

**L.A. MATHESON  
Secondary School**

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**GRADE 8  
Course Selection Handbook  
2026-27**

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# At L.A. Matheson, we...

provide a safe, cooperative and supportive learning environment that promotes social, intellectual and creative growth. We aim to help all our students develop into informed, active and responsible global citizens.

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## **Grade 8 Courses**

All grade 8 students are required to take the following for a total of 8 courses:

1. Humanities (English Language Arts 8 & Social Studies 8)
2. Math 8
3. Science 8
4. French 8
5. Physical & Health Education 8
6. Dance 8
7. Arts Education Rotation: Art, Drama, Media Arts, and Music
8. ADST (Applied Skills Rotation): Woodwork, Foods, Computers, Textiles

**Outside the Timetable Courses** – Students have the option of taking Jazz Band (only if you're in concert band already) and Yearbook, all of which run before or after school. These are extra courses in addition to the eight above.

### **Humanities (English Language Arts 8 & Social Studies 8) MEN—08 & MSS—08**

Humanities 8 is a linear course comprised of the curricular goals for English Language Arts 8 and Social Studies 8. Students will focus on improving their reading, writing and critical thinking skills to have a strong base of foundational skills to be successful in their high school career. Students will explore different genres of texts, learn to communicate ideas clearly in a variety of ways, use evidence, and think critically.

### **Math 8 MMA—08--Y**

This course represents the foundation for the learning that will follow in Math 9 and beyond. Students will learn about different ways to represent numbers (fractions, decimals, percents), ways to apply proportional reasoning in various ways, how to represent discrete linear relationships, algebraic reasoning with linear equations and spatial reasoning through exposure to the Pythagorean Theorem and problems involving length, area, and volume. Students will also work to bolster their capacity for reasoning, problem-solving and communicating mathematical ideas.

### **Science 8 MSC—08--Y**

Science 8 focuses on the three main branches of science: Biology, Chemistry, and Physics.

Topics in Science 8 include:

- Life processes in cells
- Kinetic Molecular Theory to explain the behaviour of matter
- Energy is transferred as a particle and a wave
- Theory of Plate Tectonics explains Earth's geological processes

Each unit will prepare you for Science 9.

## **Physical & Health Education 8 MPHE-08--Y**

The mission of Physical Education at L. A. Matheson Secondary is to empower students to sustain regular, lifelong physical activity as a foundation for a healthy, productive, and fulfilling life. This is achieved through education and practice. Each activity is designed to prepare all students to develop the skills, knowledge and understanding of the life-long benefits of health-enhancing activity.

Physical and Health Education 8 is an introduction to movement and athletic skills. Through a combination of activities, games and light weight training, students will develop the strength to ensure the ability for lifelong health.

## **PHE Soccer 8-High Performance MPHE-08--APSL**

This is a linear PHE course combined with Recreational Leadership 8 (two courses in total). NOTE: either Arts or ADST rotation will be replaced. Application and fees are required for this course. Previous club experience is also required. Students will be contacted to confirm enrolment.

## **Dance 8 MDNC-08-T**

Do you love making up dances with your friends? Or learning the newest TikTok dance trend? Maybe you're all about the dance floor at weddings – whoever you are, if you love to dance, then Dance 8 is for you! This class is perfect for all Grade 8s—no experience needed, just a willingness to have fun and try new things. We'll explore the basics of different dance styles, from hip-hop to jazz, Bhangra to Gidha, and even some break-dancing basics. You'll learn a bit about the history and culture behind each style and get comfortable moving to the beat.

In Dance 8, we'll be creating a routine as a class, making dances in small groups, and going on awesome field trips. You'll discover how dance can tell stories and connect with different cultures. We'll even get to share what we've learned at a special end-of-semester show for friends and family!

Join us to build confidence, make new friends, and find your groove!

\*Note: Dance 8 & 9 may run together.

## **Grade 8 Rotations**

There are two types of Grade 8 Rotations.

1. ARTS - Course combinations may include Art, Drama, Dance, Media Arts, and/or Music.
2. ADST (Applied Design, Skills & Technology)  
Course combinations may include Foods, Textiles, Woodwork, and/or Computers.

## **Arts Education Rotation**

This is a one-semester course that may include Art, Drama, Media Arts, and/or Music.

### **Art 8 MAE—08—T**

Visual Arts teaches the foundations of drawing, painting, sculpture, visual language, and art history.

### **Drama 8 MDR—08—T**

Students are introduced to the basics of voice and movement for the stage.

### **Media Arts 8 MADMA08—T**

Combining computers and art, this course will help students grow as artists in creating media content that is engaging and persuasive. This hands-on course will explore many topics such as drawing, painting, photo editing and manipulation, video editing, programming, and presentations. The focus is on providing students with the communication and presentation skills that will help them in many of their courses throughout their high school years. This course offers unique ways to explore identity and a sense of belonging.

### **Music 8 MMU—08-CHR**

This course is designed for grade 8 students to develop their vocal skills and general musicianship within a choral ensemble. Students will learn about techniques associated with tone production, basic theory, and harmony singing. Performance material will be selected from popular folk and classical music. Performances are considered part of the course curriculum.

### **Concert Band 8 MMU—08CB—Y**

Prerequisites: NONE. This is a year-long course in conjunction with PHE 8. Band 8 replaces the Arts Rotation.

This course is designed for Grade 8 students who have 1 year – or no experience at all – with a band instrument. Students will learn instrumental techniques and musicianship skills. Attention will be devoted to developing range, articulation, tone, and sight-reading skills. This course will introduce students to many different styles of music in the concert band repertoire. Performances are considered part of the course curriculum.

### **Jazz Band 8 MMU—08—Y-JAZZ**

Prerequisites: NONE. This is a year-long course that runs off-timetable.

This course is for Grade 8 students who are interested in jazz and big band idioms. Students will be learning their instruments at a quicker pace. They will learn the basics of the jazz medium, including interpretation and improvisation. Students can choose to learn a different instrument than they may play in a Concert Band. Performances are considered part of the course curriculum. Please see your Band 8 teacher if interested.

## **Applied Design, Skills, and Technologies Rotation (ADST)**

This is a one-semester course that may include Computers, Drafting and Design, Metalwork, Woodwork, Foods, and Textiles.

## **Business and Computer Education**

### **Computers Studies 8: Introduction to Information Technology MADCC08-T**

Students will develop basic computer and digital skills that will help them do well in high school and in the digital world. Concepts covered will include keyboarding, digital citizenship, e-mail, website design, and basic tools of Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint. Other units will likely include video production, sound development, photo editing and manipulation, drawing, simple 2D animation, and computer programming. This course is entirely project-based.

### **Drafting and Design 8 MADD-08-T**

This course covers basic drafting principles and techniques, both board drafting and computer-aided design. If you are interested in a career in design, such as interior design, architecture, engineering or fashion design, you will need to take a course in drafting. Drafting is also important in construction and manufacturing careers.

### **Yearbook 8 XYB—08-Y**

**Please note that this course is offered after school only.**

In this design course, students will work as part of a team to produce our school yearbook. Students will immerse themselves into the culture of the school and become photojournalists who capture the experiences and memories of all our students. During the process, students will learn the principles of layout and design used in the desktop publishing industry, explore digital photography and editing, and will work with industry-standard software, including InDesign, Illustrator, and Photoshop. As deadlines are critical in this class, a mature attitude and good work ethic are a must.

## **Home Economics**

### **Foods Studies 8 MADFS08-T**

As a part of the ADST rotation, get ready to dive into the kitchen and discover the exciting world of cooking. Spend six weeks immersed in hands-on learning experiences, developing a foundational understanding of kitchen safety protocols and fundamental cooking techniques. In addition, you'll get to collaborate with peers while you whip up some sweet and savoury treats!

### **Textile Studies 8 MADT-08-T**

An introduction to learning the skills to use basic sewing notions, draft basic patterns, operate a sewing machine and apply basic hand-sewing techniques. You will need to demonstrate safe sewing machine practices prior to operating a sewing machine. In addition, you will be able to practice your independence, problem-solving, time management, and organization skills. You will be applying the ADST Design Model in designing and constructing your own Apron or Drawstring Bag.

## **Technology Education**

### **Woodwork 8 MADW-08-T**

This course offers a hands-on introduction to woodworking and drafting processes with an emphasis on the development of practical skills, problem-solving, and design work. Through several small projects, students will become familiar with the safe and effective use of various hand tools, power tools, and machines used in the woodworking process. Students will spend time in the computer lab using Auto CADD to learn the basics of computer-aided design and drafting, where they will design a project that they will later create in the woodworking shop. An emphasis will be on developing the practices and attitudes that will encourage students to work safely in school shops, at home, and in the workplace.

## **International Languages Department**

\*Grade 8 students with a special education designation may not be required to take language courses. However, many have had great success in the language programs with adaptations.

### **International Languages Department**

Grade	French	Spanish	Punjabi
08	French 08 (Introductory)		
09	French 09	Spanish (Introductory)	
10	French 10	Spanish 10	Punjabi 10 (Introductory)
11	French 11	Spanish 11	Punjabi 11
12	French 12	Spanish 12	Punjabi 12

#### **French 8 MFR—08—S**

French 8 is designed as an introductory course where students will review and build on skills applied in elementary school. However, no previous French experience is required! Vocabulary, speaking, writing, and grammar skills are developed in context. We will study French you can use in a Francophone environment, and the course will incorporate cultural elements and authentic documents wherever possible.

## **Support Programs**

### **BASES Program**

The BASES Program is an acronym for “Building Academic, Social & Employment Skills.” The BASES Program is available to certain students who require differentiated learning outcomes. Admission to the program is through School District #36 (Surrey) placement. Students work on individual academic, functional academic and social skill learning goals in BASES class and are integrated in electives, sometimes with Education Assistant (EA) support. During the senior grades, students prepare for and attend work experience placements in addition to their classes.

### **English Language Learners (ELL)**

The English Language Learners program enables students whose first language is not English to learn sufficient oral and written English so that they can fully participate in the regular academic program as soon as possible.

### **Learning Support Team (LST)**

Learner Support is provided for students who require additional help so that they can be successful in school. The Learner Support Center offers:

- diagnosis of learning difficulties
- review of mathematics and language basics
- remedial reading instruction
- assistance in improving study skills
- one-on-one teaching to help each student understand difficult concepts

The LST (Learner Support Team) program is available to students from Grades 8-12 and is designed to provide individual assistance and learning strategies to students who have recognized learning disabilities or have difficulties with school subjects. The long-term goal is to enable students to become independent, responsible learners who can be successful in their academic subjects. The program is flexible and designed to meet the unique needs of the individual student.

## **Counselling Services**

The Counselling Department endeavours to assist students to acquire the skills, knowledge and attitudes necessary to:

- Explore personal issues and develop coping skills
- Relate effectively to others
- Develop appropriate educational plans and
- Explore career alternatives

In order to meet these objectives, the following are a sample of services and programs that are offered:

**Counselling:** Individual counselling – Counsellors help students become aware of their own potential, make wise decisions, and deal with educational, social and personal difficulties that may confront them. A student who wishes counselling assistance may request an appointment with his/her counsellor.

**Program Planning:** Counsellors and Career Centre staff will assist students with short- and long-term planning of their educational and career goals. Educational and Vocational/Career Information is communicated to students by the following: scheduling student interviews, offering courses, participating in post-secondary days, arranging for guest speakers, displaying calendars and posters, providing vocational interest tests, posting information on Instagram (lam\_counselling), having night and summer school information available.