



Dutcher Middle School

7th/8th Grade Course Directory

2025-2026

This directory is provided to assist students, parents/ guardians and teachers to understand the list of required courses and to select elective classes for the coming year.

The Dutcher Middle School office staff is available to answer questions. Please call our counselors, Mrs. Kristen Norman or Mr. Derek Alvarado, at 350-206-3400 if you need further assistance.

PROMOTION REQUIREMENTS

*Credits are awarded for passing grades at the end of each quarter

7 th Grade Courses	Possible Credits per Year*	8 th Grade Courses	Possible Credits per Year*
Language Arts	20	Language Arts	20
Mathematics	20	Mathematics	20
Science	20	Science	20
History	20	History	20
Physical Education	20	Physical Education	20
Elective	20	Elective	20
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Total Credits Possible	120	Total Credits Possible	120
Total credits* possible		240	
Required to participate in promotion activities		215	

ELECTIVE COURSES

(Choose One: Spanish, STEM, Technology, Music, Drama, Art, Speech)

FOREIGN LANGUAGE

SPANISH I (Full Year, 5 credits/quarter)

This course is open to motivated 7th grade students who want to learn a new language. New vocabulary is memorized and spoken as students use and apply it in class and as they take part in cultural activities. Students speak, write, and listen to the language. Written and oral tests are part of the curriculum. The course content is the same as that presented in Spanish 1-2 at Turlock and Pitman High School. Successful completion (a grade of “B” or better) of two years at the middle school level will qualify students to take Spanish 3-4 in the ninth grade

MUSIC

Choir (Full Year, 5 credits/quarter)

This course is designed to teach students to use their voices in ways unique to singing. They will learn to read, understand, and sing music of all styles including popular songs of

today. The Choir will perform numerous concerts throughout the year. Participation in all performances is required. Instructor approval is not necessary.

Mariachi Band (Full Year, 5 credits/quarter)

This is a performance ensemble focused on the vibrant tradition of mariachi music. Students will develop proficiency on mariachi instruments such as guitar, vihuela, guitarrón, trumpet, and violin, while improving skills in rhythm, harmony, and melodic phrasing. The group will perform a range of traditional mariachi repertoire, exploring its cultural roots and significance. This is a performance-based class, and students are required to participate in all evening performances throughout the year. The class is open to all students, regardless of prior experience.

Concert Band (Full Year, 5 credits/quarter)

This is an intermediate performance ensemble comprised of woodwinds, brass and percussion. The group performs traditional concert band literature and various styles of popular music. This is a performance class and students are required to participate in all evening performances. The group is open to all wind instrument players and percussionists with at least one year of formal music instruction.

Orchestra (Full Year, 5 credits/quarter)

This is an intermediate performance ensemble consisting of violins, violas, cellos, and string basses. Class instructions will focus on skill development and musical growth. The orchestra will perform a variety of music throughout the school year. This is a performance class and students are required to participate in all evening performances. Students are required to take their music home for study.

TECHNOLOGY/ART WHEEL (Half Year Technology/Half Year Art, 5 credits/quarter)

Technology - The goals of this course are to equip students to use a computer efficiently and creatively to support and advance learning in the core subjects, and to build background knowledge regarding the ways in which Technology is integrated into the other STEM disciplines -- Science, Engineering, and Mathematics. Some of the learning objectives are:

- Increase competency in the use of Google Apps
- Improve Keyboarding skills
- Explore the impacts of global advancements in computers and technology
- Study the personal implications of Cyber Safety and Digital Citizenship
- Gain exposure to the fundamentals of Graphic Design, Engineering, Data & Analysis, and Coding

** Students will switch the course after the 2nd quarter to Art.**

Art – This course is designed to explore and experience creative expression, critical evaluation, and a greater appreciation for the Visual Arts. While learning about the elements and principles of design, students will develop their skills in multiple mediums. A variety of famous artists and their styles throughout history will be studied. This course is open to all students who would like to participate in a fun and creative atmosphere!

** Students will switch the course after the 2nd quarter to Technology.**

ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY (Full Year, 5 credits/quarter)

The goals of this course are to equip students to use a computer efficiently and creatively to support and advance learning in the core subjects, and to build background knowledge regarding the ways in which Technology is integrated into the other STEM disciplines -- Science, Engineering, and Mathematics. Some of the learning objectives are:

- Increase competency in the use of Google Apps
- Improve Keyboarding skills
- Explore the impacts of global advancements in computers and technology
- Study the personal implications of Cyber Safety and Digital Citizenship
- Gain exposure to the fundamentals of Graphic Design, Engineering, Data & Analysis, and Coding

STEM ROBOTICS (Full Year, 5 credits/quarter)

The focus of this course is the development of automation and robotics and their use to improve daily life. Students investigate mechanical systems, motion transfer, machine automation, and computer control systems. Using the VEX® Robotics platform, students design, build, and program real-world devices, such as food dispenser, robot pet companion, and transport system.

Automation and Robotics uses the PLTW activity-, project-, and problem-based (APB) instructional design approach, which centers on hands-on, real-world activities, projects, and problems that help students understand how the knowledge and skills they develop in the classroom can be applied in everyday life. The APB approach scaffolds student learning through structured activities and projects that empower students to become independent in the classroom and help them build skill sets to apply to an open-ended, real-world problem.

This approach provides students unique opportunities to work collaboratively, identify problems, apply what they know, persevere through challenges, find unique solutions, and lead their own learning.

VISUAL PERFORMING ARTS**DRAMA 1:** (Full Year, 5 credits/quarter)

This course is designed to teach students the basics of theater production. They will focus on the history of theatre, getting comfortable with performing monologues as well as performing in front of others. They will learn terminology, improv skills and scene performances. Entry level Drama skills will be taught.

DRAMA 2: (Full Year, 5 credits/quarter)

This course will focus on performance and acting skills. We will produce and perform a play, focusing on script writing and honing in on duo, monologue, and scene performances. With their knowledge of theatre history, vocabulary, working as an ensemble, and performing from Drama 1, this class will take those skills to the next level

in their performance abilities. Drama 2 will participate in the Thalia and Middle Stage Acting Festival as well.

ADVANCED ART

(Full Year, 5 credits/quarter)

Students will explore more sophisticated techniques, using a variety of media and methods. This is an advanced class for highly motivated students. Students will engage in long term assignments, that will further strengthen their advanced skills and techniques. Our visual arts curriculum includes recognizing art as a form of communication and expression, identifying and using the elements and principles of art and design, and exploring the role of artists in society throughout history, all while having fun in a nurturing and safe environment. Students are encouraged to take risks, think critically, and solve problems visually. Students will master new art vocabulary, art methods and techniques, and will form a deeper connection to the fine arts. This class requires teacher recommendation.

SPEECH AND DEBATE

(Full Year, 5 credits/quarter)

Students will learn to plan, research, and organize effective speeches and are given practical experience of speaking in front of the class. Reasoning and argumentation are studied as well as the basics of good communication. Students will research and present arguments on current issues and learn the skill of cross examination. Students will also learn how to use visual aids and develop interpretation skills. Participation in tournaments is required if we qualify.