

DVUSD Middle Level Elective and Exploratory Course Guide 2024-2025

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DEER VALLEY
Unified School District





Cover Design by Ian Wegley

Mountain Ridge High School

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Deer Valley Unified School District is committed to providing middle school students with opportunities to explore and experience a variety of courses beyond the core curriculum to broaden their perspective. These courses allow students to develop skills such as cultural awareness, social responsibility, technology skills, communication skills, and real-world connections.

To ensure a guaranteed and viable curriculum for all middle level students throughout DVUSD, this guide was developed with the following standards:

- Exploratory and Elective course offerings will be aligned for 7th and 8th grade across district schools.
- Performing and Visual Arts will be offered.
- Physical Education will be offered.
- Career Education will be offered.

Courses outside of the core curriculum courses fall into two categories based on campus delivery:

Exploratory Class is a course that is assigned to a student to expose him/her to different learning opportunities. These classes are designed to inspire creativity and innovation in middle school students while honing their natural skills and talents.

Elective Class is a course selected by the student that allows opportunities to explore areas of interest outside the core curriculum.

Specific offerings at each individual school are determined and driven by the school's vision, mission, and premiere programs. Courses can be delivered for the duration of a quarter, semester, or full year. Level I courses are for 7th grade students and Level II courses are for 8th grade students. Courses without a level can be offered to a combination of 7th & 8th grade students and are repeatable courses. For more information about the specific courses each school offers, please contact the school counselor.

Anthem School

www.dvUSD.org/Anthem

Aspire, Deer Valley Online Academy

www.dvUSD.org/Aspire

Canyon Springs STEM Academy

www.dvUSD.org/CanyonSprings

Deer Valley Middle School

www.dvUSD.org/DVMS

Desert Mountain School

www.dvUSD.org/DesertMountain

Desert Sky Middle School

www.dvUSD.org/DesertSky

Diamond Canyon School

www.dvUSD.org/DiamondCanyon

Gavilan Peak School

www.dvUSD.org/GavilanPeak

Highland Lakes School

www.dvUSD.org/HighlandLakes

Hillcrest Middle School

www.dvUSD.org/Hillcrest

Inspiration Mountain School

www.dvUSD.org/inspirationmountain

Norterra Canyon School

www.dvUSD.org/NorterraCanyon

Paseo Hills School

www.dvUSD.org/PaseoHills

Sierra Verde STEAM Academy

www.dvUSD.org/SierraVerde

Sonoran Foothills School

www.dvUSD.org/SonoranFoothills

Stetson Hills School

www.dvUSD.org/StetsonHills

Sunset Ridge School

www.dvUSD.org/SunsetRidge

Terramar Academy of the Arts

www.dvUSD.org/Terramar

Traditional Academy at Bellair

www.dvUSD.org/Bellair

Union Park

www.dvUSD.org/UnionPark

Vista Peak School

www.dvUSD.org/VistaPeak

West Wing School

www.dvUSD.org/WestWing



CAREER EDUCATION

Career Action Lab I

Grade 7

This Career Action Lab allows for multiple career pathway topics. Students will engage with problem-based, real-world technology and explore their career field interests and aptitudes.

Career Action Lab II

Grade 8

This Career Action Lab allows students to explore additional career fields from a broad range of career clusters through technology-based modules.

Career Action Lab-Building Skills I

Grade 7

This Career Action Lab is a hands-on technology lab taught in a modular format with students rotating through each building trades unit. The course incorporates interactive media, project-based learning, and group collaboration as well as a career exploration component.

Career Action Lab-Building Skills II

Grade 8

This course allows students to learn new skills, analyze new material based on learned skills, and to problem solve, achieve, and create. Students will harness the power of interactive multimedia delivery to provide information that must be physically applied to resolve problems similar to those found in actual building and construction industry work environments.

Career Action Lab-Health Science I

Grade 7

This Career Action Lab is a hands-on technology lab taught in a modular format with students rotating through each health career unit. The course incorporates interactive media, project-based learning, and group collaboration as well as a career exploration component.

**Career Action Lab-Health Science II****Grade 8**

This course allows students to learn new skills, analyze new material based on learned skills, and to problem solve, achieve, and create. Students will harness the power of interactive multimedia delivery to provide information that must be physically applied to resolve problems similar to those found in actual medical, nursing, and health science work environments.

Career Action Lab-STEM I**Grade 7**

This Career Action Lab is a hands-on technology lab taught in a modular format with students rotating through each STEM careers unit. The course incorporates interactive media, project-based learning, and group collaboration as well as a career exploration component.

Career Action Lab-STEM II**Grade 8**

This course allows students to learn new skills, analyze new material based on learned skills, and to problem solve, achieve, and create. Students will harness the power of interactive multimedia delivery to provide information that must be physically applied to resolve problems similar to those found in actual technology, engineering, and science work environments.

Careers I**Grade 7**

Career Exploration introduces students to a variety of careers. This class offers a flexible learning environment using technology and classroom instruction to address careers and skills common to virtually all occupations. Career Exploration will focus on career options, education choices, and development of career plans. Students will engage in problem solving, critical thinking, and leadership building, and teamwork activities. Information technology foundational skills will be reinforced.

Careers II**Grade 8**

This course will allow students to further explore career options and education choices. Students will assess their personal interests, develop a career plan, and determine course selections for high school. Students will focus on communication, collaboration, critical thinking, leadership, and 21st century skills. Information technology foundational skills will be reinforced.

Computer Science

In this course, students will interact with computer science content and computational practice. Students will utilize digital and physical computing resources while learning computer science concepts including coding, fundamentals of hardware, basics of cybersecurity, and exploring the impacts of technology developments on life.

**Creative Publications**

In this project-based class, students will use technology and work collaboratively through the production process to develop creative products such as yearbook, newspaper, newsletter, video, website, flier, blog, or alternative format.

Personal Finance

This course provides students with opportunities to develop skills used in the adult world that are useful in life and careers. Students will learn basic principles of personal finance including how to create a budget, money management, saving plans, and investment strategies. Throughout the course students will strengthen their ability to make decisions, problem solve, set goals, and plan for personal success.

Project Math

Students will have the opportunity to apply math concepts to projects and activities including, but not limited to art, architecture, physics, chemistry, astronomy, music, children's literature, environmental concerns, forensic sciences, statistical analysis, climate change, water quality, projectile motion, consumer sciences, financial planning.

Project Science

Students will have the opportunity to apply science concepts to projects and activities including, but not limited to physics, chemistry, astronomy, environmental concerns, forensic sciences, statistical analysis, climate change, water quality, projectile motion, and consumer sciences.

Entrepreneurship

In this project-based course students participate in the dynamic process of identifying and planning for positive change in response to a local or global social problem. Students will develop leadership skills as they create a pitch and presentation on how their selected problems can be solved through innovation and action.

Gifted Investigations

Gifted Investigations incorporates a PBL/Genius Hour format to engage students in meaningful research and exploration of a topic based upon individual interest. Students apply the Autonomous Learner Model and Engineer Design Process to develop a timeline aligned to their topic of exploration, meeting regular checkpoint benchmarks throughout the course. Upon completion, students plan an Investigations Showcase to exhibit their learning with multimedia presentations or demonstrations as best suited to their research. This course will provide advanced content targeted to gifted middle school students.

**STEM I****Grade 7**

STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) provides students with opportunities to apply the design processes of invention and innovation. Students experience ways in which technological knowledge and processes contribute to effective designs, abilities, and skills. Brainstorming, visualizing, modeling, constructing, testing, and refining designs provide firsthand opportunities for students to understand the uses and impacts of innovations

STEM II**Grade 8**

This course allows students to continue the development of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) skills in an integrated approach. Students will apply problem solving, collaboration, research, exploration, inquiry, evaluation, and engineering design to address real world problems.

Technology I IB**Grade 7**

As part of the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme (MYP), the Technology course challenges students to use the design cycle to structure inquiry and analysis of problems, develop feasible solutions, create solutions, and test and evaluate their solution design problems. Students will engage with technology and digital resources to design solutions.

Technology II IB**Grade 8**

This course is part of the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme (MYP) and a continuation of the Technology I IB course. Students will apply practical and creative thinking to solve design problems, explore the role of design in both historical and contemporary context, and engage with technology and digital resources to design solutions.

MYP Design IB**Grades 6, 7, 8**

As part of the Middle Years Programme (MYP), this course specifically prepares students for the study of computer science, design technology, and information technology in a global society. Students will be challenged to apply practical and creative thinking skills to solve design problems, explore the role of design in both historical and contemporary contexts, and to consider their responsibilities when making design decisions and taking action.



HUMANITIES

Art History

Students will investigate various periods of art throughout history and gain an understanding of major styles, artwork and artists of each era.

Performance and Literary Works

This course explores the fundamentals of dramatic literary works. Students will read plays and perform theatrical project-based assignments that provide the foundations of performing literary works ranging from acting, script writing and analysis, setting, and production.

Geography

This course provides opportunities to inspire and reward students' curiosity about the world using critical inquiry and hands-on research and exploration. Students will go deeper in the Arizona History & Social Science standards content area of Geography for 7/8 combined and participate in a school level Geography Bee as part of their end product portfolio.

Gifted Humanities Seminar

In this project-based course, students will apply an interdisciplinary approach as they explore significant themes (people, conflicts and cooperation, social movements and change, scientific and literary innovations, etc.) that have shaped societies and cultures throughout history. Students will explore the past by examining various perspectives that cultivate critical thinking skills, empathy, and holistic understanding of how history continues to influence the world today. Upon completion, students will present their research findings. This course will provide advanced content targeted to gifted middle school students.

Literature Studies

This course provides students with the opportunity to read, discuss, compare, and analyze high quality literature. Various genres and literature selections will be provided.

Music History

This course will explore current and past musical genres. Students will gain a deeper understanding of the evolution of music. Music will be analyzed to provide a better understanding of history and culture.

Public Speaking

This course provides students the opportunity to organize and prepare speeches and to gain confidence and experience while speaking in front of small and large groups.

Seminar

In this project-based course students will use critical inquiry, information literacy skills, and technology to explore human achievements within civilizations of the past and present

**World Cultures**

Students will explore the world around them examining history, art, culture, and the sciences through inquiry and analysis. Students will go deeper in the Arizona History & Social Science standards content area of History either for 7th grade or 8th grade. Students will create a portfolio or end project of their course.

Writing Workshop

The goal of this course is to develop and execute writing skills that are relevant and applicable to students while strengthening students' overall writing abilities. Students will learn the writing process while studying narrative, informative/argumentative, and research genres.

PERFORMING AND VISUAL ARTS**Art I****Grade 7**

This course will introduce students to the Elements of Art and Principles of Design through application and analysis. Students will be exposed to various skills, techniques, media, styles, and artists.

Art II**Grade 8**

This course will expand upon the Elements of Art and the Principles of Design and the skills, techniques, media, styles, and artists learned in Art I as students begin learning how to represent themselves, the world around them, and current affairs as young artists.

Art I IB**Grade 7**

As part of the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme (MYP), this course will provide students with opportunities to create and present art to communicate their feelings and ideas through a variety of media. Students will learn about different cultures and art forms. They will explore why artists create and why art is important to humans.

Art II IB**Grade 8**

This course is part of the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme (MYP) and a continuation of the Art I IB course. In the course, students will further develop their skills and techniques to express themselves. Students will create artwork using a variety of media, collaborate with peers, reflect upon and refine their work, and examine the role of art in life and the world.

**Band I****Duration: Yearlong****Grade 7****Prerequisite: Teacher Recommendation/Audition**

Intermediate Level Band Class focused on developing musicianship acquired at the 6 Grade level. Students will use more articulations, perform scales and music in multiple key signatures at an intermediate difficulty level (ABODA and VA Grades 1.5-2.5). Ensemble skills will become more developed and focus on preparing students for 8 Grade Band. Students will describe concepts common to music and other disciplines, and will be involved in discussing various cultures, styles, composers, and historical periods. Outside of school performances and concert dress code may be required. Class may be separated by Woodwind, Brass and Percussion if the class is over 50 students for one grade or may be combined with Band II if the combined classes are under 50 students.

Band II**Duration: Yearlong****Grade 8****Prerequisite: Teacher Recommendation/Audition**

Intermediate Level Band Class Developing musicianship acquired at the 7 Grade level. Students will use more articulations, perform scales in all 12 keys and music in multiple key signatures and at a higher difficulty level (ABODA and VA Grades 2-4) Ensemble skills will become more developed and focus on preparing students for High School Band Class. Students will describe concepts common to music and other disciplines, and will be involved in discussing various cultures, styles, composers, and historical periods. District Band Assessment Festival is required for this class. Outside of school performances and concert dress code may be required. Class may be separated by Woodwind, Brass and Percussion if the class is over 50 students for one grade or may be combined with Band I if the combined classes are under 50 students.

Band I IB**Duration: Yearlong****Grade 7****Prerequisite: Teacher Recommendation/Audition**

As part of the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme (MYP), this course will provide students with opportunities to develop skills in playing an instrument and performing for an audience. Students will learn about music from different cultures. They will explore why musicians create and why music is important to humans.

Band I IB**Duration: Yearlong****Grade 8****Prerequisite: Teacher Recommendation/Audition**

This course is part of the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme (MYP) and a continuation of the Band I IB course. In the course, students will further develop instrumental skills and techniques to express themselves musically. Students will perform music in a variety of genres, collaborate with peers, reflect upon and refine their work, and examine the role of music in life and the world.

Ceramics

This course is a comprehensive introduction to the craft of clay working. The primary emphasis is on studio work leading to a portfolio of finished pieces. In addition to demonstrating technique, students will examine historic and contemporary examples of fine ceramic art.



Chorus I
Grade 7

Duration: Yearlong

Prerequisite: Teacher Recommendation/Audition

Yearlong Intermediate Level Choir Class Developing musicianship continuing on fundamental skills acquired at the 6th Grade level. Students will focus on Tone Quality, Intonation, Rhythm, Balance & Blend, Technique, Interpretation, Diction and Vocal Performance factors. Ensemble skills will become more developed and focus on preparing students for 8 Grade Choir. Students will describe concepts common to music and other disciplines, and will be involved in discussing various cultures, styles, composers, and historical periods. District Band Assessment Festival is required for this class if combined with Choir II. Outside of school performances and concert dress code may be required. Class may be separated by Male, Female, and changing voices. Course may be combined with Choir II. Course is heavily encouraged to split into two classes if capacity exceeds 50 enrolled students.

Chorus II
Grade 8

Duration: Yearlong

Prerequisite: Teacher Recommendation/Audition

Yearlong Intermediate Level Choir Class Developing musicianship continuing on fundamental skills acquired at the 7th Grade level. Students will focus on Tone Quality, Intonation, Rhythm, Balance & Blend, Technique, Interpretation, Diction and Vocal Performance factors. Ensemble skills will become more developed and focus on preparing students for High School Choir Class. Students will describe concepts common to music and other disciplines, and will be involved in discussing various cultures, styles, composers, and historical periods. District Choir Assessment Festival is required for this class. Outside of school performances and concert dress code may be required. Class may be separated by Male, Female, and changing voices. Course may be combined with Choir I. Course is heavily encouraged to split into two classes if capacity exceeds 50 enrolled students.

Chorus I IB
Grade 7

Duration: Yearlong

Prerequisite: Teacher Recommendation/Audition

As part of the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme (MYP), this course will provide students with opportunities to develop skills in vocal music and performing for an audience. Students will learn about singing and music from different cultures. They will explore why vocalists create and why music is important to humans.

Chorus II IB
Grade 8

Duration: Yearlong

Prerequisite: Teacher Recommendation/Audition

This course is part of the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme (MYP) and a continuation of the Chorus I IB course. In the course, students will further develop vocal music skills and techniques to express themselves. Students will perform vocal music from a variety of genres, collaborate with peers, reflect upon and refine their work, and examine the role of vocal music in life and the world.

**General Music I / General Music II****Grade 7 / Grade 8**

This course will allow students to continue to develop performing skills and content knowledge. In addition to performance, student outcomes will include knowledge of music structure, elements, historical style, and notation. Students will have opportunities to improvise and compose rhythms and melodies, perform on instruments, and sing music.

General Music I IB**Grade 7**

As part of the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme (MYP), this course will provide students with opportunities to acquire skills in performing music and develop content knowledge of music structure, elements, and history. Students will explore diverse music cultures from throughout the world. They will examine why humans create music and reflect upon the significance of music as a part of life.

General Music II IB**Grade 8**

This course is part of the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme (MYP) and a continuation of the General Music I IB course. In the course, students will further develop musical performance skills and techniques to express themselves. Students will study and perform music from a variety of genres, collaborate with peers, reflect upon and refine their work, and examine the role of music in life and the world.

Guitar I / Guitar II**Grade 7 / Grade 8**

This course includes instrumental music instruction, training and performance with a focus on guitar.

Jazz Band

This course extends instrumental music instruction, training and performance focusing on Jazz.

Orchestra I/Orchestra II**Grade 7/8****Duration: Yearlong****Prerequisite: Teacher Recommendation/Audition**

This course extends instrumental music instruction, training and performance focusing on orchestral music.



PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND HEALTH

Health I

Grade 7

This course will provide students with the skills and knowledge to make positive health decisions. The topics of tobacco, nutrition, and skin cancer prevention/sun protection education will be included in the program. Students in grade seven will generate and choose positive alternatives to risky behaviors. The students will learn skills to resist peer pressure and manage stress and anxiety. Students are able to relate health choices to alertness, feelings, and performance at school or during physical activity. Students exhibit a healthy lifestyle, interpret health information, and promote good health.

Health II

Grade 8

This class will provide students with the skills and knowledge to make positive health decisions. Students in grade eight will gain an understanding of the origins and causes of diseases, including the relationship between family history and certain health risks. The students will begin to relate short and long-term consequences of health choices and apply health skills to specific personal, family, and community health concerns. Students can discern relationships among all components of health and wellness and knowledgeably use consumer information.

Fitness and Conditioning I / II

Grade 7 / Grade 8

Students set personal fitness goals and work towards attaining those goals through individual and team activities.

Physical Education I / Physical Education II

Grade 7 / Grade 8

This course develops the whole individual; physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially. As the students progress, they encounter concepts and information across a spectrum of fitness and sports-related activities. They are challenged to not only internalize this knowledge, but to competently apply it, using effective communication modes and through performance of various strategies, tactics, skills and techniques. Health concepts will be embedded within the course.

Physical Education I IB

Grade 7

For 7th Grade - As part of the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme (MYP), this course will provide students with opportunities to experience physical activity and acquire knowledge about healthy choices and practices. Students will explore a variety of physical and health education activities including team sports, individual sports, international sports and activities, and examination of fitness and nutrition components.



Physical Education II IB

Grade 8

For 8th Grade - As part of the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme (MYP), this course will provide students with opportunities to experience physical activity and acquire knowledge about healthy choices and practices. Students will explore a variety of physical and health education activities including team sports, individual sports, international sports and activities, and examination of fitness and nutrition components.

WORLD LANGUAGES

World Language Introduction

This is an introduction to studying a world language. Students will learn basic vocabulary and language, focusing on oral communication and culture. This course may be taught in any language including Spanish, French, or Mandarin.

MYP World Language IB

The study of additional languages is a compulsory component of the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme (MYP). Students will develop language proficiency in a world language focusing on communication and cultural competencies. This course may be taught in any language including Spanish, French, or Mandarin.

Mandarin I

Grade 7

This immersion-based course is specifically designed for 7th grade students who have completed an elementary Mandarin Immersion Program. Students will expand their proficiency in Mandarin with a focus on communication and cultural competencies. Students who receive an A or B average in this course will receive high school credit for Mandarin Immersion 1-2 H. *Schools must seek approval from the CIA Department before offering this course.*

Mandarin II

Grade 8

This immersion-based course is specifically designed for 8th grade students who have completed an elementary Mandarin Immersion Program. Students will expand their proficiency in Mandarin with a focus on communication and cultural competencies. Students who receive an A or B average in this course will receive high school credit for Mandarin Immersion 3-4 H. *Schools must seek approval from the CIA Department before offering this course.*

Mandarin Immersion I-2 (GP, HMS) (High School Credit)

This immersion-based course is specifically designed for students who have completed an elementary Mandarin Immersion Program. Students will expand their proficiency in Mandarin with a focus on communication and cultural competencies. Students who receive an A or B average will receive high school credit for this course.

**Mandarin Immersion 3-4 (GP, HMS) (High School Credit)**

This immersion-based course is specifically designed for students who have completed an elementary Mandarin Immersion Program. Students will continue to expand their proficiency in Mandarin with a focus on communication and cultural competencies. Students must receive an A or B in order to receive high school credit for this course.

Mandarin 1-2 H (High School Credit)

This course is an introduction to the Mandarin Chinese language and culture. Students learn vocabulary and basic language structures through conversation and written expression. *Schools must seek approval from the CIA Department before offering this course.*

Spanish 1-2 (High School Credit)

This course is an introduction to the Spanish language and culture. Students learn vocabulary and basic language structures through conversation and written expression. *Schools must seek approval from the CIA Department before offering this course.*

Spanish 3-4 H (High School Credit)

As part of the Renaissance Program, this advanced level course emphasizes the language and culture utilizing techniques from the AP curriculum. Students will engage in rigorous academic activities involving conversation and written expression as preparation for the Spanish 5-6 Honors, as well as the AP Spanish program in the 10th through 12th grades. This class requires summer reading. *Schools must seek approval from the CIA Department before offering this course.*

NON DEPARTMENTAL COURSES**AVID**

AVID stands for Advancement Via Individual Determination. AVID students are provided with a rigorous college preparation curriculum and given support in organizational habits, notetaking and study skills, time management, and goal setting. *Schools must seek approval from the CIA Department before offering this course.*

Leadership

This course will expose students to the habits, practices, and mindset of effective leaders. Through project-based learning, students will develop teamwork and communication skills. Students in this course may serve on the school's student council.

Teaching Assistant

Students work under the supervision of a teacher, counselor, or clerical staff member to assist with tasks related to the efficient functioning of the classroom or school. This is a Pass/Fail course.

**Transition**

Transition is assigned to students who take courses on the high school campus to allow for travel. This is a non-graded course.

SUPPORT - ACADEMIC**Academic Academy**

Academic Academy is a graded course that provides students with academic intervention based on specific needs identified by screening or benchmark assessments. Enrollment in Academic Academy is flexible, allowing students to move in and out of the course and returning to exploratory coursework based on analysis of individual student achievement and growth.

Differentiated Student Support

Differentiated Student Support courses provide differentiated instruction based on student need. Differentiated support may include intervention for students based on needs identified in benchmark assessments or enrichment opportunities for students working on or above level. Differentiated Student Support is a Pass/Fail course.

Learning Center Supplemental

This course is designed to meet the needs of students as determined by their IEP. Services provided during the learning center supplemental course should address the student's IEP goals and may include support in the following areas: reading, writing or math skills remediation, social skills, self-help, self-management, and social awareness. Learning Center Supplemental is a Pass/Fail course.