

## Middle School Elective Course Descriptions

### **SEMESTER-LONG ELECTIVE OPTIONS**

(If Choosing a semester elective, please make sure to choose at least two courses)

- ART 1 (Semester Course open to 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders)** **Prerequisite: None**  
Students will explore 2D and 3D concepts. This beginning hands-on studio course focuses on creative problem-solving and the art process. Students will experience a variety of materials and techniques, including but not limited to: tempera paint, pencil/colored pencil, modeling clay, and printmaking.
- ART 2 (Semester Course open to 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders)** **Prerequisite: Successful completion of Art 1**  
Students will expand their exploration of 2D and 3D concepts learned in Art 1. In this hands-on studio course, students will experience a variety of materials and techniques, including but not limited to: charcoal, pen, watercolor paint, sculpture making and printmaking.
- ART 3 (Semester Course open to 8<sup>th</sup> graders)** **Prerequisite: Successful completion of Art 2**  
Art 3 is a semester elective course that provides students with a deeper understanding of the concepts learned in Art 1 and Art 2. Areas of concentration may include oil pastel and chalk drawing, acrylic painting, clay and ceramics-making, and digital drawing and image manipulation.
- ART 4 (Semester Course open to 8<sup>th</sup> graders)** **Prerequisite: Successful completion of Art 3**  
Art 4 is a semester elective course that provides students with a deeper understanding of the concepts learned in Art 1, Art 2, and Art 3. Areas of concentration may include critique, self-choice, colored pencil drawing, implement and tool selection, glazing and painting 3-D artworks, using plaster, and introductory digital photography and image manipulation.
- DEBATE (Semester course open to 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders) \*\* Can be taken more than once** **Prerequisite: None**  
This course is for the student who has the desire to acquire more advanced debate, personal, and group discussion skills. Students will learn how to plan, develop and organize structured and impromptu speeches emphasizing verbal and nonverbal delivery skills such as: organization, projection, inflection, eye-contact, hand gestures. A secondary emphasis of this course will stress critical listening skills, techniques to reduce public speaking anxiety and the development of audience etiquette and fostering an appreciation of diverse perspectives on a variety of topics.
- ESSENTIAL TECHNOLOGY- Intro to Computers (Semester course open to 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders)** **Prerequisite: None**  
Students will have unique engagements in coding, animations, 3D printing, drone and sphero programming with other emerging technologies. Students will use the power of computers to communicate with a global community to solve real-world problems. The course is designed to be fun, engaging relevant, collaborative, and creative. Students will apply their understanding through innovative projects where they will learn to create 3D prints, websites, animations, music, graphic designs, videos and video games.
- ESSENTIAL TECHNOLOGY – Interactive Media (Semester course open to 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders)** **Prerequisite: None**  
Students will have differentiated opportunities to explore introductory and advanced technology skills including coding, robotic programming, podcasting, augmented and virtual reality, multimedia editing, 3D printing, drone flight, graphic design, and new emerging technologies. Interactive Media places an emphasis on global citizenship using cutting edge technology to solve real-world problems. This course is designed to be choice-driven, engaging, relevant, collaborative, and creative. Students will expand their understanding through inventive choice-directed projects.
- FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCE (FACS) – Culinary & Personal Success (Sem course open to 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade) Prerequisite: None**  
Students will learn in a real-world hands-on environment using employability competencies as a guide. Students will develop and apply skills related to leadership, communication, collaboration, and financial literacy. There will be an introduction to culinary fundamentals including safety, nutrition, and food preparation in culinary labs. Additionally, students will relate their own family functions, structures, and traditions to the real world and investigate their personal interests and abilities to prepare for college and careers.
- FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCE (FACS) – Culinary & Leadership Skills (Sem course open to 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade) Prerequisite: None**  
This real-world, hands-on class will have students showcasing their employability skills including leadership, communication, and collaboration in professional scenarios. They will master culinary skills including cooking methods, recipe creation, budgeting, and culinary entrepreneurship. Students will explore the foundations of early childhood, including child development, safety and care for infants and toddlers. They will learn how to align career and college goals to high school pathways and explore post-secondary options and search for colleges and careers that meet their independent goals for a successful future.
- STEM - Design and Engineering / PLTW (Sem course open to 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> graders)** **Prerequisite: None**  
Students are exposed to a variety of topics that range from the design process to engineering. Students will work together in small groups to complete the design and modeling process of a product. This semester course challenges students to use critical thinking skills to develop solutions and or innovations to everyday problems and products.
- STEM - Automation and Robotics / PLTW (Sem course open to 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> graders)** **Prerequisite: None**  
Students are exposed to a variety of topics that range from engineering to automation and robotics. Students will work together in small groups to complete the design and modeling process of a product. This semester course challenges students to use critical thinking skills to develop solutions and or innovations to everyday problems and products. *It is recommended that PLTW – Design and Engineering is completed prior to this class*
- SPEECH (Semester course open to 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders) \*\* Can be taken more than once** **Prerequisite: None**  
This course is for the beginning public speaker who would like to strengthen their public speaking skills. This course will offer a supportive setting to practice presenting to a variety of live audience types. In addition to public speaking, further performance opportunities may be included in the area of public oral reading. This course prepares students to learn the role communication plays in our daily lives. Students will explore the five levels of communication: intrapersonal, interpersonal, small group, public, and mass communication. Emphasis will also be placed on verbal and non-verbal communication as well as organization techniques for delivering successful and engaging presentations.

## Middle School Elective Course Descriptions

### **YEAR-LONG ELECTIVE OPTIONS**

**AVID 7 or AVID 8 (Year-long available to 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders)**  
**Advancement via Individual Determination**

**Prerequisites:**  
7<sup>th</sup> Gr or new to AVID - Application, Interview and Selection process  
8<sup>th</sup> Gr Returning to AVID – Successful completion of AVID 7

This course focuses on techniques and learning strategies to improve students' study skills to prepare them for high school and college. Emphasis is on students taking structured notes, time management, organization, writing, reading, test-taking strategies, active listening, using academic language in verbal presentations, and methods of collaboration. Twice weekly, structured tutorial sessions teach students high level inquiry, problem-solving, and collaboration. Additionally, students will have ongoing opportunities to apply these skills to work in their other classes and receive feedback to enhance their study habits. AVID is designed for students who are first generation to attend college, low-income, minority, or academically in the middle. Frequent guest speakers, field trips and research are focused on college and career readiness. (Potential AVID students are identified by district data. Students will need to complete an application, be interviewed, and then accepted into the AVID course.)

**BAND (Year-long course open to 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders)**  
**\*\* Can be taken more than once**

**Prerequisite: 1 year of Elementary Band or instructor approval**

This course is for students who play a brass, woodwind, or percussion instrument. Students rehearse every day and participate in sectional rehearsals once per week. Rehearsals emphasize the continued development of musical fundamentals, technical skills and increased musical knowledge through the exposure to a wide variety of literature, ensemble playing and performance experience. Full participation in all concerts and festivals is required for all students enrolled in band.

**CHORUS (Year-long course open to 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders) \*\* Can be taken more than once**

**Prerequisite: None**

This course in ensemble rehearsal and performance is for students who want to learn to sing. Chorus students meet every day in rehearsals which emphasize the development of musical fundamentals and skills and increased musical knowledge through exposure to a wide variety of literature and performance experience. Full participation in all concerts and festivals is required for all students enrolled in chorus.

**CRITICAL READING (Year-long course open to 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders)**  
**\*\* Can be taken more than once**

**Prerequisite: Consistent MAP scores 50 percentile or higher**

This course provides proficient readers the opportunity to refine literacy skills and strategies necessary for college and career readiness. Coursework includes authentic practice reading a wide range of fiction and non-fiction texts, with a variety of purposes, to enhance critical thinking, comprehension and analytical skills as well as opportunities to practice reading and responding to a wide variety of texts. Core unit topics include: *Engaging Today's Reader, Reader's in the Real World, Reading Relationships, and Reading Perspectives*. Extra emphasis will be placed on demonstrating proficiency of the standards associated with Reading. Students enrolled in this course will be expected to participate in building and maintaining reading stamina through regular independent reading, goal setting and self-monitoring of reading progress.

**ORCHESTRA (Year-long course open to 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders)**  
**\*\* Can be taken more than once**

**Prerequisite: 1 year of Elementary Orchestra or instructor approval**

This course is for students who play a string instrument. Students rehearse every day and participate in sectional rehearsals once per week. Rehearsals emphasize the continued development of musical fundamentals, technical skills and increased musical knowledge through the exposure to a wide variety of literature, ensemble playing and performance experience. Full participation in all concerts and festivals is required for all students enrolled in orchestra.

**SPANISH 1A (Year-long course open to 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders)**

**Prerequisite: None**

This course will provide an introduction to Spanish grammar, syntax, and vocabulary and includes oral and written drill. Students are introduced to culture and customs of Spanish speaking countries. Activities include: Writing simple sentences, reading short segments, and learning to express oneself and understand the language, and presentation of dialogues. Successful completion of both Spanish 1A and 1B classes in middle school will allow a student to enter Spanish 2 in high school. **Special Note:** 8<sup>th</sup> graders completing only Spanish 1A will need to take both Spanish 1A and 1B in high school.

**SPANISH 1B (Year-long course open to 8<sup>th</sup> graders)**

**Prerequisite: Successful Completion of Spanish 1A**

The course is a continuation of Spanish 1A. Students are introduced to culture and customs of Spanish speaking countries. Activities include: Writing simple sentences, reading short segments, and learning to express oneself and understand the language, and presentation of dialogues. Students successfully completing this course will be able to take Spanish 2 in high school.

**SPANISH FOR HERITAGE SPEAKERS 1 (Year-long course open to 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders)**

**Prerequisite: Exposure to Spanish at Home**

This course was established to meet the needs of the heritage Spanish speakers in the student population by giving them a significant viable alternative to the classes for non-heritage speakers while at the same time offering a means for broadening and deepening their abilities in the Spanish Language. Activities include: Readings of literature and poetry from Spain and Latin America and the study of Spanish grammar, art, music, culture, and geography. **Special Note:** 8<sup>th</sup> graders completing only Spanish for Heritage Speakers 1 will need to take both Heritage Spanish 1 and 2 in high school.

**SPANISH FOR HERITAGE SPEAKERS 2 (Year-long course open to 8<sup>th</sup> graders)**

**Prerequisite: Successful completion of Spanish for Heritage Speakers 1**

This course is a continuation of Spanish for Heritage Speakers 1 and is designed for students who are advanced Spanish speakers and need a more challenging language program. Students successfully completing this course will take Spanish for Heritage Speakers 3-4 in high school. Activities include: Readings of literature and poetry from Spain and Latin America. The study of Spanish grammar, art, music, culture, and geography.