

School Without Walls

Extended Class Descriptions

2019-2020

Gratitude

-Ashley Ladiges

“If you have done the best you can do,
and if you have gotten all you could extract from something,
You have given all you had to give,
Then the time has come when you can do no more
Then say thank you and move on.” - Maya Angelou

Students will learn specific strategies that will aid them both academically and socially, while taking care of self. As a class, we will choose what aspects of World Health Organization’s definition of self care they wish to focus upon.

We will start with self advocacy as a skill that needs to be learned and practiced. How one can study, deal with stress (physical activity, yoga, meditation, breathing, creative projects, music, walks in nature), maintain wellness, and transition after high school (to college or career) will be practiced. Recognize when you have given your best, and boost others who have given their best, are soft skills that aid you in any position.

Project management skills will be developed through chosen projects to help “you” in the community. Possible projects could include neighborhood clean up day, Foodlink, services to help families new to our country, and soup kitchens. Project management and academic planning skills will be practiced and developed (including short term / long term planning).

Major Requirements:

- Journal
- Conferences
- Decision Making
- CPR
- Community Partnerships

The Great Debaters

-Aylin Rodriguez

"Debate is blood sport. It's combat. But your weapons are words."-Mr. Tolson

The art of debate and public speaking can be traced back to ancient times. Great civilizations like the Kemetic people, Greek philosophers, and even our own presidents have used debates to show off their oratorical skills and charisma.

Every day events, decisions, and tragedies occurs throughout the world. Social media has proven that everyone has their own opinions but can they back it up? This class explores both sides of current event arguments and presents them in front of an impartial panel. We will learn to think critically and quickly on your feet and be ready with a comeback at any moment. Examples of debates could be: The Flint Water Crisis, gentrification in Rochester, climate change, Trump's "wall" and many more.

Conceptual Questions:

- How can students use current events to craft reasonable arguments?
- How can students use the art of debate to hone their critical thinking and public speaking skills?

Major Requirements:

- Journal
- Conferences
- Decision Making
- CPR
- Bi-weekly debates
- Community partnerships and class field trips

Rebel Music: The Sound of Youth-Led Social Movements

-Dan Sullivan

"Music has the power to change the mentality of the people," says Caracas singer Onechot.

Music, particularly created by young musicians and artists, has powered change to overcome injustice and oppression around the world. From global hip-hop and reggae influences, to Egyptian and Iranian civil rights music and rebel music from Venezuela, all share a common thread of social transformation and a demand for justice.

The world is full of emerging artists making music to put injustice and oppression in the spotlight. With a simple cell phone or computer it can be shared across thousands of miles in an instant. Are you interested in tapping into the pulse of the world's rebel music? Perhaps you want to write some of your own music, perform, or simply appreciate how music can transform the entire consciousness of the planet, including yourself. This class will provide opportunities to explore this in many directions that will enlighten you both socially and musically.

Questions we will consider:

- How and where does music empower people to protest and rebel against injustice?
- How has nonviolence and music impacted people's beliefs and political actions?
- What styles of music infiltrate global cultures and in turn address injustice?
- Presently, how is the power of music impacting various hotspots of injustice around the world?

Class Requirements:

- Journal
- Conferences
- Decision Making
- CPR
- Triad
- Class trips
- Playlist creation and sharing
- Participation in school-wide music events and performances
- Fundraising

Growing Out of Poverty

-Deb Rowe-Jarrett

“What you see depends on how you view the world. To most people [the soil] is just dirt. To a farmer, it's potential.”

-Doe Zantamata

Food is universal, but how we plant, grow, harvest, prepare and preserve food varies by race, ethnicity, religion, socio-economics and

geography. What are the socio-political impacts of growing and distributing healthy food in urban environments?

Potential topics to be explored and pursued include: Urban Agriculture Across the US; Urban Agriculture in Rochester; Green Careers; and, Planting, Growing, Preparing and Preserving Food. There are several films and books that will allow us to further our knowledge of these topics including, but not limited to: *Urban Farmers*; *Plant This Movie*; *Seedfolks*; and *Farming While Black*.

Conceptual Questions:

- Why is Urban Agriculture important?
- How can Urban Agriculture improve our neighborhoods?
- What are the benefits of growing, distributing, preparing and eating fresh food?

Major Requirements:

- Journal
- Conferences
- Decision Making
- CPR
- Community Partnerships
- Group Projects
- Field Trips
- Guest Speakers Q&A

21st Century Art Junkies

-Elisa Bond

One man's junk is another man's treasure.

Our lives have become so busy and fast paced that we forget to notice the beauty around us that has inspired artists since the beginning of time. There is a satisfaction that can't be bought that derives from creating things by hand. *Twenty First Century Art Junkies* is all about getting your hands dirty. Our main focus will be viewing and creating art from a variety of materials including what some may consider "junk." So roll up your sleeves, pull off those acrylic nails and turn back the clock to the days of the Play-Doh Fun Factory.

In order to fully appreciate the talents and beauty our city offers, we will consider field trips to the Elizabeth Gallery, Memorial Art Gallery and Rochester Arc & Flame. Students will have an opportunity to learn about the different art programs available at our local colleges and institutions as well as meet with local artists.

The class will participate in a creative service-based project that utilizes design and sculpture to improve or support a not-for profit agency or community cause.

Conceptual Questions:

- How do artists come up with ideas?
- What is the creative process?
- How are the Elements and Principles of Art & Design used in creating art?
- What is the difference between traditional and non-traditional art materials?
- Which contemporary artists are known for their use of non-traditional materials in art making?

Major Requirements:

- Visual Journal/Sketchbook
- Conferences
- Decision Making
- CPR
- Artist Studios & Gallery Tours
- Service Based Project

Happiness & Well-being -Gil Rosa

Is happiness the key to life??

Many people believe that the key to finding happiness is through wealth. Others believe that beauty is the key. This may not be case! This class will explore what people define as happiness and how some attempt to achieve it. We will examine social media, geographic location, wealth/poverty etc. There will also be a focus on social psychology, human interaction and what strategies can make us happier.

Can we improve the happiness and well-being of teens during the long cold and dark winters in Rochester, NY? Join this extended class and feel a greater sense of happiness and well-being.

Conceptual Questions:

- How can you make yourself happy?
- Is it possible to make others happy?
- Why might geographic location impact happiness?

Major Requirements:

- Journal
- Conferences
- Decision Making
- CPR

Life After High School -Holly Taylor

“What we learn with pleasure we never forget.” -Alfred Mercier

Too often the complaint of “Why didn’t I learn this in high school?” is stated across social media. The connection between what is taught in high school is not often translating to the “real world.” This class will offer the opportunity to see the connections between high school and the “real world” and you will learn those “other skills” needed to navigate life after high school.

Topics that we will focus on will range from money management, finances, mending clothes, basic vehicle maintenance, home repairs, interviewing skills, living situations, credit cards and social media just to name a few. You decide what it is that you want to learn and what skills you want to have when you leave high school.

Conceptual Questions:

- How do I prepare for my future?
- How do I make sure I am not being scammed?
- Who are the people I can ask for help?
- How can technology assist or harm me in trying to be independent?

Major Requirements:

- Journal

- Conferences
- Decision Making
- CPR
- Triad
- Class Field Trips

Doom!

-Karen McCann

“It’s the end of the world as we know it but I feel fine”...or should I?
You are now entering the Twilight Zone.

Is Hulu’s adaptation of the novel *A Handmaid’s Tale* where women now serve as sex servants to wealthy men, a real possibility? In real life, certain areas of the world are like this and in the US it could end up being our future (hopefully not!). The Netflix series *Black Mirror* also looks at a lot of issues and twists on reality. The direction we take is ours to choose, we can read dystopian novels and compare to the world today or look at current issues and discuss possible futures or how to get involved in these issues to keep them from happening! We could look to incorporate more community service into our class/school by becoming involved in different organizations. Possible books to read: *A Handmaid’s Tale*, *Orson Wells’ 1984*, *Fahrenheit 451*, *The Gender Game* etc.

Conceptual Questions:

- Where is the line between science fiction and reality?
- How long will the human population last?
- How is the world being threatened?
- How could war destroy society?
- What is threatening society today?

Requirements:

- Journaling
- Conferencing
- Decision making
- CPR
- Books/articles

- Writing assignments
- Presentations
- Participation

Conflict Resolution

-Karie Shaw

“The goal of resolving conflict in a relationship is not victory or defeat. It’s reaching understanding & letting go of our need to be right.” - unknown

“Conflict cannot survive without your participation.”-Wayne Dyer

Learning how to resolve a conflict peacefully is an important life skill. Remember when Stephany Givens was killed outside of Jefferson Middle School? Would Stephany still be alive today if the girl who stabbed her was equipped with the necessary skills to resolve their conflict peacefully?

Knowing how to resolve conflict will not only defuse situations like this, but it can also help you compromise, de-escalate problems and restore kindness even in the tensest circumstances.

Conceptual Questions:

- How can students use current event/issues to resolve important conflicts?
- How can students use effective strategies to resolve conflict with their peers and adults?

Major Requirements:

- Journal
- Conferences
- Decision Making
- CPR
- Community partnerships and class field trips
- Host two peace circle discussions each quarter to bring up current issues

Being the Best You

-Leda Williams

"There is no greater threat to the critics and cynics and fearmongers than those of us who are willing to fall because we have learned how to rise." Brene Brown

Have you struggled with learning how to overcome your personal obstacles? Do you wish you had better coping mechanisms with failing, so you don't feel full of shame and guilt? If you've answered yes to either of those questions, then this class might be for you.

Throughout the course of Being the Best You, we will explore research and literature written by Brene Brown, who is a researcher and a storyteller and a University of Houston Graduate College of Social Work. She has become well known for her research on vulnerability, courage, worthiness, and shame. Together, we will learn more about what happens to our brains when we go through traumatic experiences and how we can reprogram our minds to work for us, instead of against us.

Conceptual Questions:

- What does trauma do to the brain?
- How can applying certain mindfulness strategies help you be aware of your personal triggers?
- How does empathy and vulnerability combat shame and guilt?
- How does failing promote growth, and allow you to become the best version of yourself?

Major Requirements:

- Journal
- Conferences
- Decision Making
- CPR
- Research presentations
- Participation in field experiences

Lights, Camera, Drama **-Mariana Barry**

"Acting is standing up naked and turning around very slowly."

~ Rosalind Russell

The world of theater dates back to the 5th century in Ancient Greece and has been used as a way for people to express the issues of society. From building community, to entertaining, the performing arts offers people the opportunity to express themselves in a way that is unique, honest and freeing. This class will explore the world of theater and the performing arts from improvisation (comedic arts), musicals, learning how to write/direct/perform a play, set and costume design, and theater reviews. We will look at the history of theater and explore theater around the world. We will take trips to local performances and learn about different genres such as one act plays, auto-biographicals, comedies and dramas. The possibilities are endless and we as a class will decide the course!

Conceptual Questions:

- How can performing arts be used to address social justice issues?
- How can theater and performance be the voice of the oppressed?

Major Requirements:

- Journal
- Conferences
- Decision Making
- CPR
- Attendance at Rochester Broadway Theater Plays, Geva, SOTA, etc.

Let's Play!

-Mary McGohan

"The true object of all human life is play."

- G.K. Chesterton

What does it mean to play? Why do we play? How and when should we play?

In this extended class, students will learn about playing. We will explore many types of play, including sports, video games, board games, and more. We will learn about the history and ever-changing culture of play through meeting experts in sports and games, visiting local sites such as the Strong Museum of Play, Frontier Field, Blue

Cross Arena, and gaming sites in the area. Students will learn the rules and strategies of sports and games from around the world through playing. Students will also work to create their own games, toys, sports, and play activities and present them to their classmates and the community.

Key Questions:

- What role does play fill in our lives?
- How has play changed throughout history?
- How has the digital age affected the way we play? Is this good or bad?
- How have professional sports and gaming affected our concept of play?
- How can we fit play into our lives in an increasingly work-oriented culture?

Major Requirements:

- Journal
- Conferences
- Decision Making
- CPR
- Participation in class trips
- Working with classmates to create and teach games and sports
- Volunteer in play sites in the rochester area such as museums, schools, and day care centers
- Research about the history of play
- Participation in fundraising activities

Fitness for Life

-Mary Mon

“Physical fitness is not only one of the most important keys to a healthy body, it is the basis of dynamic and creative intellectual activity.” John F. Kennedy

Fitness for Life is a class designed to introduce students to the basic principles necessary for living a healthy lifestyle. Students will gain an understanding of different types of physical fitness activities, training principles, nutritional guidelines, and the benefits of being physically active. The topics of study include basic anatomy and physiology, fitness terminology, goal-setting, self care, self-esteem and body

image, diet and nutrition, and diseases related to poor health choices. An emphasis will be placed on developing responsible personal and social behavior, respect for individual differences, self-control, and cooperative skills. Students will contemplate their bodies and body image as related to broader issues of social justice and the harm caused from stereotypes.

Conceptual Questions:

- What does it mean to be fit?
- What is the link between health and human rights?
- How can fitness and proper nutrition be promoted in poor communities with limited resources?

Major Requirements:

- Journal
- Conferences
- Participation in Decision Making
- Participation in CPR
- Participation in weekly fitness activities (yoga, pilates, weight training, etc.)

Heroes and Villains

-Walter Jahnke

“A hero is someone who understands the degree of responsibility that comes with his freedom”

“We see the enemy and he is us”

What is a hero? What are the attributes and actions that describe a hero? What is a villain, what are the actions and attributes of a villain? Who are our heroes? Can anyone become a hero? How are heroes created and sustained. Can a hero become a villain? In this class we will examine heroes and villains in the real world, in literature, and comicbooks. We will examine what creates a hero, what causes villainy and what can we all do to be the hero we want to be and the world needs.

Conceptual Questions:

- If bad things are done to achieve good results are you a hero or a villain?

- Are good and evil a result of birth or created by environment?
- Is choosing to be silent when witnessing injustice an evil action?

Major Requirements:

- Journal
- Conferences
- Decision Making
- Current Events
- Writing Assignments

Straight Outta Rochester -Wasa Bouphavong

"Rochester? Why Rochester?' 'Why not?'" — It's a Wonderful Life, Sam Wainwright.

Rochester, New York's third-largest metropolitan area, features a unique blend of history and innovation. Former home to pioneers and independent thinkers like Susan B. Anthony and Frederick Douglass, Rochester has worked hard to preserve and honor its landmarks...which is why, this class will explore the history/geography of the city of Rochester and its suburbs as well. With that knowledge, we will learn how and why Rochester has changed socially, economically, politically and culturally and in some ways, has not changed at all. This extended class will provide opportunities to engage and enlighten you as you go on this year-long journey learning about the history of Rochester, NY and its future.

Conceptual Questions:

- What will Rochester look like 5, 10 or 20 years from now?
- How and why has Rochester, NY transformed and has not transformed?
- Why is Rochester so segregated and how I can change/impact it?

Major Requirements:

- Journal
- Decision Making
- CPR
- Bi-weekly Conferences
- CPR
- Community service - 75 hours per year

- Field trips/ service learning to historic landmarks, parks, etc.