8th Grade
Course Description Booklet
2026-2027

FULL YEAR – REQUIRED COURSES

LANGUAGE ARTS

Using a variety of texts and in congruence with grade level English Language Arts standards, language arts students will work to increase their reading, writing, thinking, speaking, and listening skills. Students should expect a learning experience that helps them grow their literacy and analytical skills through a variety of activities, including small-group and student-led discussions as well as independent and collaborative work.

ADVANCED LANGUAGE ARTS

This class is designed for students who are motivated to engage in a curriculum that is accelerated and advanced. The goal for this program is to prepare students for high school Honors, Pre-AP, and beyond. Advanced ELA students are expected to:

- proactively engage in the accelerated pacing of an honors curriculum
- participate at a higher level of critical thinking and analysis with at/above grade-level texts
- have strong foundational skills in narrative, argumentative, and explanatory writing
- engage in independent research and self-guided units of study
- self-advocate with teachers and peers; communicate needs and ideas voluntarily

UNITED STATES HISTORY

This social studies requirement picks up the story of our nation's history just prior to the Revolutionary War and continues through the end of the Civil War. Major units of study are: Revolutionary War, U.S. Constitution, Industrial Revolution, Westward Movement, Slavery, the Civil War and Reconstruction.

8th GRADE SCIENCE

This class is an integrated science class based on the Next Generation Science Standards. 8th grade science will give students a basic understanding of the relationships between contact forces, sound waves, forces at a distance, earth and space, genetics, and natural selection and common ancestry.

MATHEMATICS

Students are placed into mathematics based on their achievement as measured by their grade in current class, teacher recommendation, STAR Test, SBA scores and Placement test results (when applicable). Big Ideas Math, which is aligned to the Washington State Learning Standards, is the district-approved curriculum for all middle school level students. In all math classes, students will continue to evolve as mathematicians as they learn to use the Eight Mathematical Practices as outlined in the Washington State Learning Standards.

Math 8 - Students study linear equations, graphing, geometric transformations, probability and statistics, scientific notation and exponents, measurement, the Pythagorean Theorem, and solving equations. SBA preparation is continued.

Algebra 1 - This course introduces fundamental operation of equations and formulas, studies of ratio, proportion, variation, indirect measurements, polynomial operations, factoring and operation with radical expressions. Students will solve equations (linear, quadratic and systems) and inequalities using graphing, substitution and/or addition. The student is also introduced to principles governing system and set theory. Students must maintain a B- grade or above to be recommended for Geometry the following school year. Algebra 1 provides one high school math credit upon successful completion (see note on transcript policy*).

Geometry - **(Prerequisite – Successful completion of Algebra 1)** – This course will cover the core content as outlined by the math standards: Logical arguments and proofs, lines and angles, two- and three-dimensional figures, geometry in the coordinate plane, geometric transformations and additional key content. This course provides one high school math credit upon successful completion (see note on transcript policy*).

***Transcript policy for high-school-credit math courses taken during 7th & 8th grades.**
Regarding high-school-credit math courses (Algebra and Geometry) taken during 7th or 8th grade:

- Grades will be posted to the students' middle school transcript.
- Grades will be posted to the students' high school transcript.
- When posted to the high school transcript, the grades:
  - ✓ will accurately indicate when the class was taken
  - ✓ will be included in the student's high school graduation credits and GPA

SEMESTER – REQUIRED COURSES

PHYSICAL FITNESS **One Semester**

This course is designed to improve the student's physical skills and knowledge through participation in both individual and team activities. Opportunities are provided to understand and improve cardiorespiratory endurance, muscular strength, muscular endurance, and flexibility in addition to the social-emotional aspects of sport in an effort to promote lifelong fitness.

SEMESTER - ELECTIVES

ACTING **One Semester**

Welcome to the world of theatre! Over the course of this semester, we will look at various aspects of performance including characterization, movement, voice, articulation, scene work, monologues, and play production. This is a great class for students who already have a love of drama as well as those who want to feel more comfortable speaking in front of people. The culminating project is a full play production with an evening performance. Memorization and participation are required.

COMPUTER AIDED DRAFTING and DESIGN (CADD) ***(Algebra or higher math recommended)*** **One Semester**

This 18-week advanced class starts out by exploring how to use the computer-aided drafting program Rhino. This class spends about 70% of the time in the CADD and manufacturing computer lab and about 30% in the main STEM lab area. Students will be using Rhino to design 3D models of their projects they will be constructing in the shop. Once 3D models have been made on Rhino students will use a 3D printer, laser cutter, vinyl cutter or CNC router to make their projects. Advanced use of tools and equipment are used in project construction. Lecture and demonstrations will increase the student knowledge and skills while working on their projects**. Students who take this class and receive a "A" grade can waive "CADD Fundamentals prerequisite" in 9th grade and go directly into year-long "Advanced CADD/CAM." *It is okay to enroll in both EXPLORING ENGINEERING II and CADD**

DIGITAL PRODUCTION **One Semester**

In this class you will learn to produce content in a digital space. You will have choice over what you learn in this class and be able to pursue your passions as they relate to creating creative content in digital space. You can learn to create games, virtual reality spaces and games, beats and songs, websites and blogs, the basics of photography and photo editing, how to make animations, how to create digital art, coding and much more. This course will be done through Canvas, which will allow you to learn at a pace that is right for you. You will also have as much choice as possible when it comes to the topics you use as the basis for the work you do. Examples of some of the content previous students have produced in this class can be found at http://snocode.weebly.com on the Virtual Travel, Advocacy Sites, Student Websites and Virtual Reality pages. T**his class is a mix of 7th and 8th grade students and may have a lunch opposite of 8th grade two days per week.**

DRAWING and PAINTING **One Semester**

Students who enjoy drawing or who would like to learn more about drawing would enjoy this course! Students will create using multiple drawing and painting mixed media techniques. Working mostly with paper, students will explore many mediums such as pencil, charcoal, pastel, watercolor, printmaking, and collage.

ENGINEERING 2 **One Semester**

This 18-week exploratory S.T.E.M. course incorporates project-based learning with a focus on the engineering cycle. Students will apply problem solving, visual communication, and industrial skills to design and build challenging and exciting projects. Units of study include power tool safety & operation, manufacturing, electricity, applied physics, computer aided drafting & design (CADD), and structures. Projects include trebuchets, monster trucks, pinball machines, stick frame construction, pens and more**. *Engineering 1 is not a pre-requisite for this course.**

FORENSICS **One Semester**

Forensics is a perfect fit for students who like science and/or true crime. Students will apply science skills to learn how to collect, analyze and evaluate evidence found at crime scenes. Topics include: fingerprinting, DNA analysis, Forensic anthropology (bones), chromatography, Impression evidence (tire tracks/shoe prints/ tool marks), Arson investigation and chemical analysis and proper crime scene investigation. We will also explore true cases and how forensic evidence solved these cases. This class has a focus of hands-on learning and experimentation. **This class is a mix of 7th and 8th grade students and may have a lunch opposite of 8th grade two days per week. Students cannot repeat Forensics if the class was taken in 7th grade.**

FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCES 2 **One Semester**

In this class students will be learning the essential concepts in cooking and food preparation. This is hands on learning where students learn to cook as a team, create a variety of tasty foods and have fun trying new things! Throughout this semester long class students will learn about nutrition, healthy meal planning from the "My Plate" guidelines, students will discuss budgeting and will do research on various careers. This is a fun, fast paced class that keeps the students engaged and excited about learning and becoming more confident in the kitchen!

LEADERSHIP **One Semester**

This class is open to all students interested in developing leadership skills and creating a positive school culture. The class emphasis is the importance of communications, character development, personal growth and building strong relationship. Leadership is designed to empower and give students the opportunity to become successful leaders and contributors in the school and community. Through servant leadership, students will acquire knowledge, skills and experience towards demonstrating their leadership potential.

SCULPTURE **One Semester**

In this course, students will explore the 3D art of sculpture. If you enjoy working with your hands, then this class is for you! Students will learn the hand-building basics of clay and will create at least 2 ceramic sculptures within the semester. Students will also learn modern sculpture methods and techniques, such as plaster, wire, or paper mache.

TEAM SPORTS **One Semester**

This course will include various sports with an emphasis on skills, strategy, and game play. Activities may include but are not limited to: Flag football, softball, volleyball, badminton, soccer, and basketball.

Students may only take one semester of fitness electives.

YOGA **One Semester**

In this class you will learn breathing techniques, specific yoga exercises including Hatha, Power, Sculpt, and PiYo. All varieties are designed to build strength and increase flexibility. You will develop an understanding of how to use yoga to maximize your flexibility and strength, while protecting your body throughout life. **Students may only take one semester of fitness electives.**

TEACHER ASSISTANT (TA) **One Semester**

TA's will be assigned to a teacher, the library or the office to provide support to staff by working on such tasks as making copies, organizing materials, putting up bulletin boards, etc. TA's may also provide assistance to students in the teacher's class who are struggling with their work.

****Students will need to complete an application that requires the recommendation of two staff members before selecting this for an elective. Teacher assistants will not select the teacher they work with.**

FULL YEAR – CHOIR or BAND - ELECTIVE

CHOIR (Grades 7 and 8)

Choir is for 7th and 8th grade students who love to sing and perform. Choir members learn to sing in three-part harmony, with some singing baritone parts and others divided into sopranos and altos. Students will also learn to read a music score and to sight sing. This group takes field trips, including one to an adjudicated Choral festival in May. There are required evening concerts and occasional assembly performances. Solo opportunities may be available for students who are interested.

This class is a mix of 7th and 8th grade students and may have a lunch opposite of 8th grade.

CONCERT BAND (Grade 8)

Concert Band is for students with at least two years of experience playing a band instrument. At a typical rehearsal we do warm-ups, sight reading, technique exercises and work on concert music. This group performs in three evening school concerts, several school assemblies and takes at least 3 field trips to perform in band festivals and at our local elementary schools. In April we attend a band festival in British Columbia, Canada.

***Note for New Band Students:** This includes students with no experience, students with some band experience or those who wish to learn a new instrument. If you are a new player or used to play an instrument but haven't for a while you can still join Concert Band by taking Cadet Band first semester. Instruction is offered on flute, oboe, bassoon, clarinet, sax, trumpet, French horn, trombone, baritone horn or tuba. Percussion is offered if there are openings in the Cadet or Concert Band, and percussionists are expected to practice and learn bells as well as snare drum. Students are required to provide their own instrument for this class, although some larger school-owned instruments like French horns, baritone horns and tubas may be available for checkout. Contact Mrs. Stout at 360-563-4554 or jenessa.stout@sno.wednet.edu for more information, or if you need help selecting or acquiring an instrument.

JAZZ BAND (Grades 7 and 8)

- ZERO HOUR CLASS (6:30-7:25 am) **AUDITION REQUIRED
- PREREQUISITE: ENROLLMENT IN BEGINNING, CADET, CONCERT BAND OR CHOIR

Instruction focuses on jazz concepts such as improvisation, big band swing, jazz, rock, Latin styles and funk. This is a performance-oriented group that takes three field trips to regional jazz festivals, plus required evening school concerts and one Saturday festival. **Auditions are held in Spring,** and private music instruction is highly recommended for interested students. For information about auditions, Contact Mrs. Stout at 360-563-4554 or jenessa.stout@sno.wednet.edu. **Students must arrange their own transportation to this class.**

BEGINNING BAND (Grades 7 & 8) - Full year

Beginning Band class offers individualized instruction designed to meet the needs of students with no previous band experience, students with some band experience, or those who may wish to learn a new instrument. Did you try band in 6th grade and not complete it? Did you want to participate in

band but couldn't get a ride to school? Did remote learning make it impossible for you to attend? This is the right class to get you involved in band. Instruction is offered on flute, oboe, bassoon, clarinet family, sax family, trumpet, french horn, trombone, euphonium, tuba, and percussion. Percussionists will learn and practice bells as well as snare drum. Some instruments are available for loan. Contact Mrs. Stout (360-563-4554) or jenessa.stout@sno.wednet.edu for more information, or if you need help selecting or acquiring an instrument.

SNOHOMISH SCHOOL DISTRICT

Middle School Adavanced Courses
Process for Appropriate Placement for Student Success

GOAL: Student access to and success in advanced courses

Interest, Motivation, and Perseverance Indicators

Students who are successful in advanced courses:

- Demonstrate a high level of interest, academic engagement, and an innate curiosity to learn in specific courses of interest (Language Arts, Social Studies, and/or Science)
- Are highly self-motivated, take responsibility for their own learning, attend class regularly, complete quality assignments on time, and recognize that effort is important for success
- Maintain a high standard in academic integrity
- Successfully complete complex tasks that require extra time, thought, and perseverance
- Examine and learn from errors, demonstrate a willingness to try different approaches, problem solve, make revisions to work throughout the learning process, seek help, and access available resources
- Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher led)

Academic Indicators

Students who are successful in advanced courses:

English Language Arts: Have demonstrated the indicators for academic success as indicated below.

- Has a history of curiosity around language, reading, and writing
- Reads two or more years above grade level
- Demonstrates advanced reading and communication skills
- Reads and writes beyond required assignments. Has a history of creating own reading and writing projects
- Consistently shows interest in the details of language (word origins, grammar, sentence structure, etc.)

Middle School data teams will review data (SBA, STAR, teacher input, grades) to recommend appropriate math placement. Letters with your student's math placement recommendation will be sent by the end of May.