

February, 2012

Dear Students and Parents,

We are excited to continue our offering of a unique learning experience at Pomperaug High School, which will be made available to a cohort of 24 incoming freshman students in the fall of 2012. The Academy of Digital Arts and Sciences is a program developed by The Center for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills at Education Connection, in collaboration with Connecticut Career Choices (CCC), Connecticut Pre-Engineering Program, and the Connecticut College of Technology. The program was developed with the goal of preparing students for success in 21<sup>st</sup> century science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) careers.

In the fall of 2011, Pomperaug High School, as well as other participating high schools, became a part of a grant-funded research study and included additional courses as part of a 4-year sequence of academy courses for cohorts of students interested in this mode of learning. Academy courses are worth 1 credit and qualify as an academic level weight. Unfortunately, students planning on taking honors geometry and honors biology would not be able to follow the academy sequence. Learners engaged in the academy sequence of courses take a combination of mainstream PHS courses (English, history, foreign language, PE, etc.) and the following academy courses:

9th	10th	11th	*12th
Alg21 (Algebra)	Geo21 (Geometry)		
E3 (Earth & Energy Essentials)	Bio21 (Biology)	Chem21 (Chemistry)	Physics21 (Physics)
Skills21 (Digital Media and Technology)	RD2 (Research, Design and Development) <u>OR</u> DM3 (Digital Media & Moviemaking)	ECE (E-Commerce Entrepreneurship) <u>OR</u> 3D Modeling & Animation	VWS (Virtual Worlds & Simulations)

All students involved in the Academy of Digital Arts and Sciences should feel comfortable with technology and enjoy authentic, innovative learning experiences. Groups of students in the academy will have an opportunity to exhibit the “products” they have worked on in their classes at the Connecticut Student Innovation Expo in Hartford each spring. Field trips are also included as part of the curriculum in each course, and learners will be expected to complete digital portfolios while involved in the academy.

The PHS math/science academic chair, an academy teacher, and two current academy students recently provided academy informational programs to students at both Memorial and Rochambeau. If your child is interested in joining the academy as part of his or her program at Pomperaug High School, ***please complete the attached application and return it to your child’s middle school guidance counselor by Thursday, February 16.*** Depending on the number of interested students, a lottery will be conducted to assure fairness, and letters will be sent home indicating your child’s acceptance into the program. Please contact your child’s guidance counselor if you have additional questions about the academy or contact the PHS math/science department chair, Mrs. Szymanski at 203-262-3200.

Sincerely,

Lorrie Rodrigue  
Principal, Pomperaug High School

Heidi Szymanski  
Math/Science Academic Chair  
[hszymanski@region15.org](mailto:hszymanski@region15.org)

**PHS Digital Arts & Sciences Academy  
Application Form**

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

Counselor \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Address \_\_\_\_\_

Parent or Guardian (s) Name/Phone#

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The primary mission of the Academy is to motivate, facilitate, and support the development of student artistic and creative skills in the use of digital media with a focus on applying those skills to the study of science and technology. All courses associated with the Academy will feature problem-based learning and comprehensive projects as the mode of instruction. Field trips and the CT Student Innovation Expo in Hartford are additional components of the Academy path.

As an incoming freshman, I, \_\_\_\_\_ would be interested in taking the sequence of courses associated with the Digital Arts and Sciences Academy at Pomperaug High School. I understand that this is a 4-year academy sequence that requires students' interest and passion for science and technology in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Each course (Alg21, Skills21, and E3/Earth and Energy Science) will carry academic weight. I also understand that this cohort group of 24 students will be part of a grant-funded study interested in assessing the value of these academy courses and their ability to help prepare students to be knowledgeable participants in our ever-expanding digital society.

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

\*\* Students who are planning on taking honors geometry and honors biology will not be able to participate in the academic-level sequence of courses outlined above.