CHRISTENSEN MIDDLE SCHOOL

2025-2026

SEVENTH GRADE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

SEVENTH GRADE CORE: The seventh grade core program consists of two instructional periods covering the content areas of language arts and social studies. In the **Language Arts** component, students read from selected "core" novels and explore concepts of plot, setting, character and theme in relationship to these literary works. Skills introduced in the sixth grade are expanded upon and a variety of writing modes (expository paragraphs, short essays) and public speaking are explored. The review of the rules of language mechanics is an on-going component of the program.

In the area of seventh grade **Social Studies**, students study the Byzantine, Islamic, African, and Asiatic Empires, the feudal societies of Japan and Europe, and the Renaissance and the Enlightenment in Europe. Cross-curricular learning is encouraged through the development of vocabulary, book reports, and critical issues specific to the social studies curriculum. Students participate in "hands on" activities, and art/construction projects are incorporated into the course of study.

SEVENTH GRADE MATH ** Math placement will be determined using the LVJUSD Math Placement Matrix. This matrix uses information from multiple student data sources as well as teacher recommendation to determine the best math placement.

MATH 7: This course is designed for students who are performing at the average to below average range of grade level. Students in *Math 7* have the knowledge and skills to access grade-level standards but may at times need additional support to understand new concepts or skills. *Math 7* presents the California Common Core State Standards for Math (CA CCSSM).

Accelerated MATH 7B/8: This course is designed for students with a firm grasp of grade level standards. These students quickly comprehend new concepts and skills and incorporate new understandings with their overall mathematical reasoning. Students will progress through the seventh grade math text and may begin an introduction to algebra. *Accelerated Math 7B/8* presents the CA CCSSM.

SEVENTH GRADE SCIENCE: The seventh grade curriculum focuses on Life Science. Students will begin the year reviewing the scientific method and basic laboratory skills. Throughout the year, students will engage in hands-on activities and perform labs while investigating cells, classification of living things, plants and animal kingdoms, human biology including the skeletal, muscular, digestive, circulatory, respiratory, nervous and reproductive systems.

SEVENTH GRADE PHYSICAL EDUCATION: Students in seventh grade physical education participate in a wide range of endurance, physical conditioning, and individual and team sport activities. Motor skills and movement concepts mature through repetition. A focus on the student's ability to assess and maintain a level of physical fitness to improve health and performance is evaluated by the State-mandated fitness test.

SEVENTH GRADE ELECTIVE OPTIONS: Seventh grade students have the option to select an elective class for the sixth course in their class schedule. If you select the "Two Electives = Zero Period P.E. Option," please understand that in most requests for two electives will not be accommodated due to staffing and budgetary constraints. Please prioritize your elective choices carefully. While we will make every effort to honor requests, it may not be possible in many cases. If your first and second choices are the same elective, the office will assign an alternative if your preferred choice is unavailable.

THE FOLLOWING CLASSES ARE YEARLONG CLASSES:

- **ADVANCED ART** Students in advanced art will refine artistic skills and learn a variety of new techniques. Through drawing, they will incorporate values, shading, light source, shadows and perspective. Through painting with watercolors, tempera and acrylics students will take on a variety of subjects, both realism and abstract. Students will explore three-dimensional art through one or more of the following; ceramics, plaster, foam, paper and wood.

- **ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE** Students will use hands-on experiences to learn about the world around them. Activities will include labs, field work on and around the CMS campus, management of the school recycling program, student-designed research, and field trips.

- **LEADERSHIP** Students in the seventh grade may elect to take a yearlong course dealing with student government, school spirit, and leadership activities. This class is primarily a service organization, and as such, handles many duties and responsibilities such as Back to School Orientation, Dances, and Athletic Events. Requirements are excellent academic and discipline records combined with teacher recommendation. Students and parents sign a contract requiring them to maintain a 2.0 GPA and exemplary discipline record throughout the year. Students who fail to do so will be dropped from this elective. A student evaluation at the end of the first trimester will determine second trimester participation.

- **MUSIC Advanced Band or Orchestra.** Both groups are full year classes. Students will continue to focus on tone production, advanced standard notation reading skills, appropriate grade level technical studies, and challenging concert literature. Both groups will attend a music festival and have multiple performance opportunities. Performance attendance is required. R**EQUIREMENTS:** Students must have prior music experience.

  Intermediate Band or Orchestra. These full year classes meet daily with the objective to learn to read standard music notation, learn proper tone production, and prepare appropriate grade level literature for performance. Grading emphasis is on participation, performances, and a willingness to learn.

  Band students will receive instruction on the core instruments: flute, clarinet, trumpet, and trombone. Depending on class size, progress, and instrumentation, students may have the opportunity to play alto saxophone, baritone, and tuba. Depending on class size and instrumentation, a limited number of students may audition to play in the percussion section.

  Orchestra students will receive instruction on cello, viola, and violin. Depending on class size, progress, and instrumentation, students may have the opportunity to play string bass.

- **SPANISH 1A** Students in Spanish 1A will learn the basics of the language in an environment that focuses on a conversational /role-playing approach. The textbook and workbook are also utilized to reinforce acquired skills and to provide additional information relative to the mechanics of the language. It is highly recommended that students who wish to enroll in this class have strong study skills and a “C” or better in their language arts class.

- **SPECTRUM** Students in Spectrum will be enrolled in the following three single-trimester courses during the school year:

  - **AVID READINESS** AVID Readiness is designed to enhance student performance in content areas in which the student demonstrates need. There is an emphasis on analytical writing, study skills and test taking, note taking, research, presentation skills, and time management. These skills are all supported through Writing, Inquiry, Collaboration, Organization, and Reading (WICOR) strategies used throughout the AVID Readiness elective, as well as student’s academic classes.

- **ART** Students in art will learn a variety of art skills. Through drawing, they will learn about line, shape, value, shading, and perspective. Through painting, students will learn about color mixing, color theory, expression, realism, and abstract. Art techniques will be explored through various media such as: pen, colored pencil, pastels, tempera and watercolor paints. Students will record art vocabulary and maintain a sketchbook for drawing assignments.

- **HOME ECONOMICS** Students in the home economics class focus on skills for personal life-management. Topics covered include financial management, nutrition, cooking, child development, consumer skills, and sewing.

- **STEM EXPLORATION 1** STEM Exploration 1 (STEM) is an activity-, project-, and problem-based (APPB) learning program designed to challenge and engage the natural curiosity of middle school students. The instructional units excite and motivate students to use their imaginations and teach them to be creative and innovative, while gaining the skills they need to develop, produce, and use products and services.

  The STEM curriculum appeals to a full range of middle school students and relates technology to students' daily lives. It also promotes communication and collaboration by emphasizing a team approach throughout the instructional units. This approach utilizes the strengths of each team member to accomplish the goals of the project, while offering students learning challenges at all ability levels.

  The STEM program helps students develop and hone skills in middle school that enable them to enter the high school program with foundational knowledge and skills for success in engineering.

- **STUDENT ASSIST** Seventh and eighth grade students may elect to participate in the CMS Star Student Program. Stars are assigned to classroom teachers or staff members to assist in the classroom or office. Duties are assigned by individual teachers, and, as a result, may vary. They generally include record-keeping, grading papers, and other clerical duties. The goal of the course is the development of good organizational and office skills, the ability to work with others, and the ability to take and follow directions. Star students must have and maintain a 2.5 GPA and have an exemplary discipline and attendance record. Supplemental application is required.

- **VOCAL MUSIC** This is an elective course designed to introduce students to the musical concepts of tone, pitch, rhythm, and music reading. This course will offer students the opportunity to learn the basics of vocal production. As members of a choral ensemble, students will be exposed to a variety of music styles. Attendance at all performances is required. Both boys and girls are equally welcomed in this class.

- **YEARBOOK** This course will guide students through the organization and publication of the school yearbook. They will enhance their communication skills as they gather information, organize it, produce individual pages and sections, and ultimately create product. After school time may be necessary to complete assignments and meet deadlines, which will include the coverage of many sports and evening events. Student participation in all aspects of yearbook production is required.