

# The Link School Course Catalog 2012-2013

**The experiential education** at The Link School has five key components:

**Academics** - a variety of learning opportunities includes an innovative blend of small group and individual instruction taught by dedicated Christian Scientist faculty members who hold advanced degrees appropriate to their subjects; intensive block courses conducted by visiting instructors; state-of-the-art online courses which allow students to earn credits outside of the Link curriculum; and interdisciplinary learning opportunities in an unparalleled natural setting of rivers, mountains and canyons which stretch out from the school's backyard.

**Expeditions** – field programs each month encourage character development, leadership, writing, and natural sciences education in backcountry settings.

**Individually Mentored Projects** – projects broaden knowledge and skills in areas of the students' interests with instruction and oversight from a mentoring adult.

**Service Work** – service opportunities include daily chores and responsibilities at home in the Lodge and projects that extend out into the greater community.

**Spiritual Development** - purposeful spiritual exploration and community investment in living our faith deepens students' "link" with the Divine.

## **Academic Plan**

**The academic program** is designed and taught by the school's faculty. Courses are taught in multi-age settings with grade-appropriate assignments, resources, and assessments. Link School courses are experiential by design and include a wide variety of assessments, including, but not limited to, portfolios, presentations of learning (POLs), field experiences both local and abroad, fieldwork, blogs, group problem-solving, and authentic assessments such as writing for publication. Extensive use of technology is a critical component of the curriculum.

Students pursue individualized learning plans (ILPs), individual projects and group activities. Some credits are earned through successful mastery of college preparatory core subjects; others by self-directed student explorations. In general, for three weeks of each month, students will work on their ILP through Link's project based courses and then have time in the afternoons for personal projects, and group recreation and service activities. The other week of each month will be spent on a wilderness expedition.

## **Student Assessments & Placement**

The Education Director and Academic Advisor work together with each student and his/her parents to review their previous work and determine appropriate course

placements at start of term. Standardized tests may be used to assist in appropriate placement.

### **Individual Learning Plans - ILPs**

ILPs are developed for each student based on their grade, previous course work completed, and goals for either a college prep track or aiming for high school graduation and then vocational courses.

### **Transferring Link Credits to other High Schools**

The Link School is fully accredited with the North Central Association, recently re-named AdvancED.

### **Standardized Tests**

Standardized testing: Freshmen through juniors will register to take the PSAT (Pre-Scholastic Aptitude Test) in October. This preliminary exam gives students practice in taking standardized tests before results from such exams become part of their record for college. Students and faculty receive detailed PSAT score reports. As part of the college admission process, upperclassmen will also take SAT and/or ACT exams, depending on the requirements per college. Students are responsible for SAT/ACT test fees.

### **On-line Research**

Students gain access for on-line research sites through Bill Fabian, the librarian at Buena Vista High School, and our Social Studies & History teacher.

### **Academic, College and Career Advising**

Link teachers meet with students one-on-one at least four times a year to discuss academic progress, and academic goal setting, done both at the beginning and middle of each semester. We focus on each student's goals, whether those be to attend college, a vocational school, or begin work, and how Link can support each student. In addition, each senior is guided through the college application process, including all support necessary for taking standardized tests.

A letter will be sent to parents of Juniors and Seniors outlining the steps Link's College Advisor will be taking with the student and the role parents can play in college preparation.

### **Project Based Learning (PBL) Overview**

The Link School works to ground academic learning in real life experiences and employs PBL as a systematic teaching method that engages students in learning knowledge and skills through an extended inquiry process structured around complex, authentic questions and carefully designed products and tasks.

Driving Question: A central part of Project Based Learning is the selection of a theme or “driving question” for each academic year. This year’s theme is **“How do you create and maintain respectful relationships.”**

### **Assessment - Grading:**

Assessments are done in a narrative fashion and “A,” “B,” “C,” “D,” and “I” letter grades. Assessments are developed appropriate for the student’s skills and grade level. “I” represents an Incomplete and students are given the opportunity to complete their work and earn a passing grade.

### **Attendance Policy:**

**Attendance:** Attendance requirements at The Link School is equal to or greater than the minimum number of days and hours required by the state of Colorado, which is 1056 hours and 160 days (Title 22, Colorado Revised Statutes: Education Article 33, School attendance Law of 1963, Section 104).

**Excused Absences** include all absences for reasons beyond the control of you or your family, such as illness/injury, appointments, or a family emergency. If you are not able to get or complete work from the teachers to do while you are away from school, it is expected that the work will be made up within a period of time no longer than the time missed from school. Teachers will determine when missed exams are to be made up.

Parents may also request from time to time for students to miss class time for family events or trips, but such absences should not be a regular occurrence due to the stress it can put on a student’s academic responsibilities.

**Unexcused Absences** are defined as absences from class or school without proper authority from home or the school. Parents or legal guardians will be notified immediately of any unexcused absence. The academic penalty for an unexcused absence will be a daily grade of “0” in every class missed, with no makeup privilege. Additional consequences may include disciplinary action – probation, suspension or expulsion.

### **Block Courses**

From time-to-time, Link courses are instructed in blocks. On those days, rather than rotating from class to class each hour, students spend the entire day, or multiple days, on one interactive subject and corresponding project.

### **Presentations of Learning – POLs**

Students conclude each term with Presentations of Learning that display to the community the students’ knowledge and development in a given subject area, or from their project work.

## **Whole School Learning Community – WSLC**

Link staff do not view students as empty vessels that need to be filled with knowledge by teachers. Link teachers facilitate and teach, but also openly join students as learners and coconspirators in the quest for understanding. Link staff also share what they are working on professionally and personally through POLs. Lastly, staff work to honor students' input by engaging students in academic and community problem solving and not just imparting solutions.

## **Graduation requirements**

The graduation requirements listed are minimum requirements. Students interested in attending highly selective colleges are expected and encouraged to complete more academic coursework.

English	4 credits
Mathematics	3 credits
Modern Languages	2 credits
Science	3 credits
Social Studies/History	3 credits
Electives	8 credits
Physical Education	1 minimum
<b>Total</b>	<b>23 credits + 1 PE</b> (a minimum for graduation)

## **Course Requirements for an Academic Year at Link**

English	1 credit
Mathematics	1 credit
Spanish	1 credit
Science	1 credit
Social Studies	1 credit
Electives	1 or more credits
Physical Education	1 PE credit
<b>Total Credits</b>	<b>6 (minimum) + 1 PE</b>

## **Portfolios**

Students prepare a portfolio of completed work as a key graduation component including: course work, photos, writing samples, projects, expeditionary accomplishments, service work, personal code, athletics, entrepreneurial work, & presentations of learning (POLs).

## **Diplomas**

High School diplomas are awarded to students who have completed graduation requirements.

## **AP (Advanced Placement) courses**

Courses are available and offered on request as independent study.

## **College Courses**

Courses are available through a local satellite of Colorado Mountain College.

## **Academic Integrity**

The Link School cultivates honesty in every area of a person's life. Academic integrity means that the student or teacher guarantees that work turned in as his or her own is in fact original, unless properly cited.

Any instance of academic cheating, copying other's homework, or plagiarism is a serious offense. Copying and pasting information is common, but the student is responsible for learning proper methods of paraphrasing or citing information so that another's ideas are not represented as one's own.

Consequences for academic dishonesty are a grade of zero on the assignment and, if the situation continues, possible suspension from school.

# **The Link School Course Catalog For 2012/13, Year 5**

## **English**

Contributing citizens of the 21st century must be able to think and communicate clearly. Guided practice in analytical reading, and writing and speaking for various audiences, gives students the tools and confidence to share their ideas with others. Much of Link's writing instruction is on a one-on-one, coaching basis.

### English I-IV and Honors

Two Semesters, one credit

English Year V focuses on American literature, examining texts that speak to relationships and the four basic types of conflict: man v. self, man v. man, man v. society, and man v. nature. Students read a variety of texts, including fiction, non-fiction, short stories, poetry, and articles; specific content varies from student to student based on reading/writing levels. Reading serves as a basis for class discussion, projects, writing assignments, and presentations and is supplemented with vocabulary and writing mechanics practice as defined by the Colorado state standards for Language Arts.

## **Mathematics**

Mathematical reasoning, skills and principles play an ever-increasing role in our digital society. Colleges expect students to complete four years of high school level math starting with Algebra I.

### Algebra I

Two semesters, one credit.

Algebra I is a comprehensive, standards-based coverage of Algebra I and its prerequisites. Students study arithmetic readiness, real numbers and linear equations, functions and systems of equations, polynomials and quadratic equations, rational expressions and proportions and exponents and square roots. If time allows, students also study introductory lessons on geometry, trigonometry, data analysis and probability and other topics.

### Geometry

Two semesters, one credit.

Students study algebra and deductive reasoning, lines and angles, triangles, polygons and circles, similarities and transformations, volumes and surface areas and coordinate geometry.

### Pre-Calculus

Two semesters, one credit

Throughout this course students study functions and graphs, polynomial and rational functions, exponential and logarithmic functions, trigonometry, systems of linear equations and matrices, sequences, series, and probability, conic sections and limits and continuity.

### Trigonometry

Two semesters, one credit

This course covers functions and graphs, quadratic functions, unit circle and right triangle trigonometry, trigonometric graphs and inverse function, trigonometric identities and equations and applications of trigonometry.

### Calculus

Two semesters, one credit

Calculus is a balanced approach to problem solving using analytic/algebraic, numerical, graphical, and verbal/written methods of representing problems. Students study all topics associated with functions, graphs, and their limits. Students study derivatives of a variety of functions (i.e. polynomial, trigonometric and inverse trigonometric; exponential, and logarithmic). Integration, area under a curve, and volumes of a surface of revolution are also covered.

Students study limits in indeterminate forms, L'Hospital's rule, growth rates of functions, and indefinite integrals. Students also study a variety of sequences and series, along with polynomials of infinite degree and their derivatives and integrals. Taylor series and MacClaurin series, as well as tests for convergence and divergence. The course closes with parametric functions, vectors, and polar coordinates. Completion prepares students for either the Calculus AB or BC exam.

### Math Studies I

Two semesters, one credit

This course uses the ALEK math suites. It focuses on identifying appropriate level math concepts for students to review and improve on. Concepts covered will include whole numbers and integers, rational numbers, measurements, proportions, percents, probability, variable expressions and equations, functions and graphs, geometry, and various other topics. To provide deeper understanding in some of these content areas, practical application of these concepts will be presented using a Project Based Learning model.

## **Modern Languages**

Study of a second language opens windows on the world. Students become comfortable standing in another person's shoes. Language study includes an appreciation for and understanding of other cultures. It also heightens awareness of one's native tongue of English through emphasis on speaking, listening, reading and writing. The Link School offers Spanish language study for its practical application in the U.S. and as preparation for the extended field program in Spanish-speaking countries and the intensive language studies we undergo while there.

Should you want to take a language course in addition to our Spanish courses, we can make those available through Powerspeak<sup>12</sup> an online program. Please contact the Education Director for more information.

### **Spanish I**

Two semesters, one credit.

This course is designed to introduce students to foreign language. The students not only learn Spanish but also good methods on how to approach a foreign language and why it is important. They start out by being given the tools necessary to learn a foreign language. They also learn how to use a dictionary and verb book effectively. By the end of the year, they should have a strong base of vocabulary and the ability to form coherent sentences. Ideally, they are able to express their basic needs in Spanish and carry on introductory conversations. There are cultural studies on varying Spanish-speaking countries around the world that broaden the student's ability to relate to the world around them and the people in it.

### **Spanish II**

Two semesters, one credit.

This course is designed to strengthen the students in all areas of the Spanish language. They begin to examine how to take language study to the next level and move towards a practical everyday use of Spanish. They further their comfort in using outside resources, the dictionary and verb books. The course includes reading, writing, grammar, speaking and listening exercises as well as cultural studies on different Spanish speaking countries around the world. By the end of the year, the students are able to make basic conversation in Spanish and know how to function in a Spanish speaking country. The material presented in the course follows the Colorado state standards for a Spanish level 2 course.

### **Spanish III – Spanish Literature**

Two semesters, one credit

This course is designed to move students from simply studying Spanish into being proficient practicing speakers, writers and readers of the language. There are sections of the course applied to reading texts, writing reactions, summaries and short stories, listening exercises, grammar exercises and cultural studies. The goal is to have students actively using their grammar and vocabulary while taking a deeper look into Spanish culture through literature and cinema. We read texts

from the book “Aproximaciones: al estudio de la literatura hispanica.” We also watch full films and clips from various films which shine light on different perspectives of Hispanic cultures. By the end of the year, the students should be able to function efficiently in all areas of the Spanish language.

## **Environmental Science**

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the environmental sciences will continue to play a powerful role in transforming our society and our place in the universe. Stewardship for the natural environment is an Intended Outcome of The Link School. Environmental Science courses develop that sense of stewardship as humanity makes progress towards sustainability.

### **Oceanography and Marine Ecology**

Two semesters, one credit.

This course provides a general introduction to geological, physical, chemical, biological processes, and history of Earth's global oceanic system. A primary goal of the course is for students to connect the physical aspects of the marine environment with the adaptations of the living environment of the oceans. The habitats and lifeforms are uniquely adapted to fit the conditions caused by both local and global conditions. A second goal is to begin to understand the immense impact that man is having on the marine environment.

The first semester focuses on the physical marine environment including plate tectonics, bathymetry, salinity, density, climate, winds, tides and currents, and how these influence marine ecology.

The second semester will focus on marine life and habitats. We will do a survey of the evolution, adaptation, biology and anatomy of vertebrate and invertebrate sea creatures, including their taxonomy. We will also key on basic ecological concepts, comparisons of marine habitats, and the study of their associated biotic communities, including ecological productivity and upwelling. Some of this will take place during the winter field program in Baja, Mexico.

Throughout, we will discuss marine resources and their management into the future, and the impact of humans on the marine environment, including topics such as climate change, ocean acidification, plastics and pollution, and sustainable fisheries.

## **Social Studies**

Social studies courses help students meet many of The Link School's Intended Outcomes, including a compassionate and respectful relationship with others, service to their communities as informed citizens and prospective voters, and making a difference for good through prayerful and informed action.

### **American Government**

Fall semester, one half credit.

This course focuses on both history and current events to understand United States government. First, students look closely at the US Constitution: why it was written, how it was written, what it says, and how it is relevant to our own times. Why has this document endured longer than any other national constitution? Is a constitution essential to a society ruled by law? What role did risk-takers such as Paul Revere, George Washington, and James Madison play? How did members of the Constitutional Convention, practicing Link's theme of creating and maintaining respectful relationships, pull off the impossible? How can one citizen change the Constitution? Is it possible to create a new constitution in 2012 (using Egypt's current experiment in doing so)? Next, we dive into the presidential election process, discussing liberal and conservative, studying polls and propaganda, identifying election issues, and monitoring election night results live. Lastly, students conduct research analyzing the current state of political discourse both in the context of American history and in today's highly charged political climate. Throughout the course, students utilize news and opinion in print and on the Web, checking editorials, letters to the editor, political cartoons, and campaign advertising for accuracy while learning how to evaluate Web sites.

One night a week includes a 30-minute discussion of current events.

### 19<sup>th</sup> Century United States History

Spring semester, one half credit.

They struggled to put into practice the principles and ideals of the country's founding documents, sometimes successfully, sometimes at great cost and sacrifice. Through these experiences, the term "American" took shape and continues to guide our national purpose today.

The course is divided into two sections. After introductory classes set the historical context of the century, students complete a major research paper exploring the advancement – or loss – of human rights as they related to women, African-Americans, and native Americans. This project ties into literary studies in English class. Then students explore the century through the lives of three extraordinary Americans: Mark Twain, Mary Baker Eddy, and Augusta Tabor (wife of the richest man in Colorado). How did their lives reflect the century's values? How did their lives define new values for their fellow citizens?

One night a week includes a 30-minute discussion of current events.

### Collapse of Societies

One semester, one quarter credit.

In most years the United States currently accepts more immigrants as permanent residents than all the other countries in the world combined. The Immigration Issues enrichment course examines the status of migrant workers in America, specifically in regard to current US law and practices and an evaluation of their effectiveness. Our particular focus is legal and illegal immigration from Mexico and Latin America to the US. It is taught as a compliment to the US

Government class and works in collaboration with the English & Spanish classes. The course will be reading and discussion based and includes a speaker series, case studies, and field study on the US/Mexico border and Latin America.

#### Sustainable Agriculture and Living

One semester, one quarter credit.

This course covers Sustainable Agriculture and Living. We study the ways in which agriculture has changed in the US since WWII with the advent of chemical fertilizers. Then look at the +/- of this method of growing our food and consider the alternatives that are developing. We consider what it means to live sustainably in terms of our own eating and energy consumption choices. The course is reading and discussion based and includes a speaker series, case studies, and the field components. The field components include attending the Quivira Conference in Albuquerque, NM in November titled, "How to feed 9 billion people;" farm stays in Baja, Mexico; and a ranch service weekend in May.

### **Electives – 1-1.5 credits per year**

Electives at The Link School are designed to support the living and learning experience of each student. Many of the skills and dispositions cultivated in these courses are integral to the underlying educational philosophy the school, but do not fit cleanly in more traditional coursework.

#### Service Learning & Stewardship

Two semesters, one-quarter credit

Service work in support of the school and local communities includes forestry work, trail work, projects with the Division of Wildlife, construction of a garage, animal husbandry, and work in our greenhouse and garden.

#### Leadership Seminar and Expeditions

Two semesters, one-quarter credit

Leadership skills are taught, in particular, in preparation for and during expeditions. Students earn various levels in relation to communication skills, small group leadership skills, small group participation, expedition mentality, outdoor skills, & environmental awareness. Expeditions during Year IV include rafting in UT through Westwater Canyon and either Dinosaur National Monument or on the San Juan River, horse packing in the San Isabel, Mountain Biking in Colorado and Utah, Hiking in through mountain and canyon settings in CO and UT, an international trip to Chile, a mountaineering trip to The Lost Wonder Hut, and a variety of shorter weekend trips.

#### Creative and Industrial Arts, & Computer Workshops

Two semesters, one-quarter credit

Students have the opportunity throughout the year to develop artistic skills and abilities in photography, fine arts, music and handcrafts. Students receive basic instruction and have the opportunity to work on projects in carpentry, auto mechanics, pottery, and metals. Students also have the opportunity to become

proficient in a variety of computer applications, including blogs, video and photo editing, web page design, Skype, video conferencing and other skills useful in presenting POLs.

### Culinary Arts & Sustainable Foods

Two quarters, one-quarter credit

Students learn the practical art of planning nutritious, well-balanced meals from local food sources, shopping, cooking and meal presentation. In addition they participate in cooking classes taught by local chefs, in food related activities with the local farmers' market, and learn about sustainable ways to produce food as well as the resources available on a local level, including working in our own garden.

### College Prep for Juniors and Seniors

Two semesters, one-quarter credit

Students focus on the college search process, including college essay writing and SAT/ACT practice, review, and testing.

### Money Matters

5 units, one-quarter credit

The Money Matters program was created by the Boys & Girls Club of America, in partnership with Charles Schwab Foundation, to provide behavior-changing financial education to help teens get on the path towards budgeting, saving, planning, for college and financial freedom.

The Money Matters program is comprised of core curriculum divided into five units. Each unit addresses a key Money Matters Theme, and the activities are designed to put that theme into a real world context. These five topics are:

1. Budgeting and Living within your Means
2. Saving and Investing
3. Planning for College
4. Credit and Debit
5. Entrepreneurship

There is a website with loads of free tools for the program:  
[www.moneymattersmakeitcount.com](http://www.moneymattersmakeitcount.com)

As a part of our grant requirements, 80% of these students will need to establish a savings account and contribute to it regularly, with 75% demonstrating a 20% increase in their financial knowledge.

The Career Launch curriculum is designed to help walk students through self-exploration around their desired future employment. They take an interest survey, discuss their options about college, jobs, internships, and various careers. Throughout this program they create a resume, learn about college financial aid,

where to find career data such as on the Bureau of Labor and Statistics, and have access to the free tools on [www.careerlaunch.net](http://www.careerlaunch.net).

### **Physical Education**

Two semesters, one credit

Students engage in daily workout routines and spend one week each month on a physically demanding expedition. For independent work out time, students are required to do 15 minutes of aerobic work and 15 minutes of strength work – at a minimum.

### **Senior Seminar**

Length varies, credit available varies – maximum 1 credit

Seniors who qualify may choose to engage in a self-directed project from May 1<sup>st</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> of their senior year. Qualification will be based on 1) having a completed core course work necessary for graduation, and then 2) being in good standing in the community.

Projects may range in length from a few weeks to a few days and need to take place in the western hemisphere. Generally, the expense is too great, and too much time is lost when traveling to Europe or Asia in adjusting for the time change.

A staff member works as a project mentor with each student on his or her project.

Senior projects culminate with a POL and should focus on Link outcomes – i.e. service work, career development, backcountry skill development, an expedition, etc. Students may also introduce what they are doing with a fall POL.

Projects will be assessed by staff on a Pass/Incomplete basis.

Application Process: Students who would like to be considered for a senior project should work during the fall to develop a rough idea of what they want to do, and submit in writing a general scope of their project before Christmas break. After break, and before the international trip, students must submit a full proposal which should include the items below. Staff will then review the proposal and help the student come up with a firm plan by the start of the spring semester.

The written proposal should include:

- Description of the project (one page on the project content)
- Assessment of qualification (in terms of showing you have or will have the credits to graduate. This will require talking first to the Academic Director, and then to all your teachers and working out how to get your class work completed.)
- Explanation of how it will fulfill Link School Outcomes
- Length of time for the project and the proposed dates
  - Project timeline for key components

- Budget for the project (up to \$50/day is available from Link. Students and their families will need to have a plan to cover expenses beyond \$50/day.)
- Presentation of Learning (POL) plan

If approved, seniors should give their fall semester POL on what they are planning and spring semester POL on what they did and learned.

### **Block Courses:**

Block courses fit into the overall academic program as enhancement. The instructors work with Link staff to accomplish established objectives and meet planned benchmarks. Whenever possible, block courses are project based and employ the PBL approach coordinated by Dave Bailey. Time blocks for these courses is often the afternoons but sometimes is all day.

### **Faculty and Adjunct Faculty List for 2012-2013**

- Bobby Lewis (Link Director) Spanish tutor, Social Studies, World Religions, PE, Service Learning, Leadership, Wilderness Skills.
- David Bailey (Education Director) ILP Coordinator, Math and Spanish tutor, Wilderness Skills.
- Natalie Lewis (School Administrator) Home Economics, Math and Spanish tutor, Horse Program, Agriculture Program.
- Christine Love Bailey (Instructor) English Instructor, Spanish tutor, College Advisor.
- Bill Fabian (Academic Advisory Committee, Instructor) Current Events, Social Studies, History, Academic & Career Advising, Accreditation Head.
- Preston Larimer (Instructor) Global Science.
- Bryan Reed (Resident Counselor, Instructor) Math instructor, Wilderness Skills
- Makenzie Barron Murray (Resident Counselor) Standardized test tutor, Math tutor.
- Erin Easton (Instructor) Spanish and French.
- Danielle del Castillo Shelton (Tutor) Math and Spanish tutor.