

# ALBANY AREA MIDDLE SCHOOL



# COURSE DESCRIPTION MANUAL

# ART

## **Art 6**

**Required:** 1 period, 1 quarter

Students will sharpen previously taught skills while also being introduced to new mediums and techniques in the form of two and three dimensional art projects.

## **Art 7**

**Required:** 1 period, every other day for 1 quarter

Through two and three dimensional art projects, students will be introduced to elements and principles of art. Art history and art appreciation are integral components of student learning within various units of this class.

## **Art 8**

**Required:** 1 period, every other day for 1 quarter

Art 8 builds upon the introduction provided to media in Art 7. Students experience, via projects and classroom presentations, additional ideas, methods, and techniques of artistic expression. Art appreciation and art history are taught within various units in different media.

# COMPUTER

## **Computer/Media 6**

In this course, students will expand their digital skills to become critical consumers as well as creative and efficient producers of their online learning. This course will strengthen the skills of keyboarding, web navigation and evaluation, and tool selection as students explore, utilize, and produce digital content. Students will receive instruction on the use of Electronic Library of MN database as a research tool. Students will also continue to develop their understanding of digital citizenship. Through online collaboration and communication with fellow students and the instructor, students will begin building a digital portfolio to show evidence of their growth as learners.

## **Digital Literacy & Applications 7**

**Required:** 1 period quarter 3

This course will continue to develop and reinforce keyboarding skills introduced in elementary classrooms. Students will also review features of word processing, spreadsheet, and presentation applications, expanding their ability to use the tools for creating, communicating, collaborating, and critical thinking. Students will continue to build on their knowledge of digital citizenship, describing strategies and exhibiting behaviors practiced by responsible digital users. Students will also receive an introduction to coding.

## **Genius Hour 8**

**Required:** 1 period quarter 2

Students will engage in an inquiry-based project based on their passions. Students will be guided by staff in the processes of asking questions, researching and exploring potential answers, developing a plan, communicating and collaborating on ideas, challenges, and solutions, and sharing their learning. Students will use digital applications to document their learning, research, and connect with others. Digital safety and ethics will be reviewed as students complete their work.

# ENGLISH

## **Language Arts 6**

**Required:** all year

Sixth grade Reading/Language Arts is the study of reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills. Students will develop comprehension and communication skills. Reading strategies will be applied during independent and classroom reading. Students will read from a variety of novels and short stories from the basal "Wonders." The writing process will be used throughout the year to communicate effectively and efficiently. This course will foster students' ability to read critically, write effectively, and communicate efficiently; providing the foundation for further studies in the area of reading and writing.

## **Language Arts 7**

**Required:** 1 period every quarter

Building on the foundations of elementary grades, students will explore elements of literature through reading and writing: short stories, novels (Fever 1793), non-fiction, biography, poetry and drama. Our textbook is Holt McDougal Literature. Composition in 7th grade places emphasis on creative writing and paragraphing skills. Students learn grammar and vocabulary through direct instruction and grammar in context.

## **Language Arts 8**

**Required:** 1 period every quarter

Eighth graders will continue to read and write about a variety of literature (e.g., short stories, a novel: *And Then There Were None*, nonfiction, poetry, and drama.) The textbook is Holt McDougal Literature. Composition consists of creative writing, the 5 - paragraph composition, and the formal research process. Students continue learning grammar and vocabulary through direct instruction and grammar in context.

## **ADSIS Read 180 (7 & 8)**

**Offered:** 1 period all year

Read 180 is a reading intervention program designed to help students strengthen their individual reading skills. Students will not register for this class, but may be assigned to it based on STAR and MCA scores.

# **WORLD LANGUAGE**

## **Introduction to Spanish**

**Required:** Gr. 7 & 8, 1 period, every other day for 1 quarter

This is an introductory course in Spanish language and culture. Areas of learning include: beginning reading, speaking, understanding, and writing of Spanish. Emphasis is placed on learning oral skills. Students will learn about elements of Spanish and Mexican culture and traditions such as holidays, songs, and customs.

# **FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCE**

## **“A taste of FACS” - Grade 7**

**Required:** 1 period, every other day for 1 quarter

This is a teen skills class meant to introduce the foods, sewing and child development classes offered in the senior high FACS department. Students will learn some child management skills and developmental needs of children. Student will do some simple machine sewing. They will be introduced to some basic measuring information and will learn to prepare easy to make healthy foods appropriate to feed small children or themselves. They will make a meal at home for their families.

## **“A taste of FACS” - Grade 8**

**Required:** 1 period, every other day for 1 quarter

This is a teen skills class meant to introduce all the classes offered in the senior high FACS department. They will learn to prepare easy to make healthy foods appropriate to feed small children or themselves. During the class, they will observe a small child outside of the school day. They will reinforce their measuring math skills and learn some nutrition. The students will do some simple machine sewing, making a quilt patch which will be used in a quilt top to be donated to a charity of their collective choice. Other life skills they will learn include: SCANS (Secretary’s Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills) and social skills, along with a unit on economics education.

# **TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION**

## **Automation & Robotics 7**

**Required:** 1 period, every other day for 1 quarter

Students trace the history, development, and influence of automation and robotics. Students also learn about mechanical systems and energy transfer as they build and test different mechanisms. Students will design and build devices such as windmills and pull toys to learn about practical applications for mechanisms.

## **Automation and Robotics 8**

**Required:** 1 period, every other day for 1 quarter

Students learn about machine automation, and computer control systems. Students use the VEX Robotics® platform to design, build, and program real-world objects such as traffic lights, toll booths, and robotic arms.

# **MATHEMATICS**

## **Math 6**

6th grade Math reinforces basic mathematical concepts and introduces skills that are essential for all students. Students will receive instruction in and demonstrate the ability to perform basic mathematical functions and problem solving in the areas of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division of whole numbers, decimals, fractions, ratios, pre-algebra, and geometry. Students work extensively with fractions, decimals, mixed numbers, percentages and estimating. 6th graders will work collaboratively to apply these skills to real-world problems.

## Math Foundations - 7

**Offered:** quarters 3 & 4

This is an intervention class designed to give students more direct instruction related to grade level math standards. Students will not register this class, but will be placed in the class based on STAR scores, MCA scores and teacher recommendation.

## Mathematics 7

**Required:** 1 period every quarter

Students in Math 7 will develop and enrich their understanding of math as they study topics of integers, rational and real numbers, proportions, similarity and percent, and statistics and probability. In addition, the algebra topics of equations, inequalities and linear functions will be developed and explored.

## Enriched Math - 7

**Elective:** 1 period every quarter

**Prerequisite:** see below

Students in this class will be challenged as they prepare for a rigorous course of algebra in 8th grade. Pre-algebra concepts will be emphasized. Topics include integers, rational & real numbers, proportions, similarity and percent, geometry and measurement, statistics and probability, and linear equations and functions. Because the nature of the course is intensive, both parent and 6th grade teacher recommendations are needed.

### Enriched Math 7 Placement

**Criteria** - Students must meet 2 out of 3 criteria listed to qualify for Enriched math placement. (Teacher signature required)

- Received an 660 or higher on MCA III in grade 6
- Received a 870 or higher on STAR assessment
- Received A-/A in grade 6 math

## Mathematics 8

### Algebra I

**Elective:** 1 period every quarter

**Prerequisite:** Math 7

The Algebra 8 class initiates the learning of required Algebra topics, with the remaining concepts being developed in the 9th grade Algebra course. Main concepts involve generating, manipulating, and analyzing problems involving real numbers, algebraic expressions, linear functions, inequalities and coordinate and non-coordinate geometry. This class does not follow the rigor of a traditional Algebra class, but will meet the state standards for eighth grade Algebra.

## Enriched Algebra I

**Elective:** 1 period every quarter

**Prerequisite:** see below

The rigorous content of Advanced Algebra 8 will highly challenge students in order to prepare them for the enriched high school math sequence. Students must master problems involving real numbers, algebraic expressions, linear and nonlinear functions, inequalities, factoring, coordinate and non-coordinate geometry.

### Enriched Math 8 Placement

**Criteria** - Students must meet 2 out of 3 criteria listed to qualify for Enriched math placement. (Teacher signature required)

- Received an 760 or higher on MCA III in grade 6
- Received a 894 or higher on STAR assessment
- Received B- or better in grade 7 math

# **MUSIC EDUCATION**

## **General Music 6**

**Meets:** every day for 2 quarters

Sixth Grade General Music establishes the foundations of music literacy such as reading, writing, performing, and creating melodic and rhythmic concepts. Basic healthy singing and playing techniques are introduced as well. This class also strives to provide students with world music from a variety of places that will not only help them to mature as performers, but as citizens of a global culture.

## **Choir 7**

**Meets:** all year, every other day

Beginning Choral experience builds on theory and voice training from sixth grade classroom music. Choral students will learn to read standard music in both unison and parts in ranges appropriate for their changing voices. Seventh grade choir will usually feature two public performances. This is an opportunity for students to perform, to face an audience, and to feel good about what they have accomplished.

## **Choir 8**

**Meets:** all year, every other day

Eighth Grade Choir builds on the choral experience from 7th grade choir, moving to a mixed gender classroom. Eighth grade singers continue to explore a wider variety of choral literature. The eighth grade choir will usually present two public performances annually, and may participate in a festival. Ensembles and solos may also be part of the eighth grade choir experience. This is an opportunity build on the performance accomplishments established in seventh grade.

## **Band 6**

Band is a class students may choose to take. 6th grade band is the foundation of our band program. Students learn basic technique on their instruments and perform two concerts for the public. Skills learned in this class prepare students for 7th grade band.

## **Band Grade 7**

**Meets:** 1 period, all year, every other day

Seventh grade band meets every other day for 51 minutes. In addition, each student receives 6 individual or group lessons per quarter. These lessons are pull-out lessons during other classes. Students are graded on lessons, rhythm counting and playing exams of their band music. The seventh grade band performs two major concerts during the school year. Selected students and groups will perform for the spring recital concert and attend various festivals and honor bands throughout the year. 6th grade band is highly recommended as a prerequisite for this course.

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# **PHYSICAL EDUCATION / HEALTH**

## **Health 6**

The health curriculum is centered on providing information to enable students to have and maintain a positive outlook on themselves, their peers and future success. The health curriculum enhances student awareness in the areas of; stress management, displaying a positive self-image, drugs and alcohol awareness, peer pressure, nutrition, interpersonal communication skills, and shares strategies in dealing with death, dying and suicide. Health also capitalizes on current health information in the world through a Scholastic Choices Magazine. In the spring, students are exposed to a short unit on sexual health and puberty.

## **Health 7/Project Alert**

**Required:** 22 days

This curriculum addresses adolescent learner outcomes in four areas: mental health (e.g., feelings, emotions & behaviors, positive self-concept, personalities and understanding others, communication skills, emotional stress, responsibilities-choices-consequences in decision-making, and suicide prevention); family and social concerns (e.g., change agents in family structure, and family influence on personality); and chemical health concerns (e.g., knowledge of the effects of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs, chemical use prevention, dependency, and treatment). The goal of Project Alert is to reduce the use of dangerous substances by keeping non-users from trying these substances and by discouraging experimenters from becoming regular users. Students will be studying a

unit on the disease, A.I.D.S. This is an abstinence-based unit dealing with the pathology of A.I.D.S., the modes of its transmission, and the skill of making healthy decisions. There will also be a unit on human sexuality. It too is an abstinence-based program promoting the values of equality, self-control, promise-keeping, responsibility, respect, honesty, and social justice, as they relate to human sexuality.

## **Health 8**

**Required:** 22 days

The curriculum addresses learner outcomes in the areas of: sexual health outcomes (e.g., abstinence as the best choice, refusal skills, sexually transmitted diseases, and A.I.D.S.); safety health outcomes (e.g., safety hazards, daily practices, basic first aid and CPR); and physical health outcomes (e.g., body systems, disease prevention, and communicable diseases). Students will also study a unit on human sexuality. The unit will cover the male and female reproductive systems, conception, and prenatal development and childbirth including genetic diseases.

## **Physical Education 6**

**Meets:** every day for 3 quarters

The physical education curriculum is designed to meet the individual needs of all students. It will include skill development and lead-up games to develop students who have the knowledge, skills and confidence to enjoy a lifetime of physical activity. Participation will provide opportunities for personal enjoyment, challenge, self expression and social interactions. We stress positive decision making about fitness contributes to a healthy lifestyle. At the end of the program the students will have an awareness of physical fitness (cardiovascular endurance, muscular endurance, muscular strength and flexibility) in accordance with his/her capabilities as evidenced by his/her participation in team sports, individual sports, lifetime activities and rhythm activities.

## **Physical Education 7 - 8**

**Required:** Grade 7 is 1 period, quarters 1, 2, 4

Grade 8 is 1 period, quarters 1, 3, 4

Our emphasis in physical education is on learning fundamental skills necessary for participating in a variety of sports, games, and lifetime fitness activities. Our purpose is to promote health related activities. We stress throwing, jumping, running, striking, catching, and kicking. The basic rules for playing and understanding various games are also an integral part of the program as a lead-up to greater involvement in later years of school. An additional part of our program is a regular exercise series; most of it is intended to aid the student's gain in strength, flexibility, endurance, and agility. Students will also participate in a variety of recreational games and the Presidential Physical Fitness Program .

# **SCIENCE**

## **Science 6**

**Required:** 1 period every quarter

Students will study a variety of units in the area of physical science. Students will learn about the history and nature of science along with utilizing and understanding the scientific processes. Units of study include matter and its properties, composition, structure, and interactions; forces and motion, friction, gravity, laws of motion; energy forms, transformations, kinetic & potential energy; thermal changes, sound and light waves, engineering designs, and the introduction to atoms, elements, and the periodic table.

## **Science 7**

**Required:** 1 period every quarter

Students are introduced to history and nature of science through the use of technology. Scientific measurement and tools utilized by scientists are emphasized. Students will follow the steps scientific method in a scientific inquiry. Cells are studied with an emphasis on respiration and photosynthesis. Microscopes are used to study unicellular and multicellular organisms. Students will learn how organisms are classified. Heredity is learned with a focus on dominant and recessive traits. Themes of probability, chromosomes, DNA, and inheritance patterns in humans are discussed. Diversity of organisms is examined along with organisms interaction, behavioral responses, and adaptations. Students will identify factors relating to the transfer of energy in our ecosystems including predator/prey, parasite /host, and producer/consumer characteristics. A look at the diversity of species will extend to biological populations over time - how humans have impacted the extinction of animals, our natural resources, and changes in our environment. Students are introduced to the identification and function of human body systems.

## **Science 8**

**Required:** 1 period every quarter

Students will continue to learn about history and nature of science. Students will review steps of scientific method in scientific inquiry. We study theory of plate tectonics and how it is correlated to the effects of earthquakes and volcanoes. The fact the earth's surface is constantly changing will be emphasized through weathering, erosion and deposition. Students will learn about rock cycle and many minerals that make up these rocks. Students will use information learned about the atmosphere to make predictions about weather events and climatic changes.

# **SOCIAL STUDIES**

## **Social Studies 6**

Students will focus on Minnesota as their central theme throughout the year. They will learn about Minnesota's earliest inhabitants, American Indians, Euro-American settlements, immigration and the resulting conflict of these cultures. Students will study Minnesota's early industries and growth of cities. Included is a look at contemporary Minnesota and its role in the United States as well as globally. This will include a study of our state's geography and our government so students can develop a more in-depth knowledge base about our state.

## **US Studies 7**

**Required:** 1 period every quarter

US Studies features history as the lead discipline with a strong secondary emphasis on citizenship and government. The interdisciplinary "Studies" approach is further enhanced with important economics and geography content that round out the study of United States history. Students learn about people, issues and events of significance to this nation's history from 1800 to the current era of globalization. They examine the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, and Supreme Court decisions for their lasting impact on American people, economy and governance structure. Students study civics and economic principles in depth, drawing connections between these disciplines and history to explain the impact of various policies on how people lived, worked and functioned in society. They create and use detailed maps of places in the United States and conduct historical inquiry on a topic in the nation's history.

## **Global Studies 8**

**Required:** 1 period every quarter

Global Studies focuses on seven geographic regions of the world. Physical, economic and cultural aspects will be explored in each region. Recent history in each of the areas will also be explored in relation to each geographic region.