

# ***BADGER RIDGE MIDDLE SCHOOL***



**COURSE HANDBOOK**

**SIXTH GRADE**

**2024-2025**

Dear Parents and Students:

This handbook has been developed to provide information for parents, guardians, and students about the courses and curriculum at Badger Ridge Middle School.

The curriculum features a strong skills development program, experiences of an exploratory nature, and extensive use of inquiry and discovery. It is our aim that every student is put on a path to be “college and career ready in order to thrive in a global, diverse society.”

The middle school creates a learning environment that provides stability, promotes self-confidence and is sensitive to the needs of each child. Within this environment, we strive to provide an education that allows the student to be exposed to a wide variety of positive educational experiences.

Badger Ridge houses the Two-Way Immersion (TWI) program in sixth, seventh, and eighth grades. Students in TWI are a part of the house concept, and will learn social studies and science in Spanish with integrated Spanish Language Arts. Additionally, school staff is working to provide more personalized experiences for students to access, engage in, and express knowledge, understanding, and application of expected learning.

We hope you will find the handbook to be a practical guide as you examine the required and elective course offerings.

If you do have any questions relating to our courses, please call Badger Ridge Middle School at 845-4400.

Sincerely,

Larry Love, Principal  
Shayla Glass-Thompson, Associate Principal  
Paula Arango Tavera, Associate Principal

# **SIXTH GRADE**

## **Required Classes:**

English/ Language Arts

Math

Science (TWI in Spanish)

Social Studies (TWI in Spanish)

Physical Education/WIN

Exploratory classes:

- Art
  - Family and Consumer Science (FCS)
  - Youth Empowerment, Justice & Joy
  - Information and Technology Literacy
- \*Principles of Literacy Reading Class: By Invite only for students who meet set criteria.

## **Music – Must Choose One Class**

Band

Orchestra

Choir

## **COURSE DESCRIPTIONS – SIXTH GRADE**

### **REQUIRED CLASSES**

#### **English Language Arts**

The English Language Arts classroom is taught with an emphasis on writing and reading skills. Our units of study in writing include narrative, informational, and argumentative pieces. The instruction and practice of the writing process and the mechanics of writing are infused throughout each of these units. Our reading units are structured around independent choice reading, book clubs and/or whole class reads that aim to include a diverse collection of texts and genres.-Student choice, small group discussions, and speaking and listening skills are integral components of our English Language Arts classrooms. The Verona Area School District is in the process of adopting a new literacy curriculum. Course descriptions for the 2024-2025 school year will be updated upon completion of the renewal process.

## **Math**

The 6th grade math curriculum, Illustrative Mathematics, is built off of the Common Core Mathematics Standards. Topics at the sixth grade level include real world problem solving, ratio and proportional relationships, whole number computation and estimation, number theory, decimals, fractions, percents, data analysis, graphing, and geometry. Students are expected to practice and demonstrate the standards for mathematical practice.

## **Earth and Space Science and TWI Earth and Space Science**

The 6th grade science curriculum focuses on concepts related to astronomy, Earth's history, geology, weather, climate, natural hazards, human impacts, and engineering and design. The curriculum for this course is taught in alignment with the Wisconsin Standards for Science along with the Next Generation Science Standards. Skills emphasized include safely using laboratory equipment to perform both group and individual experimental inquiries, designing quality experiments, collecting and analyzing data, and communicating results with evidence and reasoning. Strategies to read, comprehend and analyze informational science text from a variety of sources are also incorporated throughout the school year. Standards addressed are: space systems and patterns; earth history and geology processes, cycles and time scales; weather and climate; engineering and experimental design; human impacts on the world; and reading, comprehending and analyzing informational text. Students in Two-Way Immersion will learn similar concepts with the content delivered in Spanish and integrated Spanish literacy.

## **Social Studies and TWI Social Studies**

The 6th grade social studies curriculum reviews map and globe skills, as well as the geography; history, and cultures of the Western Hemisphere. Sixth graders delve into the process of inquiry while exploring social studies strands within Canada and Latin American countries. The course is taught based on the Wisconsin State Social Studies Standards and utilizes a variety of technology and resources on student iPads, including curriculum from Newsela. Students in Two-Way Immersion will learn similar concepts with the content delivered in Spanish and integrated Spanish Literacy. The Verona Area School District is in the process of adopting a new Social Studies curriculum. Course descriptions for the 2024-2025 school year will be updated upon completion of the renewal process.

## **Physical Education**

The main emphasis of the middle school physical education program is developing healthy bodies and minds. Cardiovascular fitness and the development of lifelong fitness skills are a main focus at all grade levels. Instructors strive to boost student self-image through positive reinforcement.

Activities include: Cardiovascular health, fitness testing, team sports, dance, track and field, racquet sports, cooperative games, individual sports, and adventure education.

## **WIN- What I Need**

Students will use this time to build skills they need to develop based on their academic data. Interventions will be offered and students may be invited to participate to increase academic skills and/or social emotional skills. Other options may include enrichment opportunities to extend their learning.

## EXPLORATORY CLASSES

Each sixth grader takes Art, Family and Consumer Science, Youth, Empowerment, Justice & Joy; and Information and Technology Literacy for a nine-week period. **The exception is students who are taking Mandarin, who will decide if they want to take a music class or the exploratory classes.** A brief description of each class is listed below.

### Art

The art course in sixth grade focuses on the understanding of art through hands-on learning experiences. This course is designed to allow the student to be an artist and promotes creativity and originality. This course offers a balance of directed instruction, with an emphasis on the elements and principles of design along with offering student choice. In addition, students are encouraged to bridge an understanding of art in cultures through their own personal art experiences. Students develop a portfolio of their work and begin learning vocabulary to help reflect on their artistic process.

### Youth Empowerment, Justice & Joy

Students will be empowered to advocate for themselves and others through the study of identity, culture, and relationships in order to promote justice and fairness for all groups. Students will engage with multiple perspectives through critical literacy and discussion to develop actionable ways to improve our society.

### Family and Consumer Science (FCS)

Students explore a number of areas related to the family and the individual. These areas are Sewing, Nutrition, Laundry, Human Growth & Development, Personal Financial Literacy and Bullying Prevention. The goal of the class is to promote independent living skills and attitudes as they become a young adult.

### Advanced Mandarin 6

This course is for students who, having successfully developed basic language skills, are ready to increase proficiency in listening comprehension and in the speaking, reading and writing skills of Mandarin Chinese. Readings focus on the goal of developing vocabulary and fluency. Written and oral precision will be emphasized. Instruction includes cultural content. Prerequisites include participation in the Verona Area International School, or a similar Mandarin immersion program from another school district. This is a daily, year-long class offered during elective time.

### TECH 2.0 (Information Technology)

Tech 2.0-provides students with an introduction to the Design Process, Computer Science, 3d-Design, and Robotics. While exploring a variety of technology tools, students will work on the following goals throughout the course: Creativity and Innovation, Communication and Collaboration, Research and Fluency, Critical Thinking, Digital Citizenship, and Technology Concepts.

### POL Reading: By Invite Only:

Principles of Literacy (POL) is a one-quarter reading intervention class for students who meet set criteria indicating the need for additional decoding, vocabulary, comprehension and fluency practice. Students who receive an invitation have the option to enroll in POL which will take place during the exploratory cycle of classes.

## MUSIC EDUCATION

**Sixth grade students will enroll in one of the following music classes: Band, Orchestra, or Choir: The exception is students who are taking Mandarin, who will decide if they want to take a music class or the exploratory classes.**

### Band

Sixth grade band is a daily academic class for beginning wind and bells players. Students choose to play flute, clarinet, alto saxophone, trumpet, french horn, trombone, euphonium, tuba, or bells. Through listening to and performing music from many styles and genres, students will learn performance skills on their instrument, but will also grow as critical thinkers, expert noticers, and overall well-rounded learners. Throughout the school year, students will perform, create, connect, and respond to music, while growing their technical skills and increasing their music literacy. Students will demonstrate their learning at three to four evening performances each year. No prior experience is required to participate in sixth grade band.

### **Orchestra**

Sixth grade orchestra is a daily academic class for beginning string players. Students choose to play violin, viola, cello, or string bass. Through listening to and performing music from many styles and genres, students will learn performance skills on their instrument, but will also grow as critical thinkers, expert noticers, and overall well-rounded learners. Throughout the school year, students will perform, create, connect, and respond to music, while growing their technical skills and increasing their music literacy. Students will demonstrate their learning at three to four evening performances each year. No prior experience is required to participate in sixth grade orchestra.

### **Choir**

Sixth grade choir is a daily academic class for beginning singers. Singers learn the use of their vocal instrument through correct posture, breathing, and exercises in tone production and movement. Through listening to and performing music from many styles and genres, students will learn performance skills on their vocal instrument, but will also grow as critical thinkers, expert noticers, and overall well-rounded learners. Throughout the school year, students will perform, create, connect, and respond to music, while growing their technical skills and increasing their music literacy. Students will demonstrate their learning at three to four evening performances each year. No prior experience is required to participate in sixth grade Choir.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES**

The middle school offers programs that meet the needs of all of our students. Special education services address the individual needs of any student who meets state eligibility criteria for special education. Our special education program follows a cross-categorical service delivery model which includes planning with regular education teachers. This model provides specially designed services for students with learning, speech, behavioral, physical, health, hearing, visual, developmental and/or intellectual disabilities. Each student identified as having special education needs has an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) as determined by an IEP team. Students may receive services on an individual basis, in small groups, and/or in the classroom. These services address a diverse range of needs including: remedial, functional, pre-vocational, social-emotional, cognitive, and/or adaptive.

## **RESOURCE AREAS**

We believe strongly in providing additional resources beyond the classroom materials to facilitate the learning of our students. The Library Media Center ( LMC), which includes our library staff and technology staff, is a functional and integral part of instruction, and is used on a regular basis by all students. Additional resource areas are available for small group instruction, collaborative projects, and homework assistance.

## **STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES**

### **School Counselors**

The counseling program is designed to help develop academic success, emotional awareness, social development, and career exploration as students grow and develop throughout middle school. Counselors address these issues in classrooms, small groups, individual meetings, and parent conferences. The School Counselors at BRMS work closely with the Student Services team to collaborate with staff and parents to create a safe and respectful learning environment where students can maximize personal and academic growth. They work to support

students to set informed career goals, acquire healthy emotional health, and realize their full potential to discover their gifts and thrive in the world community.

### **School Social Worker**

The primary function of the school social worker is to promote the emotional, social and mental well being and adjustment of students. The school social worker provides direct and indirect services to students, parents and school staff. Services may include counseling and family intervention, groups, consultation with staff or parents, liaison with community agencies, classroom instruction, and coordination and implementation of district programs. The school social worker role includes advocacy for children and families in the school system and community programs.

### **School Psychologist**

The school psychologist at the middle school is an integral team member in helping to determine the educational needs of students who are experiencing difficulty finding success at school. The psychologist conducts formal evaluations of students to determine placement in special education programs and informal evaluations of students to determine learning and/or behavioral difficulties. Other services provided by the school psychologist include teacher consultation, parent consultation, individual counseling sessions with students, and small groups focused on social/emotional/academic development.

### **PBIS Coach/Dean of Students**

The PBIS Coach/Dean of Students role at the middle school level provides leadership, assistance, support, and training for students, teachers, and the school level PBIS team to build and sustain the PBIS framework to meet the social emotional needs of all students. This role also serves to coordinate school level professional development in all three tiers of PBIS as well as the positive behavioral approaches such as functional behavioral analysis, Restorative Practices, and other evidence based methods. The PBIS internal coach also serves as a behavioral consultant on individual student cases and provides coaching to individual classroom teachers at the school level.

### **Restorative Practices and Student Engagement Specialist**

The Restorative Practices and Student Engagement Specialist role is a resource for all BRMS students, staff, and families in support of problem solving and resolving conflicts. This specialist leads school wide implementation of restorative practices, supports student-student, student-staff, and family-school conflict resolution through restorative conversations and/or restorative circles. The person in this role also works closely with the school administration and the student services team to provide support and implement social-emotional learning strategies. Finally, this specialist supports classroom management, small groups, behavior interventions, and other ways to make student connections. This role is predicated on building relationships with all students and staff.

### **Curriculum and Learning Specialist**

It is the philosophy of the Verona Area School District that, given time and resources, every child can learn. The purpose of Curriculum and Learning Specialist is to ensure that students receive instruction based on their individual learning styles, needs, strengths, and weaknesses. Some of the tasks associated with this position include, but are not limited to:

- Collecting and disseminating information about programmatic needs of students
- Consulting with teams to develop strategies to meet individual student needs
- Facilitating the administration and scheduling of required state and local standardized assessments
- Facilitating curriculum development, revision, and articulation
- Providing professional staff development

### **School Interventionist Support**

A resource to help support students who have traditionally struggled in the school setting--academically, socially, and/or emotionally. It services students in sixth, seventh and eighth grade with the greatest need. Staff provides additional support in classrooms, student check-ins, small group support, and finding opportunities to connect with students during the day.

### **Reading Support Services**

Badger Ridge Middle School is committed to enhancing the reading performance of all students. To address the varying needs of middle school readers, a variety of approaches are used within the regular and resource classrooms. Each student's progress in reading is monitored through formal and informal assessments and observations. Students are identified for reading support based on multiple measures including standardized assessments and fifth grade teacher recommendations. Our Reading Specialist collaborates, plans and co-teaches with teaching staff, and is an integral part of universal classroom and best practices in literacy instruction.

### **Programs for English Learners**

We welcome students from all cultures and backgrounds. In addition to learning science, math, social studies, language arts, and other academic content, English learners (ELs) must also become proficient in English (speaking, listening, reading, and writing). In order to meet students' needs and follow federal and state laws, Badger Ridge provides the following programs which allow EL students to learn grade level content and English.

### **ESL and Bilingual in-class support**

An English as a Second Language or Bilingual certified teacher works in collaboration with the classroom teacher in general education classes. The teacher works with students within the classroom, supporting individuals or small groups. Classroom teachers also implement accommodations and use teaching strategies suggested in each English learners Language Development Plan to facilitate learning.