

Academic and Enrichment Education at the Cable Academic and Vocational Education Center

The goal of CJR's academic education program is to enable students to return to their public schools with a stronger work ethic and improved skills and study habits.

Academic education at CJR focuses on four major subject areas, including English language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science. All students receive instruction in core subject areas during every school day. Students who enter CJR functioning significantly behind grade level are provided with intensive remedial instruction to improve their performance in the classroom. Advanced level instruction is provided for students who have stronger academic aptitude than the average student. In addition to core academic subjects, students also have the opportunity to participate in a variety of enhancement classes, including computer technology, physical education and wellness, and life skills classes.

In addition to academic and enhancement classes, students are encouraged to enroll in a vocational course of study at CJR. Every boy develops a theoretical base for the given course content and applies that knowledge to practical application in and out of the classroom setting. Every student develops and maintains a vocational portfolio which integrates his skills in the given trade, life skills, reading, writing, and mathematics and serves as a collection of his accomplishments. Instructors may use the portfolio as an instructional guide and assessment tool. Vocational courses of study include *Vocational Agriculture, including Animal Science and Plant Science, Horticulture & Landscape Design classes; Building Design & Drafting; Culinary Arts; Creative and Fine Arts; Graphic Arts, Power Mechanics; and Wood Technology.*

The CJR vocational program utilizes a standards-based curriculum based on the Connecticut Career and Technical Education Competencies and the Connecticut Technical High School Curriculum Frameworks. Vocational classes offer students a variety of learning experiences appropriate to their capabilities and interests while introducing educational opportunities that may provide a career path.

Academic and Enhancement Course Descriptions:

English language arts – The Connecticut Junior Republic's English language arts curriculum is based on the four primary principles outlined by *The Connecticut State Department of Education Curriculum Frameworks* (2006). Students will become proficient in reading and responding, exploring and responding to literature, communicating with others, and applying English language conventions. Students will develop reading comprehension, written and oral communication, and critical thinking skills. Through interdisciplinary thematic units and lessons, students will demonstrate an understanding of, and appropriate ways to use, the English language. Through the use of technology, students will develop a more astute ability to conduct research and use primary and secondary sources. Students will engage in the writing process by brainstorming and outlining ideas, writing and editing rough drafts, attending writing conferences with their teachers and peers, and completing final copies of their work. In order to reinforce skills, specific adaptive technology and software will be utilized as appropriate. Students will develop a sense of, and respect for, the contributions of various ethnicities to American culture, including literature from the African, Latino, Asian, Arab, Jewish, Eastern European, and Native American communities.

Mathematics – Upon admission to CJR, students are administered the *Woodcock Johnson III* and *Wide Range Achievement Test IV* examinations in order to assess their skills with mathematic computation, calculations, fluency, memory with math facts, ability to successfully engage in timed tasks, observational skills, ability to determine strategies to solve word problems, and an ability to apply mathematical functions to real world living skills. In addition to the standardized achievement testing, teachers administer on – going, formative assessments.

CJR's mathematics curriculum is based on the standards published in the *Connecticut Mathematics Curriculum Framework* (2005). Math courses are primarily individualized (or taught in small group settings) in order to address varying student needs, deficits, and abilities.

Depending on individual need, students may be assigned to either *Basic Math I* or *Basic Math II*. Remedial skills, including telling time, place value, using money, utilizing a ruler, using a simple calculator, and simple operational skills, including addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division, are addressed.

In *Consumer or Business Math*, students develop abilities in personal finance and budgeting, calculating income, banking and employment issues.

The primary goals in *Pre-Algebra* are to provide students with an opportunity to complete operations utilizing decimals, fractions, ratios, proportions, and percentages. Students are also introduced to the use of variables, simple algebraic expressions and equations, and ways to use math in their daily living skills.

Students who show proficiency in *Pre-Algebra* enroll in *Introduction to Algebra* or *Algebra I*. In this course, students develop skills in the use of real numbers, integers, and algebraic equations. They also learn to complete operations with binomials and polynomials. As students progress, skills in working with linear equations, ordered pairs, quadrants, and slope of a line are introduced and developed.

Students develop an understanding of, and ability to utilize, geometric concepts in *Introduction to Geometry*. Instructional units include completing operations on a line and a plane, using coordinates, and the use of angles and triangles. Students study the Pythagorean Theorem, and develop an ability to use polygons and quadrilaterals.

Within the mathematics curriculum, students have opportunities for real world applications and integration with their assigned vocational courses.

Social Studies – The Connecticut Junior Republic Social Studies curriculum is based on the four primary social studies principles as described in *The Connecticut State Department of Education Social Studies Curriculum Framework* (1998): history; civics and government; geography; and economics. Given the significant differences in each student's educational background, this curriculum is designed to present topics in social studies from an American perspective, thus satisfying the requirements for one Carnegie unit of measure in either United States History and/or Civics.

Through interdisciplinary thematic units and lessons, students will demonstrate an understanding of given concepts as they relate to historic, current, and ongoing issues of American history and government. Through the use of technology and the Internet, students develop a more astute ability to conduct research and utilize, access, and evaluate primary and secondary sources. Students strengthen their critical thinking, reading comprehension, and written, and verbal communication skills by actively engaging in discussions that challenge their understanding of existing ideas, support their understanding of newly presented topics, and enable them to articulate their opinions in a clear and concise manner.

Science – The science curriculum is designed to provide students with an introduction to various themes in physical and life science. The science laboratory teacher is charged with the responsibility of addressing theory, application, and experimentation in the core components of the thematic units and by facilitating reinforcement activities that assist the student in building the bridge between the abstract and reality.

Through the use of various multiple intelligences, students supplement their understanding of scientific theory, application, and experimentation through research, inquiry-based learning. By developing their research and study skills, students improve their ability to integrate the core components of the science curriculum with social studies, mathematics, and English. Through the use of current events and multi media, students will demonstrate an understanding that there are controversies and consequences related to scientific exploration and advancement. Students will demonstrate an ability to formulate, express, and support their opinions as they relate to science and society. Through identifying patterns in scientific history, students will develop an ability to predict future trends and needs within the scientific community. During independent and cooperative research projects, students will demonstrate an in-depth

awareness of the contributions that various cultural groups have made to the advancement of scientific study and development. This course is designed by utilizing the *Connecticut Science Curriculum Frameworks* (1998).

Computer Technology Integration – The computer technology curriculum is designed to provide students with an ability to utilize technology in order to assist them in their academic, vocational, recreational, and personal pursuits. Primary units of study include *The Impact Computers Have on Society, Utilizing Microsoft Systems, Utilizing Electronic Resources, and Effective & Appropriate Uses of the Internet*. Teachers have the opportunity to utilize technology when developing, implementing, assessing, and evaluating academic lessons. In addition to their formal computer classes, each academic class is assigned a full day to utilize a separate Internet Laboratory in order to conduct research and make use of educational software. This course is designed by utilizing the *Connecticut Learning Resources & Information Technology Curriculum Frameworks* (1998).

Life Skills and Health – Students learn skills critical to independent living and to being responsible citizens in their homes, schools and communities. Students discuss topics that include community and social responsibility with an emphasis on the significant duties associated with parenting; the evolving roles of family in their lives; death and dying; and the responsibilities they have to making their neighborhoods a positive environment. Consumer awareness with an emphasis on personal finance is taught, including earning and budgeting money, and local laws and ordinances that have an impact on their daily lives. The course offers units of study on the legal system including the differences between juvenile and adult offenders and career exploration including employability and work maturity skills, resume writing, and conflict resolution. This course is designed by utilizing the *Connecticut Health & Safety Education Curriculum Frameworks* (1998).

Physical Education and Wellness – Students engage in structured physical education on a weekly basis. The core components of this course inculcate a sense of team work, fairness, self-respect, self-esteem, and respect for others in competition. The physical education curriculum addresses the goals from *The Connecticut Physical Education Curriculum Frameworks* (2000). By participating in team sports and individual physical activities, students are taught the benefits of developing healthy habits and life style. Formal instruction includes units in weight training and cardiovascular exercise; basketball; swimming; baseball and softball; football; and volleyball. Interested students may enroll in American Red Cross Lifeguard Training to become CPR and Lifeguard certified. Developing a healthy lifestyle is a key component of the course. The harmful effects of substance abuse on the human body and the legal consequences are addressed. The hazards of abusing nicotine, alcohol, prescription medication, and illegal drugs are discussed. Students learn about emergency preparation within their homes and communities. Issues surrounding personal health and hygiene are also addressed, including meal preparation; the importance of physical fitness; importance of medical care; and social skills and proper etiquette. The instructor leads students in candid discussion about human sexuality and reproduction, including male responsibility and protection against acquiring a sexually transmitted disease and HIV/AIDS.