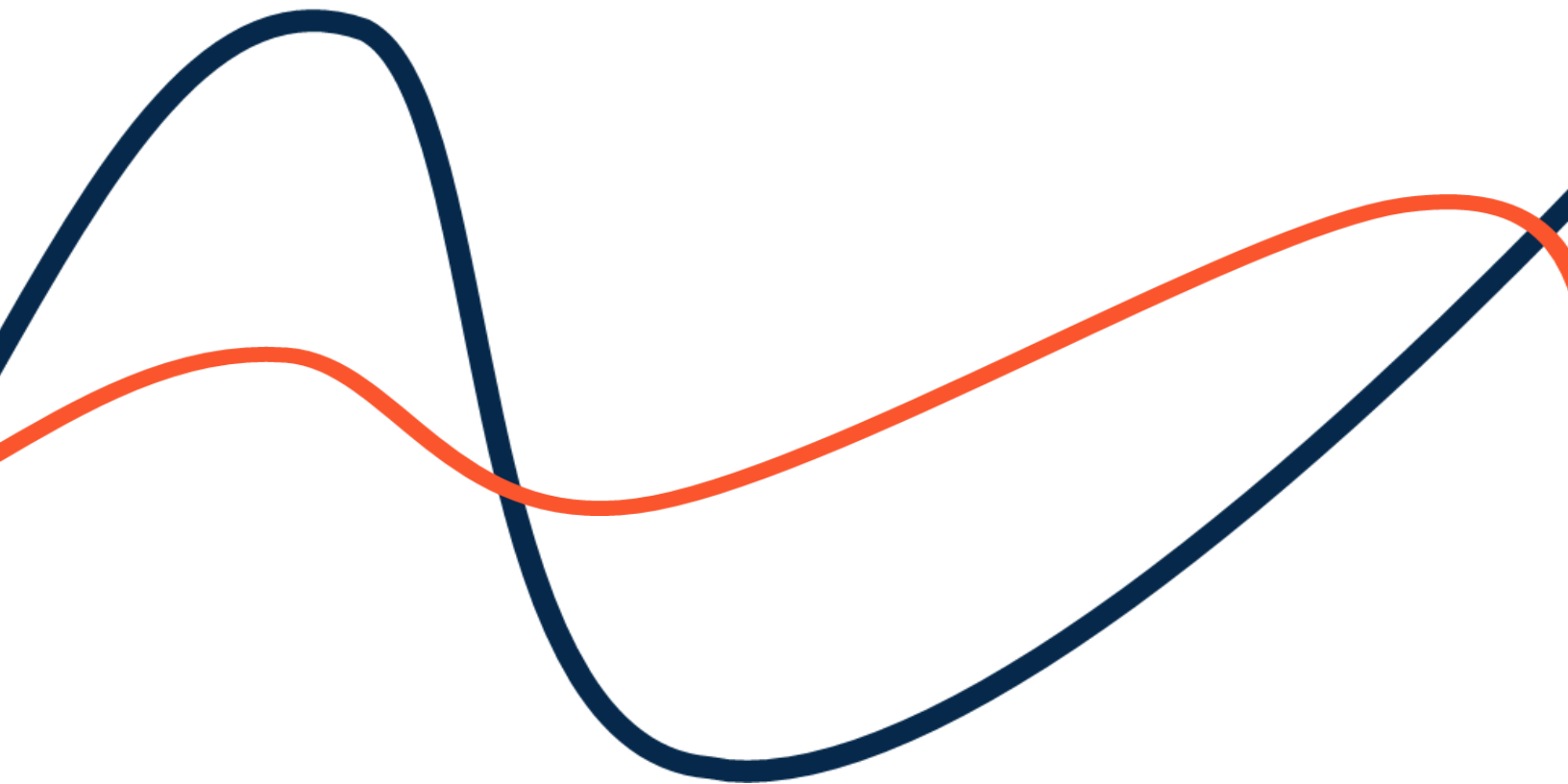




REALM Academy:

A Meaning-Centered Education
for Life Beyond School



Features of REALM Academy

While our new program will have increases in **expectation, challenge level, accountability, and participation**, we have even more features we hope to bring in the coming years.

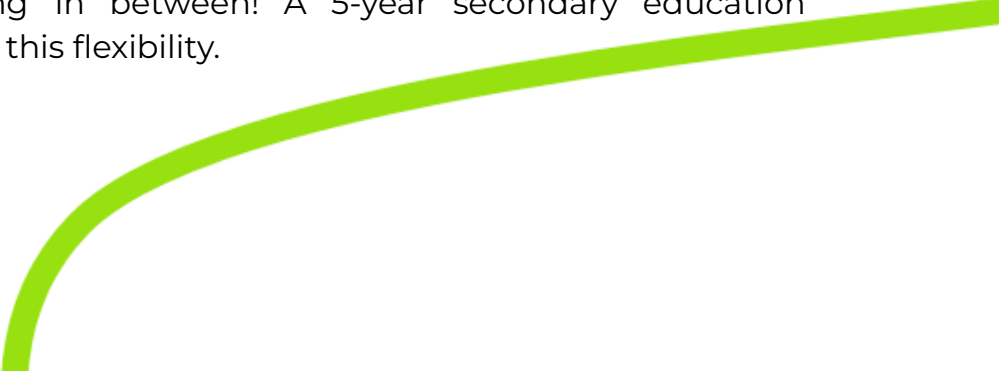
Same Building, Different Level of Classes

REALM Academy will raise the expectations of students by providing them with **their personal student email, profile on their learner management account, and more opportunities to respond to deadlines and submit work**. Overall, students at the REALM will receive more significant **challenges and accountability** than they had previously experienced. In their initial year, students will be guided towards **developing the executive functioning** needed to build successful work habits, whether at the REALM or elsewhere. Classes will be held twice a week, mostly, with some classes still engaging in one class weekly. Students will begin **meeting with a mentor** to help them develop a growth plan for their first semester in this new part of the program.

5 Years, Not 4...

Over the years we have had many students finish our program in what conventional schools would call “8th grade,” but many families also chose to transition in “7th grade” to help students get acclimated to different systems they felt they had to join because of the lack of options for robust, alternative, secondary education.

Our secondary enrichment program starts in “8th grade” (REALM Academy will still be blended ages) and will be designed to begin supporting getting accredited secondary credits starting earlier to accomplish two different goals: 1) to help prepare students for increased accountability, challenge, expectations, and managing of digital aspects of education, and 2) to begin earning credits earlier, easing the burden of taking accredited classes each year while balancing enrichment classes that REALM families have come to love. We are committed to serving every kind of student and academic goal, from learning for the sake of learning, to attending prestigious conventional universities and everything in between! A 5-year secondary education program provides space for this flexibility.



Thematic Growth Projects

Aligning with the developmental psychology of students, REALM plans to enrich the high school curriculum by helping apply it to a meaningful theme each semester that mirrors their experience and what they are focused on. As they mature and learn more about their world, their view broadens and so will their focus in our program.

Each semester, every student will be tasked with answering a thematic growth question that they can answer in any modality or method they would like. Students present their answer for their growth questions in a symposium at the end of each semester.

As our secondary education program will be stretched to five years, the first year of the thematic growth centers around the skills necessary to be a true student. After their initial year of preparation, their projects become focused on developmental subjects.

Secondary Prep Semester A: *Becoming a True Student*

Students who start in the first year of our academy go through our fresh and robust courses, but are focusing on sharpening the executive functioning and self-management strategies necessary to do the deeper work later in the program. Students will receive guidance in managing multiple courses and assignments, how to design a workflow, and learn how to take breaks effectively. Students will focus on the question ***"What are my strengths as a learner and how can I use them to overcome my academic weaknesses?"***

Secondary Prep Semester B: *Setting Meaningful Academic Goals*

Students progress through our program refining their student skills that become increasingly more individualized and tailored their strengths and weaknesses. Practice will be a core theme throughout the semester in hopes of developing the beginning structures to handle more challenging work down the road. Students growth projects this semester will focus on the question ***"What are my short-term and long-term educational goals, and what steps must I take to achieve them?"***

Secondary Enrichment Thematic Progression



Semester 1: Self

(Identity, Character, Self-Expression, Personal Health)

The first semester in this journey begins with exploring the self through academic and artistic content. How can biology, chemistry, and human anatomy help me understand myself better? What works of literature help me navigate the beginning of my own identity separate from my family? What kind of tone and style do I want when I write? These questions will be explored more as each student works on their own personal project that answers the essential question: **"Who am I currently, and who do I aspire to be? How do my values, interests, and passions align with the person I want to become?"**

Semester 2: Other

(Friends, Romantic Relationships, and Strangers)

The journey continues by applying educational subjects to the people care about around them. Classes help students explore the essential question: **"How do my relationships with others reflect who I am, and how can understanding others better enhance these relationships?"**

Semester 3: Family

Students are asked to reflect on their family system and the role they play in it. Themes of interdependence and meaning are central topics in the classes students take. Students will focus on the question: **"What role do I play in my family, and how does my family shape my views and identity?"**

Semester 4&5: Community

Students proceed to a year-long focus on community, how it's built, and how it functions (or doesn't) in the world around them. Students will expand their awareness and begin to venture out into the community around them in classes, through internships, or through engagement in the local community college or trade school. Students will consider the questions over two semesters: **"What defines a community, and how can I contribute to making my community a better place?" & "How can understanding the diverse needs and values of my community members help in building a stronger, more inclusive community?"**

Semester 6&7: Global

The thematic journey reaches its apex by expanding awareness to the entire world. Students are asked to reconcile the mass awareness of learning about the world with recognizing the limitations of a single individual. Students will also apply their classes to not only people on this planet, but the planet itself, exploring our relationship to our environment globally. Students can participate in an international exchange program for a semester or a short trip abroad, appreciating the education that comes from travel and global experiences. Essential questions students will be focused on during the semesters will be **"What global issues am I most passionate about, and what realistic steps can I take to make a difference?" & "Considering the**

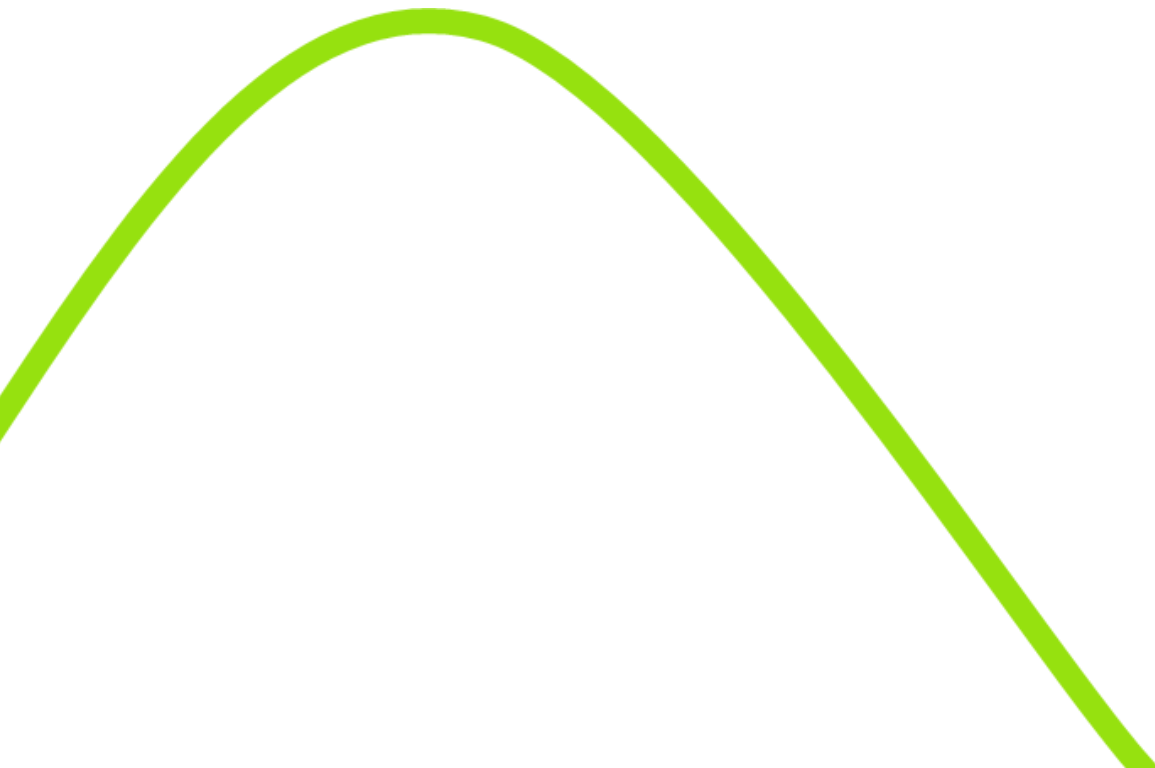
interconnectedness of global societies, how can I contribute to global solutions, while recognizing the limits of my influence?"

Semester 8: Self - Revisited

Now, with an educational journey behind them, students review their thoughts from the start of their journey and will reflect on everything they have learned as they near the completion of their experience. This final semester is focused on finding a direction as they transition to their next phase of life. Classes will be directly focused on life planning, managing oneself independently, and understanding the pathways ahead of them. Students will complete their last thematic growth project reflecting on the following questions: **"Reflecting on my past self, who I wanted to be, and who I am now, in what ways have I changed, and what further growth do I seek?" & "As I transition into adulthood, what are my aspirations, and how do I plan to align my actions with these goals to lead a meaningful life?"**

International Exchange Program

During the Global year of the program, we are currently seeking partnerships to participate in a semester-long program abroad, with the hopes of also populating our classes for that year with international students as well. We believe in learning about the world around us. Who better to learn from than people who are actually living in the world we usually get to read about. By both sending students abroad and bringing students to the REALM, students will get an international influence whether they choose to leave or stay.





Pathways:

Finding the path that means something to you...

Different Pathways for Different Goals

We recognize that each student and family is different in terms of what they strive for and how they would like to use REALM Academy. We have created different suggested pathways for students' significant goals for attending REALM Academy. However, we are always here to be flexible and customize the experience you would like to fit your exact situation and goals.

REALMified Path

The REALM has been the home for alternative education for some time. For many, socialization, enrichment, and exploration are the ultimate values. The REALM will continue supporting those not seeking a conventional path or concerned with an accredited diploma. Students will be able to pick and choose freely what they would like to learn on this pathway. The REALM is currently seeking post-secondary routes that match our alternative approach so students can continue this education.

Entrepreneurship Path

For students wanting to blaze their own trail and would like to pursue the path of starting their own business, REALM Academy is currently developing a pathway for students to focus on aspects of financial literacy, mentorship, internships, and other aspects of business. Students can be supported to graduate with an accredited diploma and an array of quality experiences. Students on this path will have projects that will make them much more experienced in the aspects of business they most want to pursue.

Trade School Path

Some students may want to continue their education by learning a trade, and REALM Academy wants to provide support and guidance along this path. We are currently forming relationships with nearby trade schools to introduce students to a world of careers that are often left out of high schools. We will be working to help students start accredited coursework in a trade school while at REALM Academy.

Community College Path

The REALM is situated close to one of the best community colleges in the state. REALM Academy will be forming a partnership with Santa Monica Community College to help students entering the community

college system after attending REALM Academy or during it as a dual enrollment student looking to get ahead on college credits. Students will have personal guidance from REALM to weigh out decisions related to college classes.

College/University Path

REALM Academy is committed to providing a path for students who pursue the conventional path toward accredited colleges and universities. Through our partnership with accredited learning platforms and with hopes of obtaining full accreditation, students can pursue a degree in the same fashion any other student could. The REALM is currently discussing how project-based education and work portfolios could replace traditional transcripts to provide both an enriching education for students while meeting the requirements of the world they will enter.

Work-Based Learning

The REALM will partner with businesses and create opportunities for students to learn what it means to work on a team, earn money, and show up consistently and professionally. The REALM is currently seeking buildings that could foster potential opportunities, such as a coffee shop and a library, to create these opportunities.

Full Accreditation for REALM Academy

While we cannot provide credit toward graduation for classes that REALM Academy currently designs, we are beginning the process of attaining WASC accreditation. We are intent on achieving that credential while maintaining the explorative and enriching feel of our classes, which are still shaped and changed each semester. While we know this is not easy and it may take longer to achieve accreditation this way, our mission is to truly redesign education toward a more meaningful end. The school work resembles actual work, and the application of content is seen everywhere because it is taught to do so. We are confident that our approach can truly allow students to feel capable as they enter the next phase of their lives.

Pricing + Fees

REALM Academy will fall under the same pricing model as the rest of our program and offerings. As the program develops, special fees may be assessed for specialized features for the needs of secondary school students in future years.

Phased Growth Plan

Currently, REALM Academy is not an accredited institution, however we are exploring this as we aim to continually improve our teacher-created courses. We will always be committed to bring a fresh take to traditional subjects, and choice and autonomy will always be at the center of what we do.

Students in our first few years of operating will need to pursue an accredited diploma (if they choose to) through a **hybrid model** utilizing both **accredited online material** (with programmatic support for working with online coursework) **AND our patented REALM enrichment courses** standard for our Roots and Branches and Journey programs.

Completing REALM Academy with an accredited diploma will require the use of both aspects, if your family goals are to achieve that standard. However, we are actively working to understand how REALM Academy courses can become accredited, while preserving the curiosity, joy, love, and fun you have come to know.

Have More Questions?

REALM Academy is in active development and will continue to update on our website as we confirm and solidify more aspects, such as partnerships, courses, and the like.

Please schedule a time with Hayden Harrower for families and students considering utilizing REALM Academy.

We would love to speak with you and find out how the REALM can help you!