

*BADGER RIDGE MIDDLE SCHOOL*



**COURSE HANDBOOK**

**SEVENTH GRADE**

**2024-2025**

Dear Parents and Students:

This handbook has been developed to provide information for parents 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

## **SEVENTH GRADE**

### **Required Classes**

Language Arts

Math

Science\* (TWI students in Spanish)

Social Studies\* (TWI students in Spanish)

Physical Education/WIN

### **Elective Courses:**

- Art
- Family and Consumer Science (FCS)
- Information and Technology Literacy
- World Language (semester-long): Mandarin, German or Spanish
- Year Long for VAIS program only: Advanced Mandarin 7
- Music (Year Long): Band, Choir, or Orchestra
  
- Principles of Literacy Reading Class: By Invite only for students who meet set criteria.

## **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.

### **Mathematics**

The 7th grade math curriculum, Illustrative Mathematics, is built off of the Common Core Math Standards. Topics at the 7th grade level include numeration, algebra, geometry, statistics and probability. Numeration topics include a particular focus on ratios, decimals, percents, proportions, and integers. Topics in algebra include order of operations, rates, functions, one and two step equations, and commutative and distributive properties. Geometry topics include three-dimensional figures, triangle and angle properties, corresponding angles and sides, scaling and similarity. Statistics topics include mean, median, mode and range, and extensive graphing. Probability topics include independent and dependent events,

combinations and permutations. Throughout the year students are encouraged to explore topics, develop a meaningful understanding of concepts, and hone the skills necessary to develop these more abstract concepts. All students are also expected to practice and demonstrate the standards for mathematical practice.

### **Science**

The 7th grade science curriculum focuses on life science topics including cell structure and function in single-celled and multicellular organisms, genetics, natural selection and adaptations, and interdependent relationships in ecosystems. 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: cell structure and function; structure and processes of single-celled and multicellular organisms; genetics, heredity and reproduction of organisms; natural selection, diversity and adaptations of organisms in a variety of ecosystems; engineering and experimental design; human impacts on the world; and reading, comprehending and analyzing informational text.

### **TWI Science**

Students enrolled in the District's Two-way Immersion program take Life Sciences in Spanish in seventh grade. Bilingual units of study include microbiomes, metabolism, traits and reproduction, populations and resources, matter and energy in ecosystems, natural selection, and evolutionary history. The curriculum and units of study were built to empower students to investigate, talk, read, write, think, and argue like real scientists and engineers through investigations of real-world problems and phenomena.

### **Social Studies and TWI Social Studies in Spanish**

In seventh-grade social studies, the primary focus is on the Eastern Hemisphere. Seventh graders delve into the process of inquiry, and civic engagement, as well as the discovery of cultures and geography. Students review geography skills while they learn about this region of the world.

The school year is divided into the following units of study: the development of early civilizations and cultural diversity of the continents in Africa, Asia, Europe, and Australia. As they study these continents, students will focus on modern-day cultures and current events around the world. 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 healthy 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: Soccer, fitness testing, team sports, individual sports, flag football, racquet sports, adventure education, creative dance, and cooperative games.

### **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.

### **ELECTIVE CLASSES**

Seventh-grade students are offered the following semester classes to choose from: Art, Exploring Plant Science, Exploring Agriculture, Spanish, German, Mandarin, Family and Consumer Science, and Information and Technology Literacy. A brief description of each class is listed below:

#### **Exploring Plant Science**

Discover the fascinating world of Plant Science! This course offers students an exciting chance to learn new skills surrounding plants. Through engaging hands-on labs, we'll explore the diverse plant life on our school grounds and in our greenhouse. Throughout the course, students can expect to cover a range of captivating topics, including plant parts and functions, the plant life cycle, plant reproduction, plant nutrition, and even tree identification. But that's not all – students will also have the opportunity to develop essential skills such as leadership, teamwork, data analysis, and organization as they collaborate with their classmates. Join us on this educational journey where curiosity meets hands-on exploration in the vibrant world of Plant Science!

#### **Exploring Agriculture**

In the Exploring Agriculture course, students will have the exciting chance to delve into the diverse field of agriculture. This class covers a wide range of important topics related to agriculture, providing a glimpse into some of the fascinating subjects offered at the high school level in the agriculture department. Throughout the course, students will explore small animal science, large animal science, food science, environmental science, agriculture careers, and FFA. This hands-on class will allow students to gain valuable insights into the world of agriculture. Moreover, participating in this course will not only expand students' knowledge but also help them develop essential skills. They will have the opportunity to enhance their leadership, collaboration, and organizational skills, preparing them for future academic and professional endeavors.

#### **Art 7**

Art 7 continues to promote an understanding of art through hands-on learning experiences. The students will experience a variety of 2D & 3D art mediums and techniques. The students learn to apply the Elements & Principles of Design in their art productions. They will also develop independent and creative thinking skills in order to solve visual problems. Students will explore the following: line & value drawing, patterns in design, clay coil hand-building, the potter's wheel, painting techniques, art history, multicultural art forms, and a study of the applied (design) arts.

## **Family and Consumer Science (FCS) 7**

FCS 7 continues to promote an understanding of FCS through hands-on learning experiences. This semester-long course builds upon the knowledge and skills practiced in 6th grade FCS. Students look more in-depth at the following topics: Nutrition, Food Preparation, Human Growth & Development, Bullying Prevention and Community Service (sewing). In addition, students will practice their decision-making skills and learn how to respond proactively to life situations, both as an individual and with others.

## **TECH 2.0 (Information Technology 7)**

Tech 2.0 (Information Technology 7) provides students with the opportunity to build on their understanding of the Design Process, Computer Science, 3D-Design, and Robotics. Students will explore in more depth a variety of technology tools while working on the following goals: Creativity and Innovation, Communication and Collaboration, Research and Fluency, Critical Thinking, Digital Citizenship, and Technology Concepts.

## **WORLD LANGUAGE 7**

Students may choose introductory Introduction to German, Introduction to Spanish or Introduction to Mandarin as a semester-long course.

### **Spanish**

In seventh-grade Spanish, students will learn Spanish vocabulary and concepts including weather, telling time, body parts, singular and plural nouns and articles, and simple present tense grammar. Students will learn about the culture in the Spanish-speaking countries. Students will develop Spanish skills through interactive lessons involving reading, writing, speaking and listening. In addition to targeting the four main areas of communication, lessons incorporate a variety of activities such as educational apps, videos, and interactive games.

### **German**

Seventh-grade German students begin developing skills in all four areas of language: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Topics include the numbers, days of the week, classroom vocabulary, family, and simple conversations. Students will also learn about the characteristics and cultures of the German-speaking countries. In addition to targeting the four main areas of communication, lessons incorporate a variety of activities such as educational apps, videos, and interactive games.

### **EXP Mandarin**

This course is designed for students who have an interest in learning about Chinese culture and developing basic language skills.

### **Advanced Mandarin 7**

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. Prerequisites include participation in the Verona Area International School, completion of Mandarin in 6th graders, or a similar Mandarin immersion program from another school district.

## **MUSIC**

**Seventh graders may enroll in the same performance music class (band, choir, or orchestra) that they took in sixth grade.**

### **Band**

Students who learned a band instrument in sixth grade should continue their learning in seventh-grade band. Seventh-grade band is an academic class that meets every day during the school year. Through listening to and performing music from many styles and genres, students will increase their 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 on their instrument and increasing their music literacy. Students will demonstrate their learning at three to four evening performances each year. Students who participated in Sixth grade band are HIGHLY encouraged to continue their musical learning in seventh-grade band..

### **Orchestra**

Students who learned a string instrument in sixth grade can continue their learning in seventh-grade orchestra. Seventh-grade orchestra is an academic class that meets every day during the school year. Through listening to and performing music from many styles and genres, students will increase their 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 on their instrument and increasing their music literacy. Students will demonstrate their learning at three to four evening performances each year. Students who participated in the sixth-grade orchestra are HIGHLY encouraged to continue their musical learning in 7th grade orchestra.

### **7th Grade Treble Choir**

Students who learned vocal music in sixth grade may continue their learning in seventh-grade choir. Seventh grade treble clef choir is an academic class that meets every day during the school year, for students who wish to perform literature arranged for two and three part female voices. Through listening to and performing music from many styles and genres, students will increase their 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 vocal skills and increasing their music literacy. Students will demonstrate their learning at three to four evening performances each year. Students who participated in 6th grade choir are HIGHLY encouraged to continue their musical learning in seventh- grade choir.

## **7th and 8th Cambiata Choir**

Students who learned vocal music in sixth grade may continue their learning in seventh-grade choir. Seventh grade bass clef choir is an academic class that meets every day during the school year, for students who wish to perform literature arranged for two and three part male voices. Through listening to and performing music from many styles and genres, students will increase their 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 vocal skills and increasing their music literacy. Students will demonstrate their learning at three to four evening performances each year. Students who participated in 6th grade choir are HIGHLY encouraged to continue their musical learning in 7th grade choir.

## **POL: Principles of Literacy**

(POL) is a one-semester 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 for a semester.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES**

The middle school offers programs that meet the needs of every student. 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. This model provides specially designed services for students with learning, speech, language, emotional, behavioral, physical, health, hearing, visual, developmental and/or cognitive 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.

## **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.