

7th Grade Course Descriptions 2017-18

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Course registration for the next school-year will take place shortly. The middle school curriculum is designed to meet State and Common Core Standards, and the teaching staff is dedicated to instructional practices that promote challenge and successful achievement for all students. Please be aware that the middle school does not accept specific teacher or team requests. Parents are welcome to discuss specific student needs with a counselor or administrator prior to July 1st. Students with an IEP, GIEP, or other legally documented needs, will be scheduled to receive direct support (such as a learning support or gifted support teachers) in classrooms. This support within our inclusionary model may also benefit other students in those classrooms. Although some intentional teaming will take place due to past performance, learning behaviors, or specific interactions with peers, students without special needs will be randomly assigned sections during the scheduling process.

Required Courses:

Language Arts: Students will be actively engaged in a 90 minute block in which all aspects of a successful balanced literacy program will be experienced. Students will participate in reading, writing, word study, speaking, and listening activities through a variety of approaches in order to ensure many opportunities for meaningful learning. They will work toward writing mastery in narrative, information, and persuasive modes. Additionally, all seventh grade learners will be encouraged to practice respect, responsibility, and independence. Seventh grade is a crucial year of forming positive habits and goal setting for the future.

Mathematics: Twin Valley School District employs *College Preparatory Mathematics* (CPM) at the secondary levels. This program was designated "An Exemplary Mathematics Program" by the U.S. Department of Education in October, 1999 and has received very positive feedback from teachers and students at Twin Valley. CPM is a curriculum that integrates algebra and geometry content with conceptual understanding and problem-solving skills. The CPM curriculum uses a variety of teaching methodologies, including direct instruction, class discussions, manipulatives, and structured study teams. During class, students are actively working on guided investigations, much like "math labs," to develop mathematical concepts and problem solving skills.

Science: 7th Grade Science investigates the science of living things. Each unit consists of inquiry-based investigations that allow students to answer questions while at the same time furthering their knowledge of science. During the first unit, students will learn how to implement the scientific method to answer a question. In the second unit, students will investigate the characteristics of living things, including cellular organization. The third unit involves genetics, the understanding of how living things inherit characteristics. The final unit of the course explores how living things interact with one another and the environment.

Social Studies: 7th Grade Social Studies explores the foundations of World History. Social concepts around the following units will be explored: Prehistoric Life, the Birth of Civilization, the Cradle of Civilization, Classic Traditions: Greece and Rome, and Middle Ages: the Beginning.

Health, Physical Education & Safety: Middle School Health and Physical Education encourages students to learn about healthy lifestyles through health education and physical activities. Students will begin to explore various lifetime activities and health concepts through leveled instruction and varied cooperative experiences.

World Language: 7th grade students will begin formal study of either German or Spanish. This study will focus on the five C's of language learning: Communications, cultures, connections, comparisons and communities; using and developing skills within listening, speaking, reading and writing modalities. Students will continue first year study of the same language as "Part B" in 8th grade.

March 1, 2017

Related Arts Courses:

Band & Orchestra: The Band and Orchestra programs offer an exciting opportunity for students to develop their instrumental music skills. Students who will be playing an instrument for the first time in 7th grade will be offered pull-out lessons, but will not be included in performances or rehearsals until proficiency with the instrument is attained. A limited number of percussion students will be chosen to participate in band and orchestra ensembles and will be selected by audition. Students not selected for band or orchestra ensembles will have the opportunity to continue pull-out lessons and perform in a percussion ensemble. Band and orchestra are full year courses of study. Concert participation is required. (Please note: All band ensemble students are required to participate in the Marching Band events.)

Chorus: Students will meet to develop vocal and choral skills. Along with the rehearsal and preparation of music for the winter and spring concerts, areas such as voice training, ear training, music reading and sight reading skills will be included in the class instruction. Chorus is a full year course of study. Concert participation is required.

General Music: This course will expose students to various genres of music and the elements that are used to create music. Students will explore a variety of music, along with its historical reference, and its theoretical components. All students not registered for band, chorus or orchestra must register for this course.

Experiences in Art I: This class is a combination of 2-dimensional, 3-dimensional art. We will create many projects throughout the semester using materials such as tempera paint, chalk pastel, clay, markers, paper and mache.

Experiences in Art II: This class will also be a combination of 2-dimensional and 3-dimensional art, along with and projects in recycled art. The projects will be different from Art I, but just as much fun!

Design & Modeling: This is the 7th grade "*Project Lead The Way*"- Gateway course. Students will learn about measurement, thumbnail sketching, 3-D Drawing techniques, Multi-view drawing, and then move on to Computer Aided Drafting using a version of Autocad design software. The students will then apply these Design and Modeling skills to activity-based projects. The projects will include two airplane based projects, and the CO2 dragster project.

Music & Technology: Fundamentals of music composition and production using various software and hardware tools such as Macs, Garage Band, Notation Software. Tone, pitch, timbre, rhythm, harmony, form, and melody will be explored in a variety of projects including free composition, podcasts, and video soundtrack production.

Get it "Write": A high level elective writing seminar that focuses on the literary demands of the next generation. Students will experience writing workshop in small focused groups that include crafting high level academic essays as well expressing ideas in a creative outlet. Students will analyze, assess, reflect, and communicate their thoughts and ideas in a combination of written and verbal expression.

Mediation & Conflict Resolution: Students will learn skills in peer mediation and conflict resolution through the lens of Restorative Practices, and facilitate informal conferences with younger grade students who report incidents in school. Students will learn life skills that will help them work with others in the future.

Mystery in History: Students will investigate and explore strange and unusual happenings in history such as Bigfoot, DB Cooper, the Sailing Stones, and Loch Ness Monster...some real and some hoaxes. Students will also investigate historic court cases such as Galileo, Martin Luther, Lincoln Conspirators, Boston Massacre: and present a mock trial similar to several of those studied.

Science Survey & Investigation: A science extension class for students interested in exploring higher level Science topics. Students will explore science careers, inventions, physics, and forensic science during this class.

Strategies in Sport: This course has an underlying emphasis on increasing student movement through participation in team and individual sports and personal fitness challenges with a focus on game strategies and advanced movement skills.