrad: Washington University in St. Louis, B.A., History, American Culture Studies, Writing
- Graduate School: University of Maryland-College Park, M.A. in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, specialization in Curriculum Theory and Development
- Hobbies & Passions: Crafting, Baking, Yoga
- Contact Info: laraf@greenacres.org and x175

### **Peter Klam**

Middle School Head/Assistant Head of School

- Began at Green Acres in 2014
- Started teaching in 1994
- Hometown: Washington D.C. (born in New Orleans, grew up in Arlington).
- High School: Gonzaga
- Undergrad: College of William and Mary, B.A. in literature
- Graduate School: Michigan State University, M.A. in Educational Leadership
- Hobbies & Passions: Reading, Creative Writing, Cooking, Music, Running
- Contact Info: peterk@greenacres.org and x113