

GRADE 6: ELECTIVE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Please be aware that course offerings are subject to change pending school board decisions.

FINE ARTS

- This course placement is a full year commitment.

BAND 6: In sixth grade band at Zionsville West Middle School we build upon the musical foundation laid in fifth grade. Students continue with wind and percussion instruments learning about different styles of music through performance and study. These instruments include the flute, oboe, clarinet, alto and tenor saxophone, trumpet, French horn, trombone, baritone, tuba and percussion. Additionally, certain advanced instruments are introduced to the band such as the bass clarinet, bassoon, and baritone saxophone. Opportunities continue to be available for students to explore ensemble, solo and chamber performance. The band schedule expands to include additional school performances and IMEA and ISSMA events. The co-curricular after school Jazz Band is also offered to 6th grade students who successfully audition for the band directors. Students continue to develop as young composers through the study of more advanced concepts in music theory, additional opportunities for improvisation, and a more in-depth look at the role of music in past and present society. Grading is based on daily participation, written and playing tests, in-class and at-home assignments, and practice requirements.

CHORUS 6: Choir is open to any student regardless of previous experience or talent; all that's required is a love for singing and a willingness to work hard. The choirs at ZWMS have earned a reputation for excellence, having appeared as a featured choir at the Indiana Music Educators Association State Convention and in the Indianapolis Symphonic Choir's Festival of Carols. Students will study a wide variety of music, which meets the state standards including classic, folk, popular, gospel, jazz, multicultural, etc. In addition to learning performance skills, students will learn music theory, history, and terminology. Grading is based on proper rehearsal and performance practices, written assignments and tests, and sight reading. Students are expected to perform in concerts outside of the regular school day, which are often highlights of the course. Involvement in choir allows students to enjoy singing, as well as feel a strong sense of social belonging, build confidence, and relieve stress. Many enrichment activities are available for students who wish to go beyond the classroom curriculum; students have been selected to perform in various honor choirs including the Indianapolis Children's Choir, Circle the State with Song, All State Honor Choir, and American Choral Director's Association Division Honor Choirs.

ORCHESTRA 6: Students taking this co-curricular orchestra class will build on their foundational skills from previous experience. Students will reinforce their music reading skills, including note reading and rhythm reading. Students will expand their performance skills by refining musical elements including but not limited to dynamics, articulations, and phrasing. There are several performances and before-school rehearsals during the school year. Students must participate in performance opportunities outside of the school day that support and extend learning in the classroom. Requirement: Privately owned or rented instrument (the school provides basses and cellos for at-school use). Grades are based on the following: concert participation, tests and assignments, rehearsal etiquette, and playing technique. Some experience recommended (basics of the instrument and note reading). Students in this class have the opportunity to participate in an extra-curricular performance group.

EXPLORATORY CLASSES

- All students are scheduled for a semester of PE/Health.
- All students are scheduled for a quarter of Art and a quarter of PLTW.

ART GENERAL 6 - QUARTER COURSE: In 6th grade Art, the chief goals of the curriculum are to develop an understanding and appreciation of the arts, promote creative growth, and enhance critical thinking skills to produce artworks that students are proud of. Students will create both two and three-dimensional art as they experience working with many different types of media and build upon skills and knowledge from 5th grade art. Beyond art production, the curriculum covers art history (artists and artistic movements), art criticism (critiquing personal artwork and the artwork of others), and art aesthetics (the discussion of the definition of art and beauty). Organizational skills and responsibility are taught and reinforced throughout the class.

PROJECT LEAD THE WAY 6: DESIGN AND MODELING - QUARTER COURSE: 6th Grade Project Lead the Way: Design & Modeling introduces students to the Engineering Design Process through engaging, real-world challenges. Students develop solutions by creating technical sketches, building physical and digital models (Tinker CAD and 3D printing the prototype), and using evidence to test, evaluate, and refine their designs. The course emphasizes creativity, collaboration, and critical thinking, preparing students for future engineering and STEM pathways.

Building on their medical knowledge, students apply engineering principles to solve meaningful design challenges. Using their understanding of neurons and the brain, students design, create, and test an ankle-foot orthosis (AFO) for an individual with cerebral palsy. Additional challenges include designing and fabricating a puzzle cube game and building skimmers, allowing students to practice precision, creativity, and iterative design.

Throughout the course, students consistently apply the Engineering Design Process to communicate ideas, collaborate effectively, solve problems, think creatively and critically, and act ethically while developing solutions to authentic design challenges.

P.E./HEALTH 6 - SEMESTER COURSE: Through the use of movement, students will learn & develop the fundamentals of cardiovascular endurance, muscular strength, muscular flexibility, and eye-hand coordination. Emphasis will be placed on total physical wellness and the relationship between physical activity and health-related fitness. Students will also explore all aspects of their health to include mental/emotional, physical, and social sides of their health. Students will examine and evaluate their own patterns of behavior through self-assessment.