8th Grade
Valley View Middle School
Course Description Booklet
2026 - 2027

REQUIRED COURSES

8th ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS (2 Semesters)

This course incorporates all facets of language arts essential for high achievement in written and oral communication based on state standards. These skills include the writing process, textual analysis, research, and critical reading of short stories, novels, poetry, and drama.

8th ADVANCED LANGUAGE ARTS (2 Semesters)

The middle school advanced program for language arts is designed for a student who is 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. (See attached guidelines for advanced courses.)

The student is expected to:

- Assume greater responsibly
- Participate at a higher level of thought
- Complete complex, involved projects
- Engage in independent research
- Collaborate in both small and large group activities and discussions

UNITED STATES HISTORY (2 Semesters)

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 will include the Revolutionary War, the U.S. Constitution, the Industrial Revolution, Westward Movement, Slavery and the Civil War or Reconstruction.

8th GRADE SCIENCE (2 Semesters)

This class is part of a series of integrated science classes based on the Next Generation Science Standards. This course focuses on 3-Dimensional learning around the phenomena of *"investigating life on the third rock"*, with content emphasis on Earth in space, genetics, and natural & common ancestry.

MATHEMATICS (2 Semesters)

Students are placed into mathematics based on their achievement as measured by their grade in current class, teacher recommendation, STAR Test, SBA and District 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, large numbers, 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. This course 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

8th HEALTH AND FITNESS (1 Semester)

This course is designed to improve overall physical skills and knowledge by the presentation of both individual and team activities. Opportunities are provided to develop physical fitness, sportsmanship, recreational skills and appreciation for good health habits. Health curriculum is integrated into the weekly physical activities for students to identify what they can do to achieve their healthiest self.

SEMESTER - 8TH GRADE EXPLORATORY ELECTIVES

All elective courses are subject to change.

(Except where indicated, all elective courses may only be taken for one semester)

DRAWING and PAINTING (1 Semester)

Students who enjoy drawing and would like to take their skills to the next level will enjoy this course! Students will create and gain an understanding of 2D media while learning classical drawing and painting techniques. Working mostly with paper, students will explore mediums such as pencil, charcoal, pastel, watercolor, printmaking, and collage.

SCULPTURE & CRAFTS (1 Semester)

In this course students will use materials such as paper mâché, plaster, clay, wire and cardboard to create three-dimensional sculptures. Students will also create traditional and contemporary crafts, both functional and decorative, using a variety of techniques employed by different cultures around the world. These include felting, wire and bead work, paper beads, glass prisms, slow stitching and recycled art. If you enjoy working with your hands this is the class for you!

VISUAL ARTS – YEARBOOK (Grades 7 and 8; May be taken 2 semesters)

In this student media class students will learn the basics for photography using cameras to take pictures for the yearbook, learn how to find and share important stories, write captions, stories and headlines for the yearbook and collaborate with classmates to meet deadlines for creating a yearbook. Students will be using Walsworth Yearbook software for creating yearbook pages.

DRAMA (1 Semester - Grades 7 and 8)

This course will introduce students to the fundamentals of theatrical performance through creative exploration, collaboration, and self-expression. Students will build confidence and communication skills as they engage in improvisation, scripted scenes, character development, voice and movement exercises, and basic stage techniques. Through ensemble work, theatre games, and performance projects, learners will explore storytelling, empathy, and problem-solving while developing an understanding of stage directions, blocking, and simple production elements such as costumes and props.

FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCES II (1 Semester)

This class will cover two areas of instruction – Personal Choices and Culinary Arts.

Personal Choices: A few years from now **you** will be leaving the "nest", and we want **you** to become contributing members of society and thrive in this crazy thing we call life! This class will help students see firsthand what it is like to live independently and make personal choices that impacts their future.

Areas of Focus:

- Future plans, personalities, values, self-concept and self-esteem
- Job applications and job interview tips/tricks
- Budgeting, pay stubs and credit vs debit

Culinary Arts:

This class will introduce students to the basic principles of food preparation and nutrition. Students will learn to cook and bake a variety of tasty foods as a team from scratch!

Areas of Focus:

- Food safety and sanitation procedures
- Food preparation methods and techniques to produce a variety of food
- Time management skills

EXPLORING ENGINEERING II (1 Semester)

This 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/electronics, applied physics, computer aided drafting & design (CADD), and structures. Projects include aerospace design, Co2 cars, and more. (Exploring Engineering 1 is not a pre-requisite for this course.)

DIGITAL PRODUCTION (1 Semester)

This class will expose students to digital photography and the skills needed to go beyond "taking pictures" to "making pictures". Projects are designed to introduce lighting techniques, rule of thirds, leading lines, and other composition skills. Students will also learn to edit using Photoshop software to enhance and change images. The second half of this semester class will introduce students to video production skills needed to create a school newscast, commercials, and a 3-minute educational video.

FORENSICS (1 Semester)

Forensics is an investigative science and technology course. Students will use scientific inquiry skills and learn how to observe, collect, analyze and evaluate evidence found at crime scenes. Included: Hair analysis, DNA analysis, Blood analysis, Forensic anthropology (bones), Chromatography, Impression evidence (tire tracks/shoe prints/tool marks), Arson investigation, Chemical analysis.

FITNESS ELECTIVE (1 Semester - Grades 7 and 8)

This class is designed to motivate and inspire students to be active. Activities will include participation in both individual sports and team sports all while having fun! Students will use many methods to increase agility, flexibility, strength and learn about setting personal fitness goals and develop skills, strategy and key concepts for a variety of team sports.

OFFICE OR TEACHER ASSISTANT (1 Semester)

TA's will be assigned to the office or to assist the teacher in the Life Skills program or specific teachers. TAs will provide support and assistance as directed by office staff/Life Skills teacher. This TA class will be in place of one semester length elective class. TA spots are limited, and placement is determined by counselors with teacher input. Indicate TA interest in the box on the front page of your course registration form.

LEADERSHIP (Students can take 1 or 2 semesters. ASB Officers will be required to take this elective)

Placement in ASB is determined by student election and teacher/counselor placement. Leadership is a required elective for ASB officers. In this class you will work on developing leadership skills and creating a positive school culture. This is a project-based class in which students will plan and execute activities for the school community.

MUSIC ELECTIVES

CHOIR (2 Semesters - Grades 7 and 8)

Let your voice be heard! Choir is for 7th and 8th grade students who love to sing and perform. All students are welcome! Choir members learn to sing in three-part harmony, baritone, alto and soprano. This class will offer instruction in vocal technique, choral performance, ear training and music reading. Students will learn rehearsal techniques and concert etiquette. Concert Choir takes two field trips a year, including one to an adjudicated Choral festival in March. There are also four required evening concerts and occasional assembly performances. Solo opportunities may also be available to those students interested. Students unable to take first semester due to scheduling conflicts are welcome to join in second semester.

CONCERT BAND (2 Semesters)

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 at evening school concerts, several school assemblies and takes field trips to perform at band festivals and at our local elementary schools. Please contact Mr. Sackman at 360-563-3294 or via e-mail at nathan.sackman@sno.wednet.edu if you are brand new to band or have questions about instruments.

JAZZ BAND (2 Semesters – AUDITION REQUIRED)

ZERO HOUR CLASS (6:30-7:25 am)

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 field trips to regional jazz festivals, plus required evening school concerts and one Saturday festival. For information about auditions, Contact Mr. Sackman at 360-563-3294 or nathan.sackman@sno.wednet.edu **Students must arrange their own transportation to this class.**