Extracurriculars Descriptions 2026-2027

Senior Chorale (9th to 12th grade) - Open to all students
Place: Evangelical Presbyterian Church, 308 Possum Park Road, Newark
Director: Ira Rodrigues
Rehearsal Day/Time: Monday Evenings, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.
Date: Fall semester starts September 14, 2026
Fees:

Registration Fee: $115.00/semester
Music deposit: $20/semester refunded when music is returned
Uniform Costs (one time only):
Ladies' uniforms approximately $75
Gentlemen's uniforms approximately $30

Credit: ¼ credit per semester
Description: Mt. Sophia Academy Chorale is a non-auditioned ensemble open to all students in grades 9 through 12. We aim to equip our students to maximize their musical potential through choral singing. We will cover advanced concepts in vocal production including breathing, phonation, diction, foreign languages and expression. Students will be exposed to a variety of choral literature from different styles, periods, genres and languages. There will be a concert at the end of each semester where the students will have the opportunity to share their musicality and achievements. Students do NOT need to be enrolled in Mt. Sophia Academy in order to participate in Senior Chorale. Our choir members will also have the opportunity to audition for the Delaware All-State Choir.
If you have a student who enjoys singing, the Chorale may be just what you're looking for, and you'll find the Monday evening practices are also a wonderful time for your son or daughter to make new friends!

Any questions can be addressed to the director, Ira Rodrigues, at mtsophiachorale@gmail.com

Hand Chime Choir (5th to 12th grades) - Open to all students
Place: Evangelical Presbyterian Church, 308 Possum Park Road, Newark
Director: Debra Arnold
Rehearsal Day/Time: Monday Evenings, 5:30-6:30 p.m.
Date: Fall semester starts September 14, 2026
Fees: $65/semester
Description: The Mt. Sophia Academy Hand Chime Ensemble is a non-auditioned ensemble open to all students in grades 5 through 12. This ensemble gives us the unique opportunity to challenge more advanced musicians and provide extra support and help to those who may be new to music ensembles. Our main focus in the Hand Chime Ensemble will be on fundamental music reading skills, working as a team, expression, accompaniment skills and ringing techniques. Students will play music from a variety of styles, periods and genres. There will be a concert at the end of each semester where the students will have the opportunity to share their musicality and achievements. They will present both Hand Chime Ensemble features and will also accompany the MSA choirs. Enrollment in the MSA Senior Chorale or Concert Choir is encouraged, but not required. If your child is interested in being part of an instrumental ensemble that is friendly to musicians of all levels, the MSA Hand Chime Ensemble may be the perfect fit.

Concert Choir (5th to 8th grade) - Open to all students
Place: Evangelical Presbyterian Church, 308 Possum Park Road, Newark
Director: Debra Arnold
Rehearsal Day/Time: Monday Evenings, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.
Date: Fall semester starts September 14, 2026
Fees:

Registration Fee: $95.00/semester
Music deposit: $20/semester refunded when music is returned

Description: Mt. Sophia Academy Concert Choir is a non-auditioned ensemble open to all students in grades 5 through 8. We aim to equip our students to maximize their musical potential through choral singing. We will cover fundamental music reading skills, singing in parts, expression, foreign languages, instrument accompaniment skills and physical singing techniques. Students will be exposed to a variety of choral literature from different styles, periods, genres and languages. There will be a concert at the end of each semester where the students will have the opportunity to share their musicality and achievements. Students do NOT need to be enrolled in Mt. Sophia Academy in order to participate in Concert Choir. If you have a student who enjoys singing and music, the Concert Choir may be just what you're looking for, and you'll find the Monday evening practices are also a wonderful time for your son or daughter to make new friends!

Any questions can be addressed to the director, debdoremi@gmail.com or the manager, Barb Varnell, at dbvarnell@comcast.net

Elementary Choir (1st to 4th grade)
Place: Evangelical Presbyterian Church, 308 Possum Park Road, Newark
Director: Mary Smith
Rehearsal Day/Time: Monday Evenings, 6:30-7:45 (note: rehearsal will end earlier than the older choirs)
Date: Fall semester starts September 14, 2026
Registration Fee: $80.00/semester
Description: Like our older choirs, the Elementary Choir is a non-auditioned ensemble. It is open to all students in grades 1 through 4. We aim to equip these younger students with foundational singing skills and give them a love and appreciation for choral music. We will cover beginning aural skills training including *solfege*, some singing in parts, expression, foreign languages, and an emphasis on age-appropriate vocal technique. Students will be exposed to a variety of choral literature from different styles, periods, genres and languages. There will be a concert at the end of each semester where the students will have the opportunity to share their musicality and achievements. Students do NOT need to be enrolled in Mt. Sophia Academy in order to participate in the Elementary Choir.
If you have a child who enjoys singing and music, the Elementary Choir may be just what you're looking for, and you'll find the Monday evening practices are also a wonderful time for your son or daughter to make new friends!

Any questions can be addressed to the manager, Barb Varnell at dbvarnell@comcast.net

MSA Chess Club (8th to 12th grade) - Open to all homeschoolers
Coach: Will Hahn
When: Thursdays, 11:45 – 12:30 p.m.
Where: MSA Room 1
Cost: $10/student
Description:
For friendship and camaraderie, as well as merciless attacks and takedowns, there will no better time spent than in MSA Chess Club. It doesn't matter if you're a shaky beginner who doesn't know a pawn from a rook or a seasoned chess strategist – you're sure to find a place where you can learn, hone your skills, or find someone to match your talents head-to-head.

You do not need to be a Diploma Program student to join MSA Chess Team.
Email any questions or interest to Will Hahn at trekelny@comcast.net.

Math League (9th to 12th grade) - Open to all homeschoolers
Teacher: Anna Hight (eltinwe@comcast.net)
Cost: ~ $35/year (this fee still needs to be confirmed)
Dates and Times: Mondays at lunchtime 11:45 – 12:25 p.m.
Place: All meetings will be held at the Mount Sophia building (Newark Church of Christ – 91 Salem Church Road – park in the back parking lot and come in through the glass double doors)
Description:
Math League is a club to supplement your regular math program, which provides opportunities for children to engage in creative problem-solving activities while developing a child's ability to reason, to be logical, to be resourceful, and occasionally to be ingenious.
Our goals for Math club participants include:
1. developing enthusiasm for problem solving and mathematics
2. deepening the understanding of mathematical concepts and strengthening the ability to use these concepts
3. considering concepts they might not otherwise encounter
4. enriching experiences in intellectually stimulating and significant mental activities
5. building a stronger foundation for assessments and for future mathematics studies

We will also explore problem solving strategies and how to choose the best strategy for any given problem when there are several successful possibilities. This class will be very conversational, and will be primarily solving math problems individually, discussing them as a team, and exploring as many methods and approaches as possible.
Like most worthwhile goals, there is no easy road to becoming a capable problem solver. You must first recognize that this is an important and desirable goal, and that it may take considerable time and effort to realize it. The more time and effort invested, the more one is likely to learn.
Your student will practice bi-weekly for six contests, monthly from October/November to March. Being able to solve a difficult problem is one of the most satisfying experiences one may have. On the other hand, struggling with a difficult problem should indicate to your child that he or she has found something worthwhile and new to learn. This should be viewed as a challenge and an opportunity to grow. Learning how to solve a problem and to understand its underlying mathematical concepts are the most important goals of mathematics education.

Rhetoric Team (9th to 12th grade) - Open to all homeschoolers
(Fulfills public speaking requirement for Mt. Sophia)
Teacher: Elizabeth Stevens
Cost: $25/year
Credit: ¼ credit for the entire year
Meets: First meeting is on Wednesday, September 23 from 2:00 to 3:30 at MSA. Other dates are still being worked out but the meetings are approximately once a month on Wednesdays.
Everyone has a voice worth hearing and this club is where you will find yours. There is no homework and no textbooks, just meaningful projects to elevate your speaking skills and at the same time have fun with your friends. From holiday party one liners, to short TED talks on your favorite subjects, and plays that will keep you laughing for days; we will learn new public speaking skills and elevate what you already know in a supportive environment. Beginners will build their confidence from the ground up, while more experienced speakers will be challenged. Everyone will grow in the skills essential to a meaningful life. Whether you plan to go to college, trade-school, or a job right after high school-these skills will help you speak your mind, share what you believe and present your ideas for the world to hear.
This club is a safe space to be yourself, grow, and have some fun on the journey!

Science Olympiad Team
Coach: Kathy Martin and Crisi Morris
Open only to MSA diploma students in grades 9 – 12
Credit: none, but participation can help to level up a MSA science class (see your science teacher for details)
Cost: $50 to $60/ year, depending upon whether the team registration fee will be increased for the 2027 competition year. Some events incur additional cost for supplies. Scholarships for team membership will be considered upon request.
Meeting: TBD—team meetings are typically held during lunch or in the late afternoon on Monday or Thursday, usually no more than once per month, from September to the beginning of March (Can't make it during this time? You can still participate. Contact Mrs. Martin.) *In addition*, students must meet regularly with event partners to work on their events (once a week or once bi-weekly per event from October through February).
Description:
Science Olympiad is a fun and exciting competition which is open to anyone who is curious about science. Students prepare for and practice their events for months in advance of the actual competition day. Science Olympiad is NOT a science fair! Instead, Science Olympiad is a nationally recognized competition in which a team of up to 15 students work as partners to fill a schedule of 24 events drawn from all the fields of science. Events range from traditional laboratory events (such as Chem Lab or Forensics), to events in which a device is built ahead of time and then tested at the competition (such as parachutes carrying a ping pong ball, electric-powered vehicles, or rubber-band powered airplanes), to paper-and-pencil "study" events (such as astronomy, anatomy & physiology, or rocks & minerals). Each student may participate in as few as one event or as many as five events. Students usually work with a partner but may on occasion work alone. Long before the day of competition, students are assigned to events (based on their preferences) and practice for their events. A brief description of this year's events can be found on the national website at soinc.org/events/2027-division-c-events.

The Delaware Science Olympiad competition is typically held on the first Saturday in March. Sixty high schools from all over Delaware can compete in the day-long tournament. Medals are awarded to the top ten finishers in each event. The team which finishes first overall advances to the national competition. Because Science Olympiad is nationally known and respected, Science Olympiad looks really good on a student transcript even if no medals are earned!
Prior participation in Science Olympiad or in particular science classes is not necessary. As per national rules, our team members must be enrolled in the Mt. Sophia diploma program and be in grades 9-12. They should be enthusiastic, committed, curious and self-motivated! Although a coach will help students find study materials, answer questions as they arise, and guide students through the process, preparation is student-driven. The student must independently pursue preparing for events in conjunction with a partner. The coach is not teaching the material.
Not sure about Science Olympiad? Check out the information display in the tank, talk to Mrs. Martin or Mrs. Morris, and attend the information meeting. By the end of September, students will fill out applications to be on the team, indicating the events that they'd most like to do. By mid to late October, students will be assigned partners and events. Students are expected to practice with their partner *at least* twice a month per event in the fall and once a week during winter. Practice can be done at school or elsewhere. Come join the fun!

Robotics Club (Grades 7th to 12th) - all homeschool students
Place: MSA, Rooms 1 and 2
Coaches: Stanimira Genov and Jonathan Busch
Cost: $150/year (this fee still needs to be confirmed)
Credit: ½ credit for the entire year (optional)
Limit: 16 seats on the competitive team
Season:

- Competition season (Sep-Mar)
- Prep-season (Apr-May)
- Summer Break (Jun-Aug)

Meeting times:

- Work meetings (In-person) Fridays, 8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. (this time and day still needs to be confirmed)
- Planning meetings (Online) Tuesday (TBD)
- Some weekends - scrimmage/outreach/championship events

Description:
Are you interested in gaining experience in Engineering, Business, Marketing, Design, Programming, and Gaming, by working with *real-world* Business and Engineering Software? Do you wish to learn critical thinking, team building, and presentation skills, and participate in a tournament? Would you like to be taught by experienced mentors in the STEM and Business fields? Are you interested in tapping into college scholarships awarded each season to *FIRST*® participants? The MSA Robotics Club is looking for **motivated homeschoolers** with an interest in hardware, software, or business systems, who possess a **deep curiosity in science,** are ready to challenge themselves in **public speaking,** are willing to **write a paragraph** when needed**,** are **driven to learn and able to dedicate 5 hours+ per week** working as a group and independently.

The MSA Robotics Club and competitive team, the MSA GrizzBots, are run in conjunction with *Delaware FIRST® Tech Challenge* (https://www.firstinspires.org/robotics/ftc). During the ***competition season***, we work as a team to design, 3D-print, build, program, and operate robots to compete in a head-to-head alliance-format game challenges; we participate in scrimmages and competition events, strategically aiming to earn specific team and individual awards; we document, present, and promote our progress and innovative work to teammates, peers, judges, and sponsors; we design our brand and run our marketing campaign; we collaborate with other FTC teams to both strengthen and learn from the *FIRST*® community. Throughout the year and especially during our ***prep-season***, we host educational and enrichment sessions with engineering professionals, conduct outreach events at schools and STEM student fairs, and actively fundraise for sponsor support. Guided by adult coaches and mentors, the students broaden their STEM skills and practice engineering principles while learning the value of strong work ethics, innovation, and teamwork.

To enroll your student, fill out the registration form here - https://forms.gle/14iFXSfEnWepUcyj6. If you have questions, reach out to Stanimira Genov at mt.sophiarobotics@gmail.com.