



Sir John A. MacDonald School



SJAM Complementary Course Guide: 2026-27

All students at Sir John A. Macdonald will take:

- English Language Arts and Social Studies (Humanities)
- Science and Mathematics (SMATH)
- Physical Education integrated with Health and Life Skills

[Grade 7 At A Glance](#)

[Grade 8 At A Glance](#)

[Grade 9 At A Glance](#)

All Grade 7 and 8 students will take:

- 4 complementary courses:
- two from September to January; two from February to June

All Grade 9 students will take:

- CTF Environmental Stewardship (to fulfill Science curricular expectations)
- 3 other complementary classes: 2 (Sept – January); 2 (Feb – June)
- Exception: **Full year courses include Band & Yearbook**

How do I sign up for my desired complementary courses?

Current Grade 6 students: Ms. Hornby and Ms. Reynolds will support in visits to your Grade 6 schools. If you miss the opportunity, you can contact Ms. Reynolds directly. (sareynolds@cbe.ab.ca)

Current Grade 7 and 8 students/Future Grade 8 and 9 learners: Please sign up through PowerSchool: <https://sis.cbe.ab.ca/public/home.html>

- **Students must use their own account;** the parent account does not provide access to course selections.

Deadline: Monday March 2nd We will strive to connect with your child if they miss this important deadline. Please proactively reach out to us!

This information helps us to design student timetables and teaching assignments. **Note:** due to high demand in several courses and facility restraints, it is impossible to give every student all of their course selections.



FINE ARTS



ART (VISUAL ARTS): A safe and welcoming space for students to take creative risks and become artists! No experience necessary; we teach you the attributes to become confident in expressing yourself, in a relaxed, supportive and fun atmosphere. Classroom instruction is student-centered and focused on individual abilities and interests. Experienced artists will be given opportunities for enrichment and growth through personalized instruction.



Art 7 (\$25.00 course fee; subject to an increase) Designed to introduce students to the elements and principles of art and will focus on creating art using various 2D and 3D materials and processes. This course will aim to build fundamental skills and will allow students to learn the basic techniques behind drawing, painting, printmaking, fiber art and sculpture. Additionally, students will discover how to analyze art, communicate through their art and understand composition. Art is all about experimenting; please do not feel like you need to have “artistic talent” or experience to take Art!



Art 8 (\$25.00 course fee; subject to an increase) Visual Art 8 will focus on creating art using various 2D and 3D materials and processes at the intermediate level. This course will allow for a deeper understanding and focus on drawing processes, painting techniques, printmaking, fiber art and sculpture. Students will integrate their knowledge of composition and use creative decision-making to communicate ideas with their art. This course does not require a prerequisite so do not be deterred if you did not take Art 7! Art is all about experimenting; please don't feel like you need to have “artistic talent” or experience to take Art!



Art 9 (\$25.00 course fee; subject to an increase) Visual Art 9 will focus on creating art using various 2D and 3D materials and processes. This course will allow students to direct their own learning so that they can build upon their skills from previous Art courses. Students will integrate their knowledge of composition and use creative decision-making to communicate ideas with their art. Fundamental skills will still be central to our learning so do not feel intimidated if you have not taken previous Art classes, there are no prerequisites required. Art is all about experimentation and practice; please don't feel like you need to have “artistic talent” or experience to take Art!

Drama 7, 8, 9 (no course fee)

This course offers students a wide variety of creative and expressive opportunities. Classes are designed to focus on individual improvement in the disciplines of movement, voice, character development, scene study and structure. Further venture into tech, improvisation, and minimal script work is also developed within the course. The basic skills of performing and audience awareness are explored in this hands-on, creative course. In addition to exploring all aspects of the dramatic arts, the film studies portion of this course is ideal for students who enjoy watching a variety of movies, who want to look deeper into the plot lines of a film and who would enjoy discussion about some of their favorite characters.





Band (Instrumental Music) 7

(\$30.00 Course Fee and Instrument Registration (Rental) Fee \$100 non-refundable)

Do you love music?! Band at SJAM is about learning to play a musical instrument while playing in a Band! No prior musical experience is necessary. Band is a full year course.

- learn to play a musical instrument; woodwind (flute, clarinet, bass clarinet) or brass (trumpet, trombone, euphonium, tuba) instrument, with additional percussion performance opportunities.
- perform and listen to a variety of musical genres (pop, rock, classical, jazz and more!)
- create and compose music.
- enjoy annual activities which include; performing in winter and spring concerts, attending concerts and field trips, performing for elementary students and band camp!



Band (Instrumental Music) 8 and 9

(\$30.00 Course Fee + Instrument Registration (Rental) Fee \$100 non-refundable)

Band students learn to play a musical instrument while playing in a Band! Band 8 and Band 9 students continue to develop music performance skills started in Band 7 and 8. Prior experience is an asset, but not required. Band is a full year course.

- learn to play a musical instrument; woodwind (flute, oboe clarinet, bass clarinet, saxophone), brass (trumpet, trombone, euphonium, tuba) or percussion. (Percussion is by audition).
- perform and listen to a variety of musical genres (pop, rock, classical, jazz and more!)
- create and compose music.
- enjoy annual activities which include; performing in winter and spring concerts, attending concerts and field trips, performing for elementary students and band camp!



Guitar 8 and 9 (\$20.00 Course fee; subject to an increase) The guitar class introduces students to the fundamentals of music and playing guitar! No previous musical experience is necessary.

However, if you already have experience playing guitar, you will continue building skills from your current playing level. Guitar students:

- Learn about the history of guitar music through various musical genres (pop, rock, classical, jazz and more!).
- play chords, melodies and finger picking technique.
- learn to count rhythms, read and write musical notation and chord symbols, various strumming patterns, as well as develop basic music composition skills.
- listen to different genres of music (pop, rock, hip hop, rap, jazz and more!).
- play independently, with a partner, and within a group.
- apply new skills to learn music of their own choice!



General Music 7, 8, 9 (no course fee) The General Music Class exposes students to the world of music through hands-on experiences. This course is designed for all students, regardless of prior experience. Students will actively engage with music through listening, playing instruments (percussion, string, woodwind, brass, keyboard and voice), and electronic music exploration, while developing essential musical skills, and a deep appreciation and understanding of music's role in the world. We will explore music from various cultures, historical periods, and genres, learning to listen, analyze, and create our own musical ideas.

- **Project-Based:** Engaging students through activities like creating musical compositions, exploring famous musicians, or performing using new notations.
- **Hands-On & Technology:** Using instruments, digital tools (like iPads/Chromebooks/Computers connected to a piano keyboard), and interactive platforms.
- **Flexible Learning:** A lab-style approach allowing exploration beyond traditional performance ensembles, welcoming all learners



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Niihiyyat 7, 8, 9



INDIGENOUS EDUCATION

This course creates space for students to build relationships with Place and Community. In Niihiyyat (Guide Us), students will learn to understand The Land as teacher, their own personal gifts and explore the 4 Domains: Spirit, Heart, Body, and Mind. Students will participate in Holistic and Experiential learning to explore the following questions:

- How can students build respect between self, others, and the natural world?
- How can students recognize and model relationships as interconnected?
- In what ways can students foster reciprocity?
- What evidence of renewal can students find on the land and in the world around them?

Throughout the semester, students will be offered opportunities to listen to Indigenous Knowledge Keepers, Elders, when these experiences are in person, through Course Materials and/or Field Trips. An additional fee may be attached based on opportunities offered.



CTF Environmental Stewardship: Science Enrichment Course

The Grade 9 SMATH team is excited to offer Grade 9 students a hands-on learning experience in this semester class that will combine Enrichment Through Experimentation, Innovation & Inquiry. By increasing time in science, students will:

- extend and deepen understanding of science concepts (life science, chemistry, physics, and earth science)
- develop critical thinking, scientific inquiry, and hands-on skills
- encourage curiosity, creativity, and collaboration
- and explore real-world applications and current issues in science.

In alignment with our School Development Plan, the class will be inclusive & culturally responsive by including topics that connect to local issues (e.g. water quality, land use, Indigenous knowledge). Students will also have choices in how they explore and express their learning (poster, model, short skit, drawing, oral presentation, etc.). A space will be created for group learning and peer collaboration, especially for students with less access to resources at home. Teachers will build in scaffolding and support for students who might need extra guidance. By offering hands on learning opportunities, student learning will deepen as we prepare for Science 10/14, Biology, Chemistry, Physics and province wide Science PATs.



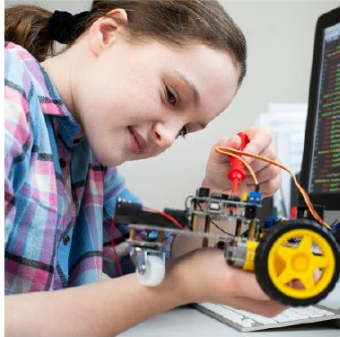


CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY FOUNDATIONS Program of Studies

Creative Apps 7 and 8 (Computing Science) (no course fee)

CTF Occupational Areas: Computing Science (CSE), Information Processing (INF), Networking (NET)

Working independently and through collaboration with others, students will experience the creative process through project-based assignments. Students will utilize interesting and relevant technology to meet the challenge of using computer applications, both web and desktop based, and understanding network processes to create products and develop skills applicable to everyday and/or workplace practices. This includes touch typing skills, manipulating digital photos, making multimedia presentations and posters, and more, through engaging projects like creating a personal class schedule, composing a photo collage about a career, creating aesthetically pleasing posters and advertisements, exploring the ethics of artificial intelligence (AI), utilization of AI, and an introduction to coding using Python. There will also be creative exploration in Minecraft.



Yearbook 9 (Management and Marketing) (no course fee)

CTF Occupational Areas: Management and Marketing, Communication Technology

Working as a team, students will experience the creative process through the creation of our school yearbook. Students will learn the skills and concepts needed to take them from developing a theme for this year's book through to creating and publishing the pages in the finished product. The demands and expectations of this course will bring everyday workplace concepts, like deadlines and delegated responsibilities, to the forefront in a relevant way. Students are also required to commit their time outside of class to fulfill their obligation to photograph three school events/activities for each semester. Upon completion of the yearbook, as a final project students will then go through the creative process again in the creation of the Grade 9 Farewell Video.

FULL YEAR COURSE.



Film Studies 7, 8, 9 (no course fee)

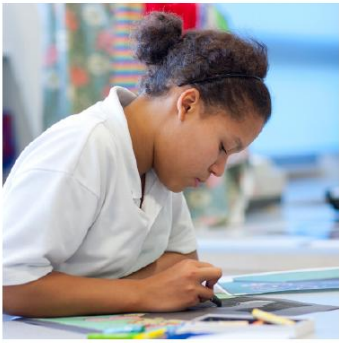
CTF Occupational Areas: Communication Technology, Design Studies, Management and Marketing

The aim of this course is to encourage students to explore their interests and passions in film as they learn about various career possibilities and occupational areas in film that may interest them in the future. Students will have the opportunity to learn about the history of film, film techniques, how to appreciate and analyze film, and how to review and write about film. Students will watch and analyze film clips, short films, documentaries, and full-length films. Advanced students will engage in writing screenplays from different genres, design promotional materials, and create short films.



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Construction and Fabrication 7, 8, 9

CTF Occupational Areas: Construction (CON); Fabrication (FAB); Design Studies (DES)

Course fee: \$30 Course fee; subject to an increase

The Construction program provides students the opportunity to work with their hands to design and construct wood, metal, and plastic projects. During their exploration, students will apply elements of design, experiment with different materials, and explore various wood-working and metal-working techniques.

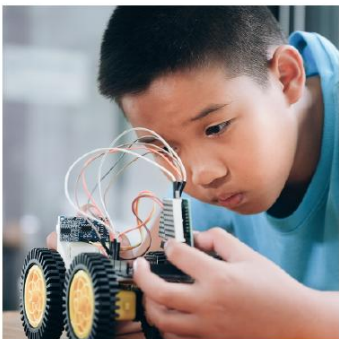
After completing a mandatory machine safety unit, students will have the opportunity to take on projects that will challenge their abilities and extend their skills. Students will learn about the design process and how to plan and construct projects in an efficient manner. The goal in our construction course is to focus on the students' interest in designing and creating, develop technical skills, and expose students to the knowledge and skills required in wood working and metal working industries. Students do not need any prior experience to join our class although it may be an asset.

Grade 7: Students will build 3 skill development projects + a mechanics project (something moves) and a design project (that solves a technical problem). They will learn about introductory hand tools, measurement types, and various ways to assemble designs. They will also engage with machine tools such as the scroll saw, the bandsaw, and belt/disc sanders.

Grade 8: In this 'intermediate' level class, students will complete the same basic requirements of grade sevens, but they will be introduced more interesting and challenging projects as well as several new machines, such as wood lathes (bowls, candle sticks), milling machines (metal die) and more advanced metal work.

Grade 9: In this 'advanced' level class, students will complete the same basic requirements of previous courses, however, they will be taking on more advanced projects. Students will have greater freedom to individualize their mechanics and design projects and demonstrate their creativity, originality and their craftsmanship.

Please Note: All basic materials and supplies are covered by course fees, however, additional fees may be required if students wish to complete larger projects, use exotic hardwoods, or require specialized materials.



Cosmetology 7, 8, 9

CTF Occupational Areas: Human Services, Cosmetology, Esthetics, Human and Social Services

Course fee: \$20

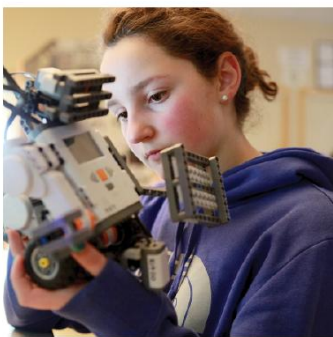
Cosmetology is open to ALL STUDENTS. This is an exploratory course that introduces students to the fundamentals of personal care, beauty practices, and creative self-expression. Students develop hands-on skills in basic skin care, nail care and design, make-up application, and introductory theatrical and special-effects make-up, with an emphasis on hygiene, safety, and professionalism. Through practical projects and discussions, students explore how cosmetics are used for everyday wear, performance, and storytelling. The course also examines societal and

cultural standards of beauty, media influences, and the role of self-image and identity, encouraging students to think critically about representation, inclusivity, and personal choice. Science connections, such as skin structure, product ingredients, and allergic reactions, are integrated throughout the course. This course supports creativity, confidence, and career awareness while promoting respect for diversity and healthy self-care practices.



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Food Studies 7, 8, 9

CTF Occupational Areas: Human services, Business, Information Processing
\$30 Course fee; subject to an increase

Students examine the role of food, looking beyond consumption to production, visual appreciation, nutrition, meal planning, economics and preparation; and learn the various skills in the cooking trade.

Food Studies 7- Food Basics

Students learn safe and sanitary food handling procedures, equipment care, comprehension of recipes and the importance of efficient work habits. Students will discover basic recipes with a focus on breakfast foods and Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide. Grade sevens will also prepare some light snacks and baking.



Food Studies 8- Contemporary Baking

Students develop and demonstrate an understanding of traditional and contemporary baking focusing on basic measuring techniques, preparation methods, role of ingredients and the proper use of equipment for baked goods. Grade eights will also prepare some light lunch items.

Food Studies 9- Snacks & Appetizers

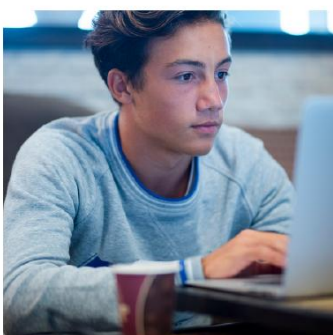
Students apply the importance of snacks and appetizers related to lifestyle by making nutritious, as well as delicious, snacks and appetizers. Students develop an understanding of planning, preparation and evaluation of balanced, healthy meals. Students will also prepare some dinner items, baking and some multicultural foods.



Movie Making 8 and 9 (Communication Technology) (no course fee)

CTF Occupational Area: Communication Technology

Working independently and through collaboration with others, students will experience the creative process through project-based assignments. Students will utilize interesting and emerging technology to meet the challenge of communicating a message through the "canvas" of making movies. Emphasis will be exploring skills relating to post-production tasks like audio-video editing, digital graphic design, and animation using Blender. Major projects include exploring different video/movie styles, camera work, animation of basic pre-made characters, and recreating their own version of movie trailers.



Tourism 7 and 8 (no course fee)

CTF Occupational Areas: Environmental Stewardship, Wildlife, Tourism

- **Note: tourism is sometimes not offered due to low demand.**

Welcome to Tourism! Have you ever thought about traveling the world!? Here is your chance to gain some useful skills to plan the trip you have been dreaming of! In this course we will be investigating the motivating factors for travel and exploring employment opportunities related to tourism. Students will begin by creating a travel package (itinerary, attractions information, traveler information, etc.) for somewhere in Alberta or Canada. They will then apply the knowledge and skills acquired to an international adventure for themselves and/or others! Assessment will be mainly project based.



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Leadership 7, 8 and 9 (no course fee)

CTF Occupational Areas: Enterprise & Innovation, Community Care Services

This exciting course will prepare you to successfully work with people and help you to make a positive impact in your school and home community. The course blends aspects of community volunteerism, mentorship, and leadership into one course that:

- Encourages you to be a leader at SJAM! As part of this course, you will engage in activities such as planning various school events such as spirit days, fundraisers, dances, and assemblies.
- Examines the role of volunteers in a community and performs as volunteers themselves!
- Supports learning about the characteristics of positive mentoring relationships in their personal lives and society. Students will prepare to engage in a mentoring relationship which could include things such as mentoring future SJAM students and reading buddies.
- Explores basic principles of leadership. Create a plan for personal growth- Who do you want to be!?

Leadership 7: Listen and learn – Year of Discovery

Leadership 8: Key leaders in the support of the SJAM Grade 7 welcome in 2026-27 and support with the Grade 9 Farewell

Leadership 9: Add in Pep Rallies and support organizing the Grade 9 Farewell

Outdoor Education and Environmental Education 7, 8, 9

CTF Occupational Areas: Agriculture, Environmental Stewardship, Forestry, Primary Resources, Wildlife, Recreation Leadership

Activity fee for each field trip students choose.

The focus of the Outdoor and Environmental Education course is to build an awareness and foundation of basic knowledge, skills, and attitudes related to a variety of environmental issues and outdoor pursuits. Students are introduced to safe and responsible outdoor travel, have a chance to apply their new skills on off-site trips, and learn about basic ecological processes and the effects of human lifestyles on the environment. The in-class theory-based learning prepares students with all the required knowledge, skills, proper use of equipment, and experience to ensure safe and enjoyable opportunities for outdoor recreation.

Students will connect to and explore occupations in resource management and extraction, urban planning, parks and protected areas, recreational pursuits and leadership opportunities.

Field Trips may include skating, cross country skiing, snowshoeing, hiking, climbing, canoeing, kayaking, field experiences in water testing, ecosystems, forestry, air monitoring and wetlands. Off-site activities will have an associated cost.

Grade 7: Focus is on human impacts on forests, navigation and introductory map making skills, the Leave no Trace principles, in addition to basic camping and survival skills.

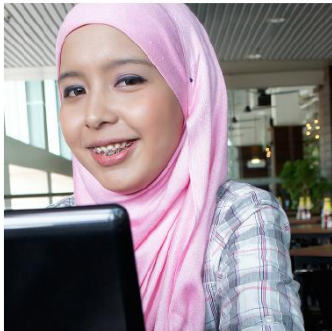
Grade 8: Focus is on human impacts on wetlands, Navigation and topographic mapping, in addition to survival skills, first aid and risk management.

Grade 9: focus is on outdoor leadership, environmental action, climate change, advanced survival skills, first aid and risk management, and trip planning.



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Power Up Your Learning: 7, 8 and 9 (no course fee): Power Up Your Learning is based on the belief that students who have the confidence to ask questions, solve problems, explore possibilities and evaluate choices will make responsible decisions about their learning. Students who understand their learning preferences are better equipped to understand and explain relationships among ideas and make relevant connections between what they are learning in school and their lives outside of school. Awareness of areas for growth assists students in setting appropriate goals that will support their learning.

Grade 9 Transitions:

The CBE and SJAM staff are supportive of the transition of students from Grade 9 to 10. Ms. Billeck and Ms. Balis have started conversations.

- Your child's high school is based on your primary address: [CBE Find A School](#)
- All high school transfer requests need to be submitted by families between February 9 to March 15 – no extensions are provided.
 - [CBE High School Transfer Process](#)
 - A course (taken in Grade 10, 11 and 12) can be a reason for transfer.
 - Schools accepting transfers: [See Green and Yellow Schools in Chart](#)
 - If Diefenbaker offers the course or program, it cannot be a reason for transfer.
- A full list of possibilities for your child: [CBE High School Programs](#)
 - Regular programming: designated high school
 - Advanced Placement
 - IB program: [Expression of Interest](#)
 - [High Performance Athletic Development Pathway](#) (Bowness)
 - [Performing and Visual Arts Programs \(Central Memorial\)](#)
 - Application and interviews January 21-24
 - Unique Settings
 - [Alternative High School](#)
 - [CBE Learn](#)
 - [Jack James](#)
 - [Louise Dean](#)
 - [CBE Language Programs](#)

An excellent guide for all families: [Get Ready, Set, Go For It...](#)
Detailed High School Course Guide: [link](#)

If you have questions about your child's transition to high school, please don't hesitate to contact Ms. Billeck (mabilleck@cbe.ab.ca), Ms. Balis (bjbalis@cbe.ab.ca) or Ms. Hornby (mahornby@cbe.ab.ca).

Updated Jan 2026



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