

Little Falls Township Public Schools
Middle School
Electives
2026-2027



School No. 1
32 Stevens Avenue
Little Falls, NJ 07424

Grades 5-8

Elective Course Offerings

Welcome to the School No. 1 elective course offerings for the 26-27 school year! The following courses will vary by grade level. Here are a few things to know before narrowing down your elective decision...

STUDENTS IN GRADES 5 & 6: The 5th & 6th Grade electives run alongside marking period cycles. Therefore 5th and 6th graders will take 2 electives for the year. With these two electives, 5th and 6th graders will also take their cycle courses that rotate each marking period.

List of Cycles for your information:

5th Grade: Art, Health, Music, & World Language

6th Grade: Art, World Language, Financial Literacy, & Computer Science Design Thinking

STUDENTS IN GRADES 7 & 8: The 7th & 8th Grade electives run alongside half year cycles. Therefore 7th and 8th graders will take 2 electives for the year. With these two electives, 7th and 8th graders will also take their 1/2 year cycle courses that rotate every 2 marking periods.

List of Cycles for your information:

7th Grade: Civics & Personal Finance

8th Grade: STEAM & Visual Literacy & Media

PLEASE NOTE: Students who have been accepted into the Peer Group Connection (PGC) or GROW program will not be scheduled for cycle courses. Instead, they will participate in the program to which they were accepted as their assigned course during that time.

IMPORTANT:

1. It is important to know that while we do our best to fulfill student choices, students are not guaranteed their preferred elective. We encourage all of our Hornets to try something new.
2. If students qualify for BSI, ELA Lab, or Math Lab, these courses will replace an elective. You will be notified if your child is in need of one of these courses.
3. All course offerings are based on teacher scheduling availability.

Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics

Out of this World (5th Grade)

If you are shooting for the stars, dreaming of lunar landings, or even curious about your specific cosmic address, then this is the elective for you! We will take an exciting journey to explore the inner workings of our home planet, and venture into the vast expanse of our solar system, galaxy, and beyond! In 'Out of This World,' we will combine our knowledge in mathematics, the sciences, as well as other disciplines, to better understand where we've been, where we are, and where we are going. As Carl Sagan once remarked, "somewhere, something incredible is waiting to be known." Join us as we discover, together.

Build It Like You Mean It!: A Fun Intro to Architecture (6th Grade)

Step into the world of architecture with this playful, hands-on course designed for curious beginners. Explore how buildings are imagined, designed, and brought to life through creative challenges, sketching, and real-world inspiration. No experience needed. Get ready to dream, design, and build like you mean it!

Sports Math & Analytics (6th Grade)

Venture into the world of analyzing sports data! In this course you will learn to use some mathematical tools that can help predict and analyze sporting performances and outcomes. This course covers all major sports and even includes a collection of graphics displaying various sports data. This is a great course for anyone interested in quantitative aspects of athletics!

STEAM (6th & 7th Grade)

Teamwork and virtual learning in which real-world problems and challenges will be explored. We will find solutions while using Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math. Get ready to imagine, plan, and create.

Engineering Beats and Bots (8th Grade)

Ready to build robots, create music, and learn how coding powers it all? In **Engineering Beats & Bots**, you'll explore the exciting world of technology through hands-on projects that combine creativity, problem-solving, and innovation.

Start by learning coding with Scratch, where you'll design programs and interactive challenges before using those skills to program LEGO Mindstorms robots. Put your

engineering skills to the test as you tackle robotics challenges and discover how code brings machines to life!

Then switch gears and enter the world of music technology. Learn the basics of music theory, create your own tracks using BandLab, and explore EarSketch, where music production meets Python coding. You'll see how programmers and musicians use technology to create amazing things every day.

Whether you're interested in robotics, coding, music, or just love creating new things, **Engineering Beats & Bots** offers a fun and engaging way to explore the future of technology. No experience needed—just bring your curiosity, creativity, and willingness to try something new!

Social Studies & History

Film Study (7th & 8th Grade)

Are you a visual learner? The goal of this class is to gain knowledge of classic and historic events through movies you may have seen or heard about. Film study will explore the nature of the motion picture, the actors, and directors who have made a significant impact on America both past and present. All movies viewed will be age-appropriate and will focus on significant cultural and historic events that have shaped our society.

Current Topics and History (6th Grade)

This course introduces students to current topics that impact citizens living around the world. Students will be expected to seek out and analyze newsworthy events and explain how the event impacts them either directly or indirectly. The focus will be on reading and writing, as well as gaining the necessary public speaking skills to share opinion and research orally. At the end, students will have a sound knowledge of important current events and the confidence to change their surroundings as an active world citizen.

Rap, Rock, & Music Culture (8th Grade)

This class examines the cultural, technological, and development of music from the 1950s to early 90s. Who were the Beatles and why were they popular? What's the big deal about Elvis? How did music have an impact on the civil rights movement or the Vietnam war? How did hip-hop start? All of these questions and more are answered in this interactive and retrospective class! Listen to some music, watch some live performances, and even learn how to do the moon-walk!

World Language

Mango - Language Exploration (Grades 5th, 6th, 7th, & 8th)

Welcome one of our newest additions to the elective choices - MANGO! Mango is a virtual world language exploration course. Students may choose from dozens of languages and will explore/expand their listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in whichever language they choose! This online program is very interactive with personalized computer guidance to help students have fun and learn a new language.

Communications

Book Club (Grades 5th, 6th, 7th, & 8th)

Do you love to read books? Do you love to finish a great book and discuss that book with friends? If so, this is the elective for you! In the book club elective, you will read amazing books and talk about those books with your classmates. As a School No. 1 Book Club, we will learn more about the authors, find common themes in the books we read, and stage our own battles. In this elective, you will also gain knowledge and enjoyment from reading good books and sharing them with friends!

Creative Writing (Grades 5th, 6th, 7th, & 8th)

If you have a wild imagination and love to make up stories then this is the class for you! Creative writing is a year-long course that needs every other day. We will be exploring different genres of writing, through both reading and writing, as well as the other necessary elements needed to improve writing and composition skills.

Writing Genres Covered:

(5 & 6) Journal Writing, Memoir, Poetry, Mystery Stories, and Fairy Tales

(7 & 8) Poetry, Music, Memoir Writing Worldwide Mythology, and Short Fiction

Journalism (Grades 5th & 8th Only)

Journalism is a course designed for students interested in newspaper journalism and developing their skills as a writer. The course explores the contemporary media and the ethical responsibility issues inherent in the press today. Students will learn the fundamentals of news, feature, editorial and sports writing. Copy reading, news style and editing will be stressed. Students will create numerous original stories using varied structures and writing techniques. Students will also learn to create computer

generated layouts and graphics in preparing for publication of the School No.1 Student Newspaper.

Yearbook (8th Grade)

Welcome to our new Yearbook course! Students will become historians, journalists, and artists putting together a photojournalistic book that will be on shelves for many, many years to come! There never was a better time to help create memories for all to see!

Visual & Performing Arts

Form and Color: 3D & Painting Studio (5th Grade)

In this engaging, hands-on elective, students will explore both sculpture and painting while learning how artists use form and color to express ideas. Through a variety of creative projects, students will design and build three-dimensional artworks using materials such as clay, wire, cardboard, and recycled objects, while also developing painting skills with acrylics, tempera, and mixed media. Students will learn how to plan, construct, and refine their work as they experiment with texture, space, and color. The course encourages creativity, problem-solving, and perseverance as students bring their ideas to life in both 3D and painted forms, building confidence in their artistic abilities within a supportive studio environment.

Art & Graphic Design (7th Grade)

This course introduces students to the world of visual communication through the lens of graphic design. Students will learn how to use color, typography, layout, and imagery to create compelling designs for posters, logos, packaging, and more! Using both traditional sketching and digital tools, students will develop their own design projects while learning about the role of design in everyday life. Emphasis will be placed on creativity, critique, and the design process from concept to final product.

Painting Studio (8th Grade)

This course invites students to deepen their artistic skills through focused exploration of acrylic, watercolor, and wet media techniques. Students will learn how to mix custom color palettes, understand color theory in practice, and apply various brushwork and layering methods. Projects will encourage personal expression while building technical proficiency. Whether working on canvas, paper, or unconventional surfaces, students will gain confidence in their ability to create expressive, original works of art.

Instrumental Music (Grades 5th, 6th, 7th, & 8th)

The primary focus is on the development, continuation, and expansion of basic skills begun the previous years that are necessary for effective instrumental music performance. In addition to large group ensembles, individual growth and achievement are encouraged. Topics/skills covered include: tone development, counting, timing, and rhythmic development, reading and notation skills, including sight reading, introduction of scales, simple music theory, development of an extensive vocabulary of musical terms and symbols, ear training, and listening skills, equipment care and maintenance, and effective practice habits. This course requires evening/virtual performances.

Chorus (Grades 7th, & 8th)

****Also Offered to 5th & 6th Graders during Zero Period (before school).**

This is a premier Middle School choir for both male and female students who are interested in vocal music performances. It is also an outlet for students who enjoy singing for their own pleasure. The following musical skills will be stressed: proper breathing, Pleasant vocal production, blend and balance, expansion of range, good intonation, ear training, and sight-reading. Different styles of music will be explored. Participation in various performances is a requirement of the class.

Health & Physical Education

BUZZ Fit!: Hive-Strong Fitness for Hornets (Grades 5th, 6th, & 7th)

Get ready to move, sweat, and thrive in *BuzzFit*—the ultimate fitness adventure for middle school hornets! This high-energy class blends fun workouts, teamwork challenges, and healthy habits to build strength, coordination, and confidence. Just like a hive, we work together and support each other while staying active. Whether you're buzzing through obstacle courses or powering up with fitness games, you'll be getting stronger every step of the way!

Leadership

Peer Group Connection (8th Grade)

Students must be selected via the application process.

8th grade students supporting 5th grade students in their transition into Middle School. Peer Group Connection (PGC) taps into the power of 8th graders to create a safe and supportive environment for new 5th grade students. Once per week, pairs of Select 8th graders meet with groups of 5th grade students (virtually) to help them be successful in

their first year of Middle School. The focus of the classes on activities and scenarios that allow them to practice academic, social, and emotional skills such as decision-making, time management, teamwork, and communication.

Be a leader... Be a mentor... Be a role model... Make a difference in your school!

GROW! (8th Grade)

Students must be selected via the application process.

With high school being right around the corner, we want to provide some of our 8th grade Hornets with a valuable classroom experience that is geared toward growing and building character. Students who are selected for this course will benefit by sharpening leadership skills, enhancing responsibility, cultivating community, practicing collaboration skills, and increasing confidence. This class works to develop habits for self-reflection and personal growth.

ADDITIONAL COURSE DESCRIPTIONS for 7th & 8th GRADE CYCLES:

7th GRADE ½ YEAR CYCLES:

Civics

Our 7th-grade civics program provides students with a foundational understanding of government, civic responsibility, and ethical decision-making. The curriculum includes: Foundations of American government, Citizen roles and responsibilities, & Civic analysis and decision-making

Personal Finance & Entrepreneurship

Would you like to learn how to be money smart? Managing money is an essential part of our everyday lives! This course will review the financial principles you need to enter adulthood prepared to make good financial decisions. This course is also inclusive of the TREP\$ program, a project-based learning program that teaches kids how to start their own businesses!

8th GRADE ½ YEAR CYCLES:

Visual Literacy & Media

This course helps students develop an understanding of how to look at, interpret, and respond to visual art. Through the study of artworks from a range of cultures, time periods, and styles, students will learn to analyze composition, technique, symbolism, and meaning. In addition to observation and discussion, students will create their own artworks using various media—such as painting, drawing, and collage—to explore the techniques and themes they study. As part of a culminating project, students will curate a mini-exhibition, writing thoughtful labels and descriptions that reflect their understanding of visual storytelling and artistic intent.

STEAM

Teamwork and virtual learning in which real-world problems and challenges will be explored. We will find solutions while using Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math. Get ready to imagine, plan, and create.