Grade 5 Course Handbook 2026-2027

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Inspire a caring community to ignite learning, innovation, and success for all.

- ***Jordan Public Schools Mission Statement***

Jordan Public Schools believe in the potential of every learner and that education enables future opportunity and success. We accept the responsibility of providing an educational system that positions our graduates with the knowledge, understanding, skills, and character traits they need to fulfill their individual promise for success and achieve their personal best. They deserve a school program grounded by a compelling purpose and our best efforts to achieve it.

Jordan Middle School provides a learning environment that nurtures the cognitive, physical, social, and emotional needs of 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th graders. The staff provides challenging courses for all students and opportunities for students to explore new interests, comprehensive personal wellness education, a safe school environment, and a personalized school climate that provides support and adult guidance.

Adolescence is a distinctive developmental stage characterized by significant growth and change. Experts tell us that adolescence today starts earlier and lasts longer than in previous generations. Understanding the adolescent experience is foundational to creating and implementing a successful middle level education system. In developing our middle school program, we paid particular attention to the following areas:

- Physical Development/Brain Development - Bodies and brains of adolescents grow and mature. They face coordination issues and restlessness. Their brains are refining and pruning some connections and strengthening others as their abilities to plan, reason, anticipate consequences, pay attention, and make decisions continue to develop.
- Intellectual Development - Reasoning, understanding, and the ability for abstract thought grows significantly. To make sense of the world, adolescents prefer real-life learning experiences in areas they find useful or interesting.
- Social Development - Interest and capacity for more mature interaction with groups and individuals may not develop with the same speed as bodies and intellect. Adolescents need to belong; they test limits; they want to be like their peers.
- Emotional/Psychological Development - Adolescents are searching for their own independent, adult identity. They may be moody or restless; they are frequently self-conscious and highly sensitive to criticism. They are likely to believe their experiences and feelings are unique.
- Moral/Ethical Development - The ability to make positive choices grows in adolescence. This involves a transition from a focus on self to considering the rights and feelings of others. Idealism and a strong sense of fairness develop, along with a set of personal values. Shades of gray in moral issues may replace what has always appeared black and white.

We believe understanding adolescent development and brain research supports our focus on relevance, choice, real-life experiences, and positive relationships. It makes full consideration of these issues a necessity for a successful middle level school program. We will respond to these adolescent development issues and their environmental, curricular, and instructional implications through the core principles and strategies that guide our work.

Middle School Mission:
The mission of our Middle School is to foster a culture of belonging and to inspire high expectations for achievement through instructional practices that embrace individual differences and learning styles. The middle school provides an environment that allows transition for students as they move from elementary into high school years. Middle school education provides solid standards-based interdisciplinary core courses and diverse exploratory and elective options with the goal of preparing students for Jordan High School and beyond.

Transition to Jordan Middle School

- **Core Curriculum**
  - Jordan Middle School will build on the foundational personalized core developed at Jordan Elementary School with interdisciplinary standards-based core instruction. Grade level teams will collaborate on interdisciplinary instruction in the areas of reading, language arts, science, social studies, and math. Advanced and remedial courses are offered for students to meet their instructional needs.
- **Exploratory Courses**
  - The goal of exploratory classes at the middle school level is to provide a diverse exploratory option for ALL students at JMS. These courses capitalize on the curiosity of middle level learners while exposing them to a wide range of topics in order to discover new ideas or skills they may not know they have.
- **Elective Courses**
  - Elective courses at Jordan Middle School are taught with the goal of providing student choice to expand and explore student interests. These classes include choices such as band and choir.
- **Academic Support Courses**
  - Students not meeting grade level standards will be scheduled into a support course(s) to address the identified need. These students will have the option of choosing an exploratory/elective once this need has been addressed.
- **Advisory**
  - Advisory is a class designed to encourage team building, school participation, and serve as a support system for students at Jordan Middle School. Curriculum for Advisory is designed to support students with their social/emotional, academic, and college & career readiness needs.
  - Students will participate in weekly Social Emotional activities provided by the Student Support Team during advisory. These activities will center around building skills in the areas of academic success, character building, coping strategies, and other tools to address student needs.
  - All students will be assigned to an Advisory class and advisor for the entire year. Students will meet in Advisory daily but will not earn grades in this class.

What is the scheduling process for 5th grade?
The registration process for middle school students is very straightforward. Below are the important details:

- In 5th grade, students will automatically be scheduled into grade level core and exploratory classes.
    - Students will be placed into support classes following spring testing to ensure proper placement.
        - Criteria outlined in the course handbook will be followed.
        - There is an appeals process located at the end of the registration materials that must be completed should you choose to appeal your student's course placement.
- Elective courses are scheduled based on the number of students who requested the course.

What should I do to register my 5th grader?

- If your student was enrolled in Jordan Public Schools for the current school year, their enrollment is automatically rolled forward for the upcoming academic year.
- 5th grade students are required to choose *at least one* of the performance electives for their elective hour.
    - Choir (Every Other Day)
    - Band (Every Other Day)
    - Band and Choir
- Students choosing band **and** choir will not be scheduled into the elective wheel courses.
- Students who meet the district approved criteria for reading and/or math support will be scheduled into support courses in place of their elective wheel and/or music choice.

Sample Student Schedule

Grade 5	
Advisory	
Language	
Reading	
Science	
Social Studies	
Math	
Lunch/Recess	
Exploratory Hour	
Physical Education	**Art** **STEAM 5**
Elective Hour Options	
Band	**Foundations for Learning**
Foundations for Learning	**Choir**

*Actual placement of elective and exploratory courses will be finalized with development of master schedule.

CORE COURSES

(All course offerings for Jordan Middle School are subject to change based on final budget reductions.)

Reading 5/Language 5	***Full Year, Every Day***
The goal of Reading 5/Language Arts 5 is to improve critical thinking, reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills. Students complete journals and essays, read a variety of literature, perform a wide range of writing assignments, and study grammar as well as usage. Literature genres include poetry, short stories, non-fiction, novels, mythology and legend, and drama. This course is offered as a two hour block of study.	

Math 5	***Full Year, Every Day***
Math 5 is based on the Minnesota Standards for Mathematics in the areas of number and operation, algebra, geometry and measurement, and data analysis. Skills in multiplication and division are reinforced. The addition and subtraction of fractions and decimals is covered in depth with like and unlike denominators. A more thorough understanding of variables in equations is required. Surface area and volume is introduced. Finally, students learn to interpret data through mean, median, and range.	

Science 5	***Full Year, Every Day***
Science 5 is based on the Minnesota Standards for Science in the areas of physical science, earth and space science, life science, and the history of science and engineering. Science skills from the earlier years are reinforced. Students will focus on developing an understanding of the scientific practices to demonstrate an understanding of the core ideas. These practices include developing and using models, planning and conducting investigations, analyzing and interpreting data, using mathematical and computational thinking, and constructing explanations. Students will be actively involved in experiments, activities, projects, and class discussions.	

Social 5	***Full Year, Every Day***
In Social 5, students explore the history of North America in the period before 1800. They learn about complex societies that existed on the continent before 1500, and subsequent interactions between indigenous peoples, Europeans and Africans during the period of colonization and settlement. Students will examine regional economies and learn that profit motivates entrepreneurs (such as early American fur traders). They trace the development of self-governance in the British colonies and identify major conflicts that led to the American Revolution. In addition, they analyze the	

debates that swirled around the creation of a new government and learn the basic principles of democracy that were set forth in the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights.

EXPLORATORY COURSES

The goal of exploratory classes at the middle school level is to provide a diverse exploratory option for ALL students at JMS. These classes capitalize on the curiosity of middle school learners while exposing them to a wide range of topics in order to discover new ideas or skills they may not know they have.

Physical Education 5	***Full Year, Every Other Day***
In this course, students will have the opportunity to participate in physical activity in a variety of settings including individual and team sports, cooperative games, and fitness based activities. Every effort will be made to help each student recognize significant gains in their overall fitness level as they learn sportsmanship, improve self-esteem, and have fun engaging in physical activity.	

Art 5	***Semester, Every Other Day***
In Art 5, students complete a variety of projects using many different media. Drawing, painting, printmaking, sculpture, and ceramics are all explored at various times throughout the course. Along with art production, students will learn about the elements of art. Students will learn about art history through the study of different artists and cultures, as well as aesthetics and critical analysis of works of art.	

STEAM 5	***Semester, Every Other Day***
This course is designed to help students begin the transition from Middle School readiness to Digital Learning readiness. Students will experience multiple facets of Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math. We will explore the Design Process and focus on soft skills such as critical thinking, collaboration, iteration, and time management. Students will have the opportunity to use a variety of digital tools to create various projects and explore a multitude of creative outlets. Students will gain the skills to navigate their way through 21st century technology.	

Foundations for Learning	***Full Year, Every Other Day***
Foundations for Learning is a skill-building class designed to strengthen students'	

reading abilities through targeted instruction and practice. Students are placed based on their current skill level so they can receive the support they need to grow as readers. Once students reach grade-level proficiency, they may explore additional skill areas such as reading, math, study skills and interest areas for the individual student.

ELECTIVE COURSES

Elective classes at Jordan Middle School are taught with the goal of providing student choice to expand and explore student interests. These classes include choices such as band and choir and classes to support individual student needs. Students not meeting grade level standards in reading and/or math will be scheduled into a class to address this need. These students will have the option of choosing an elective once they are meeting standard.

Band 5	***Full Year, Every Other Day***
Band 5 students learn and develop instrumental music skills. Students will explore a variety of music genres and styles and perform at three concerts throughout the year. In addition to participating in the class as part of the full band, students will receive small-group lessons on a regular basis. Students will be expected to practice on their own outside of school.	

Choir 5	***Full Year, Every Other Day***
Choir 5 is an introduction to singing and musical literacy in a group setting. Singers will learn about music elements (form, rhythm, melody, harmony, etc.) in a rehearsal setting. There will be a focus on group cooperation. There are three evening performances per year.	

ACADEMIC SUPPORT COURSES

Students will be scheduled into academic support courses based on student need with the ultimate goal of supporting academic, social, and emotional growth. Depending on the students' individual schedule, these courses will take the place of a core, exploratory, or elective option for students.

Multilingual Learners (ML)	***Full Year***

Only students whose first language is not English are eligible for this course. The level of coursework is based on the previous year's ACCESS scores. Students will have the opportunity to increase English language skills in reading, writing, speaking, and listening with the goal of fluent academic and social language proficiency. Students will be given support in their core classes, as needed. Final grades will be posted on a pass/fail basis on student report cards.

Math Intervention 5	***Based on Student Need***
The purpose of this course is to give students a boost in their basic math skills. As a large group, students will review the math lesson when needed and pre-teach upcoming lessons. The majority of time will be spent in small groups. In small groups, students will work on math skills that develop their basic math knowledge. Students will get extra math help for classroom assignments and extra practice on the Minnesota State Math Standards. This class is in addition to the students' core math class. Final grades will be posted on a pass/fail basis on student report cards.	
Entrance Criteria	**Exit Criteria**
● **Review of past data.** ○ **MCA**: Partially Meets Standards or Does not Meet Standards **FAST:** 25th percentile or below ○ Teacher Recommendation ○ Universal Screening Data	● **MCA:** Meets or Exceeds ● **FAST**: Three consecutive progress monitoring points above the 40th Percentile for Spring ● Teacher Recommendation ● Universal Screening Data

Reading Intervention 5	***Based on Student Need***
The purpose of this course is to give students a boost in their reading skills. In large group and small group settings, students will be supported on individual skills to assist in the progression toward grade level standards. This class is in addition to the students' core reading class. Final grades will be posted on a pass/fail basis on student report cards.	
Entrance Criteria	**Exit Criteria**
● **Review of past data.** ○ **MCA**: Partially Meets Standards or Does not Meet Standards **FAST:** 25th percentile or below ○ Teacher Recommendation ○ Universal Screening Data	● **MCA:** Meets or Exceeds ● **FAST**: Three consecutive progress monitoring points above the 40th Percentile for Spring ● Teacher Recommendation ● Universal Screening Data

SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

Applied Skills	***Based on IEP Minutes***
Applied Skills is designed for students who have an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP). They have been identified as a student with a deficit in reading, writing, listening skills, math, oral expression, social, or study skills. Instruction is developed based on individual student needs. It is designed to teach students strategies to enable them to become successful in their academic, social, and community settings. The students receive direct instruction in their identified skill area.	

Positive Learning Understanding Self (PLUS)	***Based on IEP Minutes***
PLUS class is designed for students who have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Students identified for this class have demonstrated a need for organizational skills, stress management, goal setting, test taking, social skills, self-advocacy, study skills, and problem solving skills. The instruction is developed based on each student's individual needs and will support students in their educational, emotional, and behavioral growth. It is designed to teach students strategies to enable them to become successful in their academic, social, and community settings. The students receive direct instruction in their identified skill area.	

Communication Strategies	***Based on IEP Minutes***
This class is designed for students who have an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP). Students identified for this class have demonstrated a need for communication skills, organizational skills, stress management, goal setting, test taking, social skills, self-advocacy, study skills, and problem solving skills. The instruction is developed based on each student's individual needs and will support students in their educational, communication, emotional, and behavioral growth. It is designed to teach students strategies to enable them to become successful in their academic, social, and community settings. The students receive direct instruction in their identified skill area.	

Life Skills	***Based on IEP Minutes***
This class is designed for students who have an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP). Students identified for this class have demonstrated a need for functional skills, communication skills, organizational skills, stress management, goal setting, test taking, social skills, self-advocacy, study skills, and problem solving skills. The instruction is developed based on each student's individual needs and will support students in	

their educational, functional, communication, emotional, and behavioral growth. It is designed to teach students strategies to enable them to become successful in academic, social, and community settings as well as gaining independent skills. The students receive direct instruction in their identified skill area.

Speech and Language	***Based on IEP Minutes***
This service is designed for students who have an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) due to their communication and language needs. Scheduling is done on an individual basis.	

Developmental Adapted Physical Education (DAPE)	***Based on IEP Minutes***
DAPE is for students who qualify for the services through an assessment process. This class is for students who need to work on extra skills that are used in physical activities. We focus on lifelong health activities and skills the student would be doing in their General Physical Education class. As a whole, we want the student to have more practice time to work on skills so they can have more inclusion in their General Physical Education class.	

Scheduling Appeals Process

Math Appeals

- Students must test out of the pre-requisite course using an end of course assessment in order to advance.
- Follow District acceleration criteria

Appeals in ALL Other Disciplines

- If not initially invited into the course by initial identification, the student and parent(s) must:
    - Complete the written Appeal Request Form.
        - Available from the building administration or counselor
    - Building Administrator(s) and school staff review the student's file including:
        - Core Data (as described above in Identification)
        - Other Supplementary Data, such as:
            - Subject-specific scores on standardized tests
            - Subject-specific grades and GPA (i.e. Math GPA, Science GPA, etc., NOT overall GPA)
            - Work samples
    - Building Administrator(s) reviews the student's file and supplementary data with parents.
        - The Building Administrator will be the final authority on ALL appeals.

Schedule Change Process

In order for a schedule change to be approved, your student needs to complete the following steps:

1. Speak with the teacher of the class wishing to be dropped.
2. Fill out the "Schedule Change Request" form, located in the main office with Mrs. Kochlin or Mrs. Meyer.
3. Mr. Bakeberg and Mrs. Meyer make the final approval of the schedule change request.
4. Requests are not considered after the course has been in session for one week.

Please note schedule changes will be considered up to the final day of the second week of the semester.