

Course Description Booklet



**AT CMS WE BELIEVE IN CREATING A
LEARNING ENVIRONMENT THAT IS
DEVELOPMENTALLY RESPONSIVE,
CHALLENGING, EMPOWERING,
ENGAGING, AND EQUITABLE FOR ALL.**



Table of Contents

3 Program Overview

4 Frequently Asked Questions

5 Course Offerings

16 Registration Planning Sheet



CMS Days

End of year studies program

Overview

CMS will conclude the school year with CMS Days, an end of year studies program. This alternative ending to the academic school year offers all CMS students an exciting high interest learning opportunity. The non-traditional courses expand student understanding and inspire new student interests. Intensive, interest-driven opportunities will provide students with choice, enhance enthusiasm for learning and strengthen relationships within CMS, the Colchester community and beyond.

Session Dates

The 2026 CMS Days dates will be Wednesday June 10th, Thursday June 11th and Friday June 12th.

NEW Full day options only

All Students will participate in one full day course that meets for each of the three days.

Registration

Course descriptions will be accessible on the CMS website, TA Google classrooms and emailed to students to read prior to registration. An online registration form will be available for all students to complete between **Monday February 9th - Friday February 13th**. Students will select their top six course choices. Course assignments will be announced in late April. All students will be required to fill out a Registration Planning Sheet with a parent/guardian signature prior to registering for courses. You can find the Registration Planning Sheet at the end of this booklet.



Frequently Asked Questions

Who is teaching my course?

We intentionally do not say this so that students choose a course based on what they are interested in, not who is teaching the course.

Is there seniority (is priority given to older students)?

For 8th grade students that complete the online registration by Friday February 13th we will strive to place in one of their top three choices. CMS Days program focuses on fostering community by ensuring there are students from each grade level in a course.

Will I get my first choice?

Not necessarily. We try to give everyone one of their top 6 choices.

Should I just pick the same class 6 times?

No. If you don't get that class, you will have to wait until everyone else has been placed to choose.

Can I resubmit my registration form?

If you need to make a change to your registration form send an email to Ms. Pawlusiak with the requested change prior to Friday February 13th.

Can I take the same course I did last year?

Possibly. Students are encouraged to register for new classes. Students who have not taken the course before will receive priority.

What if I don't like my class? Can I change courses?

No. Take the time to read the descriptions and pick your top 6 carefully. See Ms. Pawlusiak if you have any questions.

Course Offerings

Advanced Hiking

Get ready for an awesome **physically challenging adventure** in the great outdoors! In this hiking course, you'll explore two amazing Vermont mountains, hiking up to 5 miles a day, where every step is filled with fun and breathtaking views. You'll discover the best ways to pack and prepare for your hikes, ensuring you have everything you need for a safe and enjoyable adventure. We'll also cover important hiking etiquette so you can be a responsible trail buddy and help keep our beautiful nature spots clean and welcoming for everyone. This is your chance to connect with nature, push yourself physically, make new friends, and experience the thrill of hiking while soaking up all the beauty Vermont offers. So grab your gear, and let's hit the trails for an unforgettable outdoor experience!



Bakers Unite

Are you a fan of The Great British Bake Off? Love to watch Is It Cake? Then come join us and learn to bake cookies, cupcakes, quick bread and more! Hear from community bakers or cafe owners who will share their stories and tips. Bring recipes to share and try new recipes to create some yummy food! You will compete in a bake off competition against your peers to see who can make the best treat. We will share our baked goods with community members and take some home to your families. All levels of baking experience are encouraged to join! If you have any food sensitivities or allergies please still consider joining.



Bike Safety and Rides

Bring your road, hybrid or other multi-gear bicycle to school for basic bike maintenance, repair, and road safety course which will also include daily rides. **Day one** will focus on learning how to stay safe while riding on the road. We will talk about road safety rules, the equipment we need, and what makes a bike safe to ride. We'll watch some videos and check our bikes to make sure they are safe and ready to use. In the afternoon we will go for a short ride. **Day two** we will review safety rules, recheck our bikes and head out for a 10-15 mile bike ride to the Colchester Causeway which will include a stop at Airport Park. **Day three** we will head out on an all day adventure (20-25 mile ride) destined for Burlington's Waterfront Park via the bike path. If time allows, we may ride further to Oakledge Park before returning to CMS.



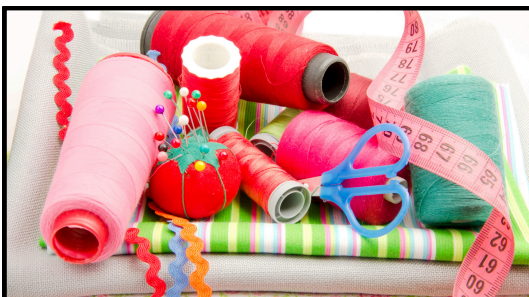


Board Game Bonanza

Get ready for three days of fun, laughter, and friendly competition at our Board Game Bonanza! Bring your favorite games or discover some new ones as we gather to play everything from strategy classics to fast-paced party games. Whether you're a master of Catan, a Scrabble champion, or just love rolling the dice, there's a spot for you at the table. Over three days, you'll get to relax, meet new friends, and enjoy some well-deserved downtime. To wrap things up, on Day 3, we'll take a refreshing walk to the beach to soak up the sun and celebrate our game-filled time together. Don't miss this chance to unwind, play, and make memories!

Collective & Personal Memory

During this CMS Day experience, students will engage with questions such as who are we, what is the past and how do we remember our history? In this course students will enjoy morning museum visits and learn about how cultural heritage is collected and documented. Tentative field trips include the Shelburne Museum, Fleming Art Museum and Saint Michael's College Archives. In the afternoons we will return to school to reflect upon and apply our learning by documenting personal histories, learning how to create personal narratives, make photo albums and create artifacts that represent our own stories.



Color to Creation: Dye & Sew

Create your own unique fabrics then use them to sew a pillow, bag, or pajama pants. In this course, you will learn to sew on a sewing machine and follow a pattern. Materials will be provided or you can bring your own fabric. If you bring your own fabric, you will need 2.5 yards. Let's create together!

Cougars Connect: Create-Mentor-Lead

Looking for a CMS Day experience that is fun, meaningful and gets you out in the community? Cougars Connect is a mentoring adventure where students team up to bring arts & crafts, games, STEM challenges, and more to students at elementary schools in our district. As part of Cougars Connect, you will: *Plan and prep exciting hands-on activities, Work in teams to design crafts, games, and/or mini projects, Visit elementary schools to lead these activities with younger students, Build leadership skills while making a real impact, Represent our school as a positive role model and mentor.* If you love helping younger kids, being creative, working with friends, or trying something new, Cougars Connect is the CMS Days choice for you! Sign up, step up, and be part of something awesome!



Crafty Connections: Friendship Bracelets & Felt Art

Calling all students who love to create! In this course, you'll design fun and fabulous tradable friendship bracelets, inspired by Taylor Swift-style bracelet swaps, and create a special keepsake for an incoming 6th grade student. You'll also learn the art of felting—an ancient technique used around the world to transform soft, fluffy wool into fabric and sculptural art using your hands, water, soap, and special tools. Students will experiment with colors, shapes, and textures while creating unique, handmade pieces. All materials and step-by-step directions are provided, and no prior experience is needed. By the end of the course, you'll have meaningful creations to share and keep, along with creative skills you can continue using long after the course ends.

Disc Golf & Frisbee Games

Get outside and throw some discs and frisbee's! Come on an adventure into the wonderful world of disc golf and frisbee games. This is a great way to get some physical activity, meet some chill people, and enjoy nature. During this course you will learn how to play the game of disc golf and various frisbee games. You'll also have an opportunity to help maintain a local disc golf course through community service.



Golfing is Life - A Lasting Exercise & Hobby (Full)

Put down the Brawl Stars on your phone and come learn how to play a sport that actually gets you outside, moving, and can be a life-long activity! No matter your age, athletic ability, or background, golf can be a hobby or a form of exercise that can be practiced for as long as you stay interested. In joining the Golf is Life group, you will learn the very basics of golf, from how to grip and swing the club to how to score and what to wear to a golf course. We will start by introducing you to the various games that you can play in golf. We will cover topics like pace of play, course management, which clubs to use and when, where to go when you need help, and how to actually make contact with the ball. Once on the course (yes, a real golf course!), we will talk about how to navigate different types of obstacles in order to get the lowest score. Golf is super fun and continues to be a growing sport in our region. Come learn how to play!



Helping the Homeless

Did you know that there are kids your age that are homeless, with no support or place to live? Have you ever thought about helping people in need, but not sure how or where to start? Maybe you've watched YouTubers give back to those in need and wondered how you could do the same? Well, join us for CMS Days and we can do just that! Our group will be learning about homelessness in Vermont and finding ways to give back to those folks in need. We will visit Downtown Burlington and go to a few of the COTS shelters, volunteer at Spectrum Youth (an organization that supports homeless youth) and give them "Christmas in June", make and give out care packages, cook a meal for Spectrum homeless youth, and possibly even meet some of these kids and hear their stories of struggle and resiliency. We are going to dive into the serious problem of homelessness in Vermont and find ways to help and give back to those in need. If you are looking for a meaningful way to spend your last few days before summer, join us in helping the homeless community of Vermont and helping to make a difference.



Hiking for Health & Wellness

Step into nature and discover how hiking can boost your body, mind, and mood! Students will explore the physical and emotional benefits of time outdoors. Each day includes guided hikes, team-building challenges, and quiet reflection inspired by the Danish concept of hygge (pronounced “hoo-gah”)—finding comfort, calm, and connection in simple moments. Students will learn that hiking isn’t just exercise—it’s a way to recharge, connect with others, and care for their well-being.



Mindfulness Meditation

During in this course you’ll learn cool ways to help your mind and body feel calm, focused, and ready for anything. Over 3 days, we’ll try lots of fun activities that help you feel relaxed and happy. You’ll get to: Do yoga and guided meditation to stretch and relax, Make sensory balls to help calm your hands and mind, Doodle and color for a fun and relaxing break, Create your own room spray with nice smells, Go on mindful walks to notice and enjoy your surroundings, Make breathing bracelets to help you remember to take deep breaths, Use calming stones to help you feel grounded and peaceful. By the end, you’ll have your own set of mindfulness tools that you can use anytime you need to feel calm, focused, and ready to learn.



Mountain Biking: Ride the Wild Trails!

Get ready to grip those handlebars and feel the rush! When you’re weaving through the trees, flying downhill, and rolling over roots and rocks, you’ll feel unstoppable. Every turn, every jump, every climb—it’s you vs. the trail!

Mountain biking is the ultimate adventure sport, and Vermont’s trails are some of the best around. You’ll push your limits, build strength, and discover what it means to power through a challenge—no pain, no gain! We’ll start off easy, then crank it up with bigger climbs and longer rides in Essex and Richmond. Tune up your bike, grab your helmet, and let’s ride! The mountains are calling—are you ready to answer? [Note: Mountain biking is fun but challenging! Expect climbs up to 750 vertical feet. Some sections are “challenge by choice”—if it feels unsafe, walk your bike. Safety first, fun always!]





Next Level Athlete

Do you want the opportunity to play a variety of sports? Are you curious about what it takes to get compete at the next level? Join us to learn what it takes to be a high-level student-athlete. We plan to bring in coaches, fitness professionals, sport psychologists, and nutritionists to share insight on how to take the next steps in your athletic journey. You'll also get the chance to play a variety of sports, including beach volleyball, basketball, soccer, football, softball, and ultimate.

Odd Jobs

Is that an actual job? People say to follow your passion, but these folks have some really unique jobs. Visit some Vermonters who are making their way in the world on their own terms, and getting paid to something they love! We will visit three local companies (Burton, BETA Technologies, TBD) where people are using their love of technology, their dream of being their own boss, or even their quirkiness to contribute to society in a very unique way. Who knows? You may find yourself with a new dream career!



Outdoor Adventure Camp

This three-day outdoor learning experience challenges students to explore nature, work as a team, and learn about community safety through hands-on activities and real-world challenges. Students will build outdoor skills, cook food, solve problems, and learn from local experts—all while spending plenty of time outside. Through team-building challenges, students will practice communication, courage, and collaboration. This course is perfect for students who love being outdoors, enjoy trying new things, and want to grow their confidence in an active, fun setting.

Revolutionary

Are you an historian? Do you love all things history? This year, the 250th anniversary of our nation will offer you the opportunity to engage in learning about the founding of our nation and the critical roles that Vermont and Vermonters played in the war for independence. Join us for three days of learning and touring historical sites and the legacy that our early Vermonters left for us.





Rowing

Spend your day getting strong while being out on the water in Burlington Bay. This course will include exercise, teamwork and water based fun while rowing a 32 foot wooden row boat. Our group will work together to arrive at a new destination each day. We will explore Red Rocks, North Beach, and Lone Rock Point via water. Be prepared to row hard each day to reach our destination. We will relax with some lunch and games on land; but be sure to save enough energy to row back to where we started! Bring your sunscreen and love of the lake for a fun time on the water.

Road to College Athletics: D1, D2 & D3

Are you an athlete who is curious about what it takes to compete at the college level? During this three day course, you will visit NCAA Division I, II, and III campuses to experience three different collegiate athletic environments. You will meet with coaches, athletic directors, and/or other athletic-department staff to learn about training expectations, academic balance, recruiting pathways, and what daily life looks like for college athletes. You'll tour athletic facilities and enjoy a meal in a college dining hall to get a sense of campus culture. This course will give you an understanding of the athletic, academic, and personal preparation needed throughout middle school and high school if college athletics is a goal you want to pursue.

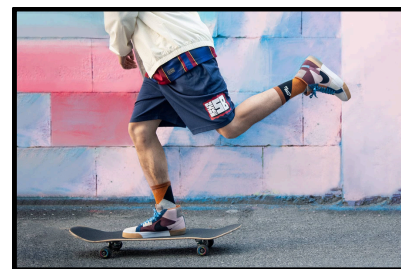


Rosie's Girls - Woodworking

Rosie's Girls is an exciting, hands-on woodworking adventure just for middle school girls! In this beginner-friendly course, you'll learn how to safely use hand tools and power tools to create amazing projects. You'll get to build your own creations, team up for group projects, and even design something totally unique. Along the way, you'll gain awesome skills, work with friends, and discover how fun and empowering woodworking can be. Get ready to unleash your creativity, solve challenges, and build confidence in a supportive, all-girls environment where anything is possible!

Skateboarding

This course is designed for students who are eager to dive into the world of skateboarding. With the help of staff from the Chill program and Talent skatepark this course will be an excellent introduction for beginners and enthusiasts looking to build a foundational understanding of skateboarding.



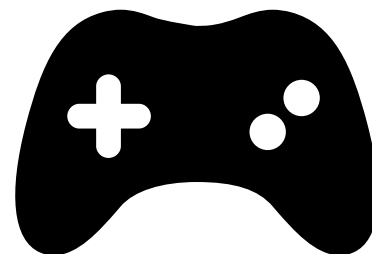
Vermont State Parks Exploration

Do you like nature? Do you like to be outside? Come explore some of Vermont's amazing state parks. The state parks have many activities to offer. During our day trips to some of the parks, we will explore the trails, play some frisbee and lawn games, picnic outside, and possibly go swimming. In preparation for our trips, we will learn about the history of our parks, and why we are so lucky to have them. Come explore!



Video Games

Video Games! We will deep dive into the history of how it all started with arcade games and the first at home consoles, up to online gaming & VR. We'll play solo and multiplayer games, look at speed runs and e-sports, video game design, and the career opportunities within the video game industry.

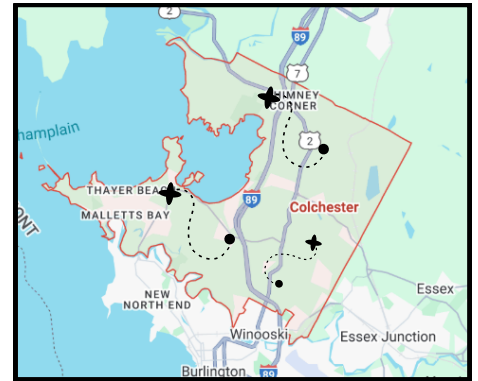


Waves and Woods: A Kayaking and Hiking Quest

Spend three exciting days off campus exploring local trails and waterways with your friends. Each day includes a moderate hike and a kayaking adventure on different types of water—from calm ponds to gentle rivers—so you'll get to try new skills in fun, safe environments. You'll enjoy time outdoors, learn the basics of paddling, build confidence on the trail, and discover some awesome views along the way. No experience needed—just bring your curiosity and sense of adventure!

Weird and Haunted Colchester

How much do you know about Colchester? Did you know that we have a haunted theater, stone tower, log schoolhouse, six cemeteries, and some of the best ice cream in the state? Join us for a multi-day hunt to take us through some of the oldest buildings and coolest sites in town. Learn the little-known history of our area and maybe if we're lucky we'll encounter some ghosts of the past!



CMS Days

Registration Planning Sheet

This sheet is designed to assist you in preparing to register for the 2026 CMS Days program.
You will need this sheet with you when you register.

- **Who needs to register for CMS Days?** All CMS students grades 6-8. Please carefully read through the course description book before registering.
- **How and when do you register?** Registration will be done through an online form in TA during the week of February 9th-13th. This is not a first come, first serve process.
- **What will I need to register?** A parent or guardian is required to provide their signature on this form acknowledging they have reviewed your course choices with you.

List your top 6 course choices starting with your first choice.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

Student First and Last Name

TA Teacher

Parent/Guardian Name

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date