

The Rock Terrace School High School Course Offerings

2011-2012



**Rock Terrace School
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The Rock Terrace School Program

Overview

The Rock Terrace School prepares students for independent living, integrated employment, and participation in the community. Our educational approach combines the Fundamental Life Skills (FLS) Curriculum and the MCPS program of studies. The Fundamental Life Skills curriculum provides students with intellectual disabilities access to the general education curriculum through modification of general education curriculum content combined with functional learning and vocational experiences. Rock Terrace students meet the participation criteria for the Alternate Maryland School Assessment (Alt-MSA). The Rock Terrace School is dedicated to ensuring that students with a wide range of significant physical and cognitive disabilities are provided a free and appropriate education. Our mission is, to the greatest extent possible, to provide our students the same range of experiences and opportunities that they would have in a general education school. Students may attend for as long as nine years. Students graduate at twenty-one years of age with a Maryland Certificate of Program Completion.

The Rock Terrace School is composed of three instructional levels: Middle School (grades 6, 7, and 8, which typically includes ages 11-13); High School (grades 9, 10, 11, and 12; typically ages 14-17); and the Transition Program, or Upper School (referred to at Rock Terrace as grades 13, 14, and 15. US students are typically ages 18-21). Within each level classes may contain students from various grades. All students have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) which aligns classroom instruction to each student's specific academic, vocational and social/behavioral goals. Classroom teachers in the High School differentiate instruction to address the individual skill levels of each student in the basic academic areas of reading, math, computer applications and science. All students receive reading and math courses daily.

The primary objectives of Rock Terrace are continual achievement and maximum independence after graduation. Our program promotes the advancement of each student's highest potential to access and interact with the surrounding community, and obtain and retain employment.

Academic skills improvement, curriculum continuity, and improved communication and social skills are achieved through a program which combines required academic, vocational, and elective courses. Rock Terrace provides an environment rich in diverse learning experiences and opportunities for all students. *The Rock Terrace 2011-2012 Course Offerings* booklet contains a complete listing of required academic and vocational courses, as well as elective and special interest courses. Parents will receive a Middle School, High School, or Upper School packet based on their child's school level.

The following course descriptions are provided to help you and your student understand and request the elective, vocational and special interest electives most appropriate for your student. *Please be advised that although the Rock Terrace School makes every effort to place students in requested classes, we cannot guarantee that staffing and other factors always will permit us to do so.*

Introduction to the High School (Grades 9-12)

The high school curriculum and school environment is a designed learning community in which opportunities are available for students to identify their strengths and interests, and apply themselves to achieve success in instructional, vocational, social, and personal interest settings. The curriculum for academic domain areas (Reading, Math, Computer Applications, and Science) is aligned annually to meet high school level Alt-MSA objectives for those areas. Rock Terrace School students are entitled to an educational program up to age 21, and typically do not graduate until they reach the year of their 21st birthday.

The High School Course Offerings

<u>9th Grade</u>	<u>10th Grade</u>	<u>11th Grade</u>	<u>12th Grade</u>
REQUIRED	REQUIRED	REQUIRED	REQUIRED
Reading	Reading	Reading	Reading
Math	Math	Math	Math
	Science		
Social Skills	Social Skills	Social Skills	Social Skills
CBI **	CBI **	CBI **	CBI **
Mini-Course ***	Mini-Course ***	Mini-Course ***	Mini-Course ***
ELECTIVES	ELECTIVES	ELECTIVES	ELECTIVES
Band	Band	Band	Band
Chorus	Chorus	Chorus	Chorus
Communications	Communications	Communications	Communications
Computer Appls *	Computer Appls *	Computer Appls *	Computer Appls *
Life Skills	Life Skills	Life Skills	Life Skills
Physical Education	Physical Education	Physical Education	Physical Education
Ready to Learn (RTL)	Ready to Learn (RTL)	Ready to Learn (RTL)	Ready to Learn (RTL)
Visual Arts	Visual Arts	Visual Arts	Visual Arts

VOCATIONALS & SPECIALS

Culinary Arts
Office Skills & Procedures
Home Survival Skills
Media I WGRT
Horticulture

MINI-COURSES ***

National Wildlife Habitat Club
School Newspaper Club
Recycled Art Club
Movement and Exercise Club
Designing and Making Jewelry Club

* *Computer Applications*

** *CBI is Community-Based Instruction*

*** *Mini-Course offerings may change as a result of instructional staff changes and other factors beyond our control.*

HIGH SCHOOL COURSE DESCRIPTIONS by GRADE

Required Courses for Grade 9

Reading

First Quarter: Students are exposed to various styles of literature. Students read novels and begin book report writing. Students master the Rock Terrace Functional Vocabulary List.

Second Quarter: Students use story maps to identify plotlines and graphic organizers to identify differences in characters in a variety of fiction and non fiction stories.

Third Quarter: Students identify elements of stories to explain how events in plots have differing levels of importance.

Fourth Quarter: Students identify the most important idea in a story or text, and begin to explore the concept of “theme.”

Math

First Quarter: Students demonstrate mastery of adding and subtracting coins up to \$5.00.

Second Quarter: Students perform basic geometry applications.

Third Quarter: Students use time-lines to explore “elapsed time”, and to identify amounts of time passed between events in their lives. Students use time lines to project amounts for time until predictable future events in their lives.

Fourth Quarter: Students make and use graphs to report and interpret real-life survey results.

Social Studies

First Quarter: Students focus on learning their school location and phone number. They learn how to ask for help, and how to respond when someone else asks for help.

Second Quarter: The students learn about using the calendar the important dates on the calendar such as Halloween Day; Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day. They learn about using the map. They use the map to find their way in shopping malls, parks and within the school area..

Third Quarter: Students learn about “connectedness” and investigate how “everyone and everything is connected to someone or something else.” Students study various kinds of safety measures in different environments. Students learn about emergencies and other situations in which people may need help. Students learn about how to ask for help.

Fourth Quarter: Students learn about decision-making processes, and participate in group decision-making. Students investigate different aspects of school life about which they must make decisions, such as what is needed for them to learn and be successful.

Science

First Quarter: Students perform hands-on experiments to explore the nature of different kinds of forces which are involved in cause and effect relationships. Students list and define these forces, and manipulate the degree of force in different experiments. Students describe their results.

Second Quarter: Students observe interactions between living and non-living matter. Students manipulate environmental factors to identify and measure different effects.

Third Quarter: Students use hands-on experiments to learn the steps in the scientific method. They identify, describe and list steps, and apply knowledge to their experiments. Students observe and describe cause-and-effect relationships during experiments.

Fourth Quarter: Students investigate experiment results and practice making predictions based on observations and data using cause-and-effect analysis.

General, Elective and Pre-Vocational Training

Ninth grade student schedules accommodate the opportunity for some elective choices, and provide the student an opportunity to exercise choice, and to explore a variety of areas that may be of interest to the student.

Students in the Middle School engage in many in-school instructional work opportunities designed to target skills and attitudes that lead to gainful employment. Whereas some specific occupational skills are learned, the emphasis at this level is on general work behaviors. These programs are built into a student's daily schedule.

Introduction to Culinary Arts

Students learn the importance of reading and following directions, such as recipes, dress codes, and hygiene routines, while stressing the importance of interpersonal relationships and cooperation in a work environment. Students learn and are then given the opportunity to practice beginning kitchen safety, organization, health and sanitation standards, nutrition, recipe selection, food preparation for commercial versus family purposes, customer service, restaurant management, and service skills. These are essential fundamental life skills.

Introduction to Home Survival Skills

Math and Reading concepts are taught through practical application. Students learn to use a variety of woodworking tools, machines and equipment safely, and perform a variety of advanced woodworking operations to complete projects. Typical production items include art drying racks and mobile storage boxes for Physical Education departments. This class is open to receiving jobs from outside for students to work on, such as simple re-upholstery, furniture, lamp

or other small appliance repairs. Students also carve seasonal products to sell at holidays to raise money for Rock Terrace programs.

Introduction to Computer Applications

Students learn basic computer use and maintenance procedures, and safe and appropriate use of the Internet. Students complete research projects related to MCPS units of study. Students create reports, tables and charts using Microsoft Word, and produce slideshows using PowerPoint. Students define functional terms and parts of the computer. Students perform basic functions of preparing a document,. Students access the Internet, define basic vocabulary words, and apply safety rules.

Introduction to Office Skills

Students are introduced to necessary work behaviors, attitudes, problem-solving skills, teamwork, quality control and making deadlines in a wide array of mailing services and office procedures. Procedures include collating, stapling, shredding, folding stuffing, sealing, sip-coding, labeling, and rolling.

Ready to Learn (RTL)

This program is unique to Rock Terrace. It is based on the research-based programs Brain Gym and Focus Moves. Students learn self-calming and attention-focusing techniques to prepare their brains and bodies to engage in learning behaviors. The curriculum includes simple body movements, self-massage, and breath control techniques. Students practice the experiences of self-calming, stimulating their brain's focus and attention, and stimulating their processing centers. Simpler exercises are mastered before progressively more challenging exercises are introduced.

Physical Education/Health

Students participate in activities to develop fundamental fitness, teamwork (cooperation, supportiveness, and other sports-related social skills) and motor (sports and exercise) skills. Emphasis is on knowledge, movement and cognitive-emotional abilities ranging from functional life skills to those needed for successful participation in self-selected leisure and other health-promoting activities. Class activities allow for individualized challenges at a level appropriate to each student, and are based on activities supported in individual and community recreation contexts.

Chorus

Students develop singing fundamentals. A variety of choral music is used to match the developmental level of the students' voices. There will be several recitals during the school year. Students are exposed to various woodwind, keyboard, string and percussion instruments. Students are instructed on introductory playing techniques. Students perform solo and ensemble pieces.

Visual Arts

Visual arts classes continue the exploration of art begun during Elementary School. Students build their knowledge and experiences of the foundation of art: line, shape, form, texture, value,

color and space. Students manipulate materials with art concepts, project directions and instructed procedures to form compositions in paper, paint, wood, cardboard, Styrofoam, recycled scraps, plasticine and earthenware (wet clay).

Social Skills Instruction

Rock Terrace provides a school-wide social skills program taught for thirty-minutes daily. Rock Terrace students learn to recognize, identify and express their feelings appropriately. Students practice appropriate social behaviors in school and in public. Appropriate behavior includes expression of need, anger, opinion, and conflict resolution.

Life Skills

Students will prepare themselves for future independence. Students will work on accessing the public library for resources (including applying for, using and maintaining a library card), filling out practice applications, reading signs for comprehension, using a directory (to find a store in a mall, etc.), reading a flyer/newsletter/newspaper article/order form for understanding, locating and using a resource's table of contents or index to find information, reading a public transportation schedule, reading a map and identifying its features, accessing websites for information and practicing appropriate use of technology. The Life Skills curriculum prepares middle school students for their weekly community based instructional trip (CBI). Middle school students practice in the classroom the skills that they will be using in the community.

Community-Based Instruction

Students in the middle school learn to travel safely in groups to various cultural and commercial destinations. Destinations are selected to reinforce classroom learning experiences and individual IEP goals. Students practice listening to staff members and following instructions, demonstrating appropriate social behaviors while on public transportation and in public places. Students practice reading, math and language arts skills in public settings. Community-Based Instruction is closely aligned with the Life Skills curriculum.

Required Courses for Grade 10

Reading

First Quarter: Students will work on functional reading skills such as reading for information, and they will use text features in reading materials to increase and improve comprehension.

Second Quarter: Students will use and complete graphic organizers to recognize and organize important information they are reading; analyze and distinguish between fact and opinion; research both sides of a debate; and form an opinion.

Third Quarter: Students will identify the characteristics which distinguish fiction and non-fiction, and will classify reading material as either fiction or non-fiction; read and evaluate a variety of poems; write friendly and business letters; and learn how to address envelopes correctly.

Fourth Quarter: Students will use appropriate on-line resources to gain information, and determine which websites are reputable and reliable.

Math

First Quarter: Students apply basic money-counting skills to solve functional word problems.

Second Quarter: Students apply basic geometrical definitions to functional problems.

Third Quarter: Students collect, organize, and analyze data to make decisions and predictions.

Fourth Quarter: Students apply basic definitions of prediction, estimation, and probability to functional mathematical problems.

Science

First Quarter: Students conduct hands-on scientific method experiments. Students apply steps of experimental method, and define vocabulary.

Second Quarter: Students identify and define seasonal cycles, and list and describe characteristics of each season.

Third Quarter: Students research different aspects of weather, and how to apply information to personal decisions. Students read weather maps in newspapers and on-line, and interpret symbols on weather maps.

Fourth Quarter: Students apply and define environmental and ecological concepts such as “reduce, reuse, recycle.” Students apply concepts to ways they can help the environment.

Required Courses for Grade 11

Reading

First Quarter: Students develop reading skills for information, identify and use text features to gain and improve comprehension.

Second Quarter: Students will complete graphic organizers to organize the important information in reading; analyze and distinguish between fact and opinion; research both sides of a debate, and form an opinion.

Third Quarter: Students will identify the distinguishing characteristics between fiction and non-fiction and classify reading material as either fiction or non-fiction; read and evaluate a variety of poems; write friendly and business letters, and learn how to address envelopes correctly.

Fourth Quarter: Students will use appropriate on-line resources to gain information, and determine which websites are reputable and reliable.

Math

First Quarter: Students define and apply basic money-counting skills to bank account management.

Second Quarter: Students apply geometric principals to measurement.

Third Quarter: Students collect, organize and interpret data on charts. Students identify units of time management, and apply them to functional problems.

Fourth Quarter: Students define and apply concepts of estimation and prediction to functional problems.

Science

First Quarter: Students will be able to identify and display safe laboratory procedures. Students will be able to identify the elements of an ecosystem and whether they are living or non-living.

Second Quarter: Students will be able to identify the effects humans have on the environment.

Third Quarter: Students will be able to identify the elements of a food web.

Fourth Quarter: Students apply and define environmental and ecological concepts such as “reduce, reuse, recycle.” Students apply concepts to ways they can help the environment.

Required Courses for Grade 12

Reading

First Quarter: Students continue to develop their reading, comprehension and composition skills: Students make connections with literature by using their personal experiences and background knowledge to relate to literature.

Second Quarter: Students increase abilities to read for information through accessing and using resources such as maps, computer resources, newspapers, newsletters, flyers, and phone directories.

Third Quarter: Students practice appropriate, necessary and functional writing skills, such as letter writing, cursive handwriting and self expression.

Fourth Quarter: Students use various reading materials, hands on activities, and other resources to increase their independent use of reading to manage practical needs of daily life, from transportation to home health care, locating entertainment to preparing appropriately for weather conditions.

Math

First Quarter: Students write checks and balance bank accounts.

Second Quarter: Students gather measurements and use geometry to solve functional problems. Students identify fractions and parts of the whole.

Third Quarter: Students conduct surveys, gather data, organize data onto charts, and interpret data to make predictions and estimate results.

Fourth Quarter: Students identify, interpret and apply to functional problems mathematical rounding, estimation, and prediction, and discuss least and most probable outcomes.

Science

First Quarter: Students will be able to identify different ecosystems and biomes and the characteristics of those biomes.

Second Quarter: Students will be able to identify different ways in which life patterns on the planet are impacted by human practices. Students will gain an understanding of how their choices can impact the health of life systems.

Third Quarter: Students will increase their understanding of how natural systems and human activities interact, and how those interactions affect the availability and nutritional value of food for ecosystems.

Fourth Quarter: Students increase their understanding of how environmental, ecological, and the problems facing human communities can be helped or worsened by choices they make to reduce, reuse, and recycle.

Computer Applications

Students learn the basics of computer use and maintenance, safe and appropriate use of the Internet to complete research related to units of study such as possible career choices, health, studies of cultures and many more. Students create reports, tables and charts using Microsoft Word, and produce slideshows using PowerPoint.

Students also learn to create a web page, newsletter, and animated PowerPoint presentations, and learn to use multi-media to create shows. Reading and language activities are incorporated into Computer applications.

Social Skills

Students learn the “what”, “how”, and “why” of good manners and civil behaviors. Students learn to identify emotions in themselves and others, strategies for self-soothing, and appropriate alternatives for self expression and problem solving. The Rock Terrace focus is always on integration in the workplace and the community, to promote the skills necessary for living as independently as each student is able.

Community Based Instruction – All students who are able participate in a weekly CBI trip

Classes use public and MCPS transportation to take weekly trips into the community. Instruction occurs in the following areas: safety, shopping, appropriate social interactions, clothing choices, banking, food choices, and use of public transportation. Students are always accompanied by a staff member during community instruction. The students' IEP goals are addressed during this class. CBI may not be graded.

High School Vocationals and Electives

Vocational Courses

Permanent paid employment is the goal for all Rock Terrace students. Training and exposure to work expectations and environments begin in the Middle School. In High School, a sequence of vocational courses is offered to help students develop the skills, attitudes and behaviors they will need to achieve their highest level of independent living. Specific work and task related skills are part of instruction, but workplace expectations are the primary objectives of instruction.

Culinary Arts

Students learn and are then given the opportunity to practice kitchen safety, organization, health and sanitation standards, nutrition, recipe selection, food preparation for commercial versus family purposes, customer service, restaurant management, and service skills. Students prepare meals and plates for commercial catering as well as breakfast and lunch for our Bistro Restaurant. These skills are necessary for future vocational opportunities and are essential fundamental life skills.

Home Survival Skills

Students manufacture items for sale throughout MCPS. Students use common woodworking machines safely and perform a variety of advanced woodworking operations to complete projects. Typical production items include art drying racks and mobile storage boxes for Physical Education departments. This class is open to receiving jobs from outside for students to work on, such as simple re-upholstery, furniture, lamp or other small appliance repairs. Students also carve seasonal products to sell at holidays to raise money for Rock Terrace programs.

Office Skills and Procedures

Students learn to fulfill actual business contracts with a variety of independent clients. Students learn and practice appropriate world-of-work behaviors, attitudes and problem-solving skills. Students practice functional reading and math skills in a business environment. Students perform many work skills such as collating, folding, bundling, labeling, sealing, and inserting. Students learn to associate work with compensation.

Electives

Electives are a critical component of the high school experience. They provide students with opportunities to choose and explore a variety of areas that may be of interest to them and enrich their educational experience. Physical Education, Chorus, Band, Media I, Ready-to-Learn, and Visual Arts are available. Please be advised that these electives are offered based on available staffing and class size.

Life Skills – High School

Students taking Life Skills at the high school level will prepare for independent living in home, school, and work environments. They will have opportunities to learn and practice social skills. Relaying personal information, reading community signs for reference, and using valuable resources such as phone books and bus schedules will also be explicitly taught. Some of these skills include: problem solving, having a conversation, turn-taking, and other appropriate communication skills with other people. Doing household chores and emphasis on personal hygiene, self care, and healthy habits will also be addressed.

Horticulture

In this course, students will learn the basics of Horticulture, which is the study of how plants grow, and how to care for them. This is a hands-on program where students plant, tend and harvest fruits and vegetables. Students learn the difference between cool and warm season vegetables and which plants grow well in this area. Students plan a garden, rotate crops and prepare the soil for planting. Students learn about plant parts and what each part's function is in plant growth. Students learn about germination, how to start plants from seeds, and how to transplant their plants and care for them as they grow.

In the spring, students work with Master Gardeners from the University of Maryland Agricultural Extension Program. They will become members of 4-H and will enter their vegetables and flowers in the Montgomery County Agricultural Fair, where they will be judged and students will have a chance to earn ribbons for their efforts. The goal of the Horticulture program is to help students develop a sense of pride, accomplishment and achievement as they learn to care for plants and to apply these skills in their everyday life.

Media I - WGRT

Students produce and broadcast a daily school-wide morning news program, WGRT. Students focus on major media breaking news, sports and cultural features as well as report on school news and cultural events. Students are responsible for on-camera, production, and editing tasks.

Communications

Students will explore and research a variety of topics using media resources. The media resources include print and non-print resources (MCPS databases). They learn the basics of researching and presenting the information in a variety of formats.

Physical Education & Health

Students participate in activities to develop fundamental fitness, teamwork (cooperation, supportiveness, and other sports-related social skills) and motor (sports and exercise) skills. Emphasis is on knowledge, movement and cognitive-emotional abilities ranging from functional life skills to those needed for successful participation in self-selected leisure and other health-promoting activities. Class activities allow for individualized challenges at a level appropriate to each student, and are based on activities supported in individual and community recreation contexts. A portion of each class is devoted to "Healthy Habits", which is a short discussion on important facts about nutrition, safety, decision-making, drug awareness, stress management, or communication.

Visual Arts

Building on knowledge and experiences gained through Middle School, High School art students will expand upon their use of art elements (line, shape, form, texture, color, value and space), and principles of design (pattern, unity, balance, contrast, movement, emphasis and rhythm) by working more intensely with these concepts. More time will be spent manipulating materials and developing ideas within the categories of drawing, printmaking, painting, stitchery and sculpture. Students will be encouraged to create their own personal art project complete with chosen art materials, focus points, verbal explanations of their choices, and personal critiques of their completed works. All students will construct Art Journals to document categories and progress in learning throughout the year's experiences. A combined Middle and High School art exhibit will be presented at the end of the school year for all to celebrate and enjoy.

Ready to Learn (RTL)

This program is unique to Rock Terrace. It is based on the research-based programs Brain Gym and Focus Moves. Students learn self-calming and attention-focusing techniques to prepare their brains and bodies to engage in learning behaviors. The curriculum includes simple body movements, self-massage, and breath control techniques. Students practice the experiences of self-calming, stimulating their brain's focus and attention, and stimulating their processing centers. Simpler exercises are mastered before progressively more challenging exercises are introduced. This course is offered to middle, high and upper school students.

Chorus

Students develop the fundamentals of chorus through singing various music styles. In addition, students learn songs presented in a thematic structure, emphasizing the historical and cultural aspects of music. Several recitals are held during the school year to showcase solo and ensemble performances.

Band

Students learn to play various instruments including but not limited to guitar, xylophone, keyboard, drums and other percussion instruments. In addition, students explore instruments and music from various world cultures. Several recitals are held during the school year to showcase solo and ensemble performances.

High School Special Interest Electives and Opportunities

Student Government Association (SGA)

The Rock Terrace Student Government Association is an opportunity for students to campaign for elected office, and, if elected, serve the school as part of the SGA. Students elected to the SGA meet weekly with an assigned staff member to plan and implement social events, charitable fund-raising activities, survey and discuss school improvement opportunities, and work with the administration and staff to negotiate and implement ideas.

Mini-Courses

Each day, students have one thirty-minute Mini-Course class. Mini-courses provide opportunities for students to participate in a club in which they experience different forms of recreation, build competencies, and learn a variety of ways to enjoy leisure time. *The availability of a specific mini-course is dependent on staff availability and other factors which may be beyond our control. Mini-course titles and content may change.* For example:

Helping Our Habitat - The Gardening Club

Students explore hands-on outdoor experiences and classroom projects to observe natural growth cycles and how people can work together to help nature. Classroom instruction and outdoor gardening activities support individual understanding, and group planning and cooperation. This curriculum is tied to the Rock Terrace National Wildlife Federation Natural Habitat Project.

Dance Movement Club

Using this mini-course, students use video-based instruction with support from the classroom instructor to practice dance movement as exercise for health, fun, and improved social competencies.

Jewelry Design and Creation Club

Students use beads and other materials to design and create jewelry. Students sell their creations to fund raw materials.

Recycled Art Club

Students use safe scavenged materials to create art.