

NECHAKO VALLEY SECONDARY SCHOOL

GRADE 9 COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

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INTRODUCTION TO STUDENTS

This book is for all Grade 8 students who are planning their courses for next year. In planning you should have the advice of your parents, and in order to receive full benefit, it is important that you read the course descriptions thoroughly.

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

TIMETABLE

At NVSS, Grade 9-12 students follow a semester timetable, which means that the school year is divided in half and, with a few exceptions, each student takes four courses each semester. We try to balance student timetables with electives so that students are not overloaded in either semester with heavy academic courses. Students can meet with academic advisors to have their timetables adjusted when necessary.

SPECIAL NOTES:

COURSE CONSTANTS courses that **MUST** be taken by all students.

ELECTIVES courses that students may choose to take considering their qualifying options and goals for future years.

COURSE LOAD students are required to take full course loads (8 courses) in Grades 8, 9, 10 and 11.

Students are strongly encouraged to select their courses with consideration to their future plans and interests. Students will **NOT** be permitted to make changes to their course requests unless one of the following conditions applies:

- To meet grad requirements
- To meet Career Prep Program requirements
- To complete core course requirements
- To balance academic course load

ACADEMIC ADVISING SERVICES AT NVSS

Currently at NVSS, there are two academic advisors. Their duties can be divided into three different areas – educational, career and personal – with educational advisory being the majority of their time.

The academic advisors handle course selections and course transfers for current and new students, as well as arrange and conduct meetings with parents and students.

Academic advisors organize liaison visits between students and post-secondary representatives and assist students with financial aid (loans, scholarships, bursaries), and post-secondary education. They counsel students regarding such things as academic progress, attendance and behaviour; they interpret educational needs of students to administration and staff.

The academic advisors are always available for personal counselling, and they are prepared to help students in resolving special problems (e.g. with teachers, family, peers, self) and in developing skills in making personal decisions, and in realizing potential. The academic advisors will assist students with referrals to outside agencies when necessary.

As well, the academic advisors and school administration assistants are responsible for monitoring and maintaining adequate and accurate student information records such as: permanent record cards; graduation requirement credits; up-to-date student timetables; student medical problems; student performance surveys and interim reports; student course selection sheets; student course transfers; class size counts and limits.

Mrs. Thiessen works primarily with students in Grades 11-12. Ms. MacKinlay works primarily with students in Grades 7-10. Of course, the academic advisors will be available to assist any students in emergency situations and for personal counselling and healthy relationships.

REQUIRED GRADE 9 PROGRAM

The Ministry of Education mandates the following program of studies for Grade 9 students:

- English 9
- Math 9
- Physical and Health Education 9
- Science 9
- Social Studies 9
- One arts education elective
- One applied design, skills & technologies elective
- A third elective - choose from modern languages*, arts education or applied design skills & technologies.

REQUIRED GRADE 9 COURSES

English Language Arts 9

The aim of English Language Arts is to provide students with opportunities for personal and intellectual growth through speaking, listening, reading, viewing, writing, and representing to make meaning of the world and to prepare them to participate effectively in all aspects of society. The English 9 curriculum will help students develop strong communication skills and an understanding and appreciation of language and literature to become literate and responsible citizens in a digital age. Students are guided in learning to think critically, creatively, and reflectively; to construct a sense of personal and cultural identity; and to be respectful of a range of perspectives and worldviews.

Mathematics 9

Mathematics 9 is a course designed to improve both mathematical fluency and understanding. Much of the course involves number sense (fractions, exponents) but it also lays out the basic understanding of graphing, algebra and polynomials which is needed for more advanced mathematics.

Physical and Health Education 9

In PHE9, the student will be expected to demonstrate knowledge, understanding, skills, strategies, and habits by engaging in the major competency areas of physical literacy, healthy and active living, social and community health, and mental well-being. The student will expand understanding and knowing how this influences personal health while considering the following concepts:

- Daily participation in different types of physical activity influences our physical literacy as well as personal health and fitness goals
- Lifelong participation in physical activity has many benefits and is an essential part of a health lifestyle
- Healthy choices influence our physical, emotional, social, and mental well-being
- Healthy relationships can help us lead rewarding and fulfilling lives
- Advocating for the health and well-being of ourselves and others connects us to our community

All students are expected to dress for safety and success by wearing appropriate active wear for this course including clean indoor court shoes for the gymnasium.

Physical and Health Education 9: Mindful Living

In PHE9- Mindful Living, the student will be expected to demonstrate growth and understanding in different ways of creating healthy long lasting life habits.

We will be exploring ways to engage our whole being – physical, emotional, mental – and putting some of those explorations into practice during our class time.

The students will expand their knowledge of:

- A variety of physical activities
- Making healthy choices in different aspects of their life
- Keeping their life in balance
- How to be resilient, resourceful, and grateful

The student is expected to:

- Participate daily in a range of pursuits including: outdoor activities, meditation, yoga, sports, crafts, journaling, etc
- Be dressed in active wear for safety, freedom of movement, and success.

Science 9

Science 9 is a general science course in which you will seek to better understand the natural world by thinking like a scientist. This course will expand your knowledge in chemistry and come to understand how the electron arrangements of atoms impacts their chemical nature. You will learn of how electric current is the flow of electric charge and analyze electrical circuits. You will understand the biological processes behind how cells are derived from other cells by studying the asexual and sexual reproduction at the cellular level. Finally, this course will begin to view ecosystems through a perspective of interconnectedness by participating in scientific field studies to monitor local watershed ecosystems.

Throughout Science 9 students will use critical thinking, creative insight, and a current scientific knowledge, to collaborate with peers, to investigate nature, to solve problems, to communicate effectively, to innovate, to discover, and to increase their understanding of science through hands-on experiences.

Social Studies 9

In this course students will develop their critical thinking, inquiry, and communication skills while learning about Canadian and world history from 1750 CE to 1920 CE. At the core of Social Studies 9 are the following big ideas:

- Emerging ideas and ideologies profoundly influence societies and events
- The physical environment influences the nature of political, social, and economic change
- Disparities in power alter the balance of relationships between individuals and between societies

- Collective identity is constructed and can change over time

As students engage with important topics like the Industrial Revolution, nationalism, and Canada's expansion westward, they will be asked to do research, explore different historical perspectives, use primary source evidence, determine the significance of a topic, identify the causes and consequences of events, make ethical judgements, and understand continuity and change.

MODERN LANGUAGES ELECTIVES

French 9

French 9 builds on the skill set acquired in French 8 – adding depth, breath and texture. Through authentic and learner-oriented text, film and research, students will further their understanding of both the French language and culture. Skills focus on speaking, reading, writing, viewing, listening and interacting. Projects and presentations are additional ways to demonstrate learning



Introductory Japanese 11

Open to students in grades 9 – 12.
4 credits Elective Courses

Introductory Japanese is a provincially prescribed curriculum that serves as a pre-requisite for Japanese 11 for students who may not have taken Japanese 5 to 10. It will introduce students to the fascinating language and culture of Japan. The linguistic component of the course will focus on the five skills of language acquisition – speaking, listening, reading, writing, and interpreting. The cultural components will include some of the many unique customs, hobbies, foods, arts, etc. which has been at the root of the island people's background for countless generations. Students will find this course as a beginning point of a life-long love and pursuit which will instil great satisfaction, as well as providing to be an important tool of communication in the Pacific- The successful completion of Intro. Japanese 11 should provide students with a level of competence that will allow them to participate successfully in Japanese 11 and Japanese 12 courses (credit courses that will give you the second language credits required by some universities).

APPLIED DESIGN, SKILLS & TECHNOLOGIES ELECTIVES

Basic project supplies will be provided for each student or, if the student wishes to have different or higher quality supplies, he/she will have the option of purchasing his/her own supplies.

Textile and Food Studies 9

This course includes two components:

Textile Studies: Students will explore the elements of design through the creation of sewing projects, from planning to creation. Through these experiences, students will gain a knowledge of sewing machine and tool use, fabric uses and care, following pattern directions, and social factors relating to textiles.

Food Studies: Students will cover topics revolving around nutritionally sound food habits and preparation using simple recipes and cooking techniques. Students will acquire knowledge in the areas of food safety, food systems, as well as global and local food factors, through a combination of written assignments and cooking labs.

Media Arts 9

It is strongly recommended that students take Media Arts 9 before taking grade 10 Media Arts.

This course is open to both grade 9 and 10 students who have not taken another Media Arts course since Media Arts 7/8.

This course is an introduction to the fundamentals of digital media technologies. You will explore a variety of techniques and styles of digital media production including image editing/compositing, graphic design, filmmaking, 3D modeling, and graphic novels/comic books.

We will explore a variety of subjects/programs and will learn how to use industry standard programs including Adobe Photoshop, Illustrator, Premier Pro, and Blender.

Students **MUST** enjoy working with computer and web-based applications and patience is essential.



Electronics and Robotics 10

Open to students in grades 9 – 12.

4 credits Elective Courses or 4 credits Applied Skills

Electronics & Robotics 10 is an introductory course into robotics focusing on programming and building robots. This course will be useful for students interested in pursuing studies in the fields of science, engineering, and robotics. This is a hands-on course that will require you to design, build, and test robots. Throughout the course you will learn basic programming techniques and apply those techniques to program the robots. You will learn how to integrate the robotic sensors and motors into both the program and the actual design of the robot. Teamwork is essential in this course as you will be part of a team. Learning to work effectively in a team environment and how to communicate with each other as well as your project supervisor.

Power Technology 9

This course is an introduction to small engines, with an emphasis on small 4-stroke and 2-stroke engines, such as those found in lawnmowers, and chainsaws. Safety and proper use of equipment is stressed. Students will be designing and building a CO2 car, mouse trap cars, and mini hydraulics along with the main project which is a full engine tear down and rebuild of a single cylinder engine. The students will have a good working understanding of the basic engine components and how they work together.

Woodwork 9

This course develops fundamental woodworking skills. It involves the use of hand and power tools with emphasis placed on learning the correct and safe uses of such tools. In the approximately 120 hours of the course, a base cabinet will be completed. Students have opportunity to do a project of their own. The course is project oriented.

ARTS EDUCATION ELECTIVES

“Art does not reproduce what we see. Rather, it makes us see.” Paul Klee

The NVSS Arts Education Programs meet the needs of both the student who is seriously interested in the world of the arts and related career professions, as well as those of the student who is interested in exploring aspects of artistic expression for personal enrichment and enjoyment. Students will be expected to develop the life skills of communication, cooperation, and collaboration (which are the foundations for all Fine Arts activities).

Drama 9

This course allows students to explore all elements of theatre in a collaborative, active atmosphere.

Students will:

- Work in pairs, small groups, and as a class to create their own material
- Develop a solid foundation in acting, improvisation, and technical theatre
- Gain experience with aspects of theatre, other than performance, including directing, choreographing, writing, lighting, sound, set design, and marketing
- Grow their confidence, sense of personal and social responsibility, communication skills and creativity
- Rehearse, contribute to, and participate in a final performance project that will be devised by the class as a whole to present for the larger NVSS community, elementary school communities, or their own families and friends



Instrumental Music 9: Concert Band

Concerts and performances outside of class time are an integral part of this course, and band members are expected to be involved.

Concert band 9 will allow students the opportunity to explore and communicate their identity through music, while gaining insight into perspectives and experiences of people from a variety of times, places and cultures. We will utilize a collaborative musical experience to build community, teamwork, and nurture relationships with others. In this course, students will:

- Perform collaboratively in a large ensemble, while developing an understanding of personal, social, cultural, historical, and environmental contexts through a variety of musical experiences.
- Develop, refine, document, and critically appraise ideas, processes, and technical skills to improve your quality of musicianship.
- Reflect on musical performance to make connections to personal learning and experiences.
- Build musical literacy skills such as metre, rhythm, pitch, intonation, dynamics, and blend as they pertain to your concert band instrument in a large ensemble setting.



Instrumental Music 9: Jazz Band

This course meets outside the timetable, and a placement audition is required with Mr. Larden. You must have prior experience on either trumpet, trombone, saxophone, clarinet, drum-kit, guitar, bass, or piano. Guitarists will require elementary theory knowledge.

Jazz Band is a highly specialized instrumental organization that meets outside regular school hours. The skills and knowledge gained in the Concert Band course are imperative for success in Jazz band. Students learn the techniques of swing, funk, bebop, rock, soul, and other genres. The course will cover the principles of improvisation and entry level Jazz theory and history. Since this course meets outside the timetable, attendance at all rehearsals is a required part of the course.



Visual Arts 9

Exploration of the elements of art through specific art mediums and techniques.

Drawing, sculpture, printmaking, and painting.

In this course, the student will be introduced to drawing, sculpture, printmaking, and colour theory. They will be encouraged to describe, interpret, and evaluate how artists use, processes, materials, and environments to create and communicate ideas.

Drawing techniques using the right side of the brain will help develop both visual and drawing skills. All students will participate, collaborate, critique and submit, as well as participate in the year-end art show.



Student Name: _____

NVSS Grade 9 Course Selection **2026-27**

5 REQUIRED COURSES:

1. English 9 2. Mathematics 9 3. Science 9 4. Social Studies 9
5. Physical & Health Education 9 _____
 Or
 Physical & Health Education - Mindful Living 9 _____

3 ELECTIVE COURSES:

1. Applied Design, Skills & Technologies Elective: _____
2. Arts Education Elective: _____
3. Any Category Elective/Modern Languages: _____

2 ALTERNATIVE COURSES:

All students MUST indicate alternative choices.

1. _____
2. _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

IMPORTANT NOTES:

ALL students must commit to their course selections.

Class size and elective offerings are determined by student's original selection of courses.

Students are strongly encouraged to select their courses with consideration to their future plans and interests. Grade 9 students will NOT be permitted to make changes to their course requests unless one of the following conditions applies:

* To complete core course requirements

* To balance academic course load

ALL COURSE SELECTION SHEETS MUST BE COMPLETED, SIGNED BY YOUR PARENT/GUARDIAN, AND RETURNED TO THE OFFICE BEFORE

WEDNESDAY, February 25, 2026

NVSS Grade 9 Course List

2026-27

** Please write your 2026-27 course choices on the backside of this page and have your parent/guardian sign in agreement to your choices. **

GRADE 9 REQUIRED COURSES (You must have all five)	
English 9	Mathematics 9
Physical and Health Education 9 <i>Or</i>	Social Studies 9
Physical and Health Education (Mindful Living) 9	Science 9

GRADE 9 ELECTIVE COURSES Choose 1 Arts Education, 1 Applied Design, Skills & Technology, and 1 from any category. You must also indicate 2 additional alternative courses.	
<u>APPLIED DESIGN, SKILLS & TECHNOLOGIES:</u> Food Studies/Textiles 9 Media Arts 9 Power Technology 9 Woodwork 9 Electronics and Robotics 10	<u>ARTS EDUCATION:</u> Drama 9 Concert Band 9 Jazz Band 9 Visual Arts 9 Media Arts 9
<u>MODERN LANGUAGES:</u> French 9 (must have French 8) Introductory Japanese 11	

Course descriptions:

To view course descriptions online, visit the school website at: www.nvss.sd91.bc.ca

If you do not have internet access, you can request a copy of the book at the office.