IOWA CITY COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
All In for All Kids

Iowa City Community School District

MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAM OF STUDIES

2027-28 COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Iowa City Community School District Non-Discrimination Statement

It is the policy of the Iowa City Community School District not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, creed, age (for employment), marital status (for programs), sexual orientation, gender identity and socioeconomic status (for programs) in its educational programs and its employment practices. There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. If you have questions or a grievance related to this policy, please contact: Laura Cottrell for programming at cottrell.laura@iowacityschools.org or Nick Proud for employment at proud.nick@iowacityschools.org, 2255 N Dubuque Rd., Iowa City, IA 52245, (319)688-1000 If you are unsure how to proceed or would like assistance in discussing your options, you may also contact Janet Abejo-Parker, Ombuds, ombuds@iowacityschools.org or (319)688-1312

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6TH GRADE COURSE OFFERINGS

Math 6

In this course, students delve into an array of mathematical concepts, including the study of ratio and rate, as well as the division of fractions by fractions. The curriculum extends their numerical comprehension to incorporate negative numbers, and students gain proficiency in the use of variables among other fundamental mathematical principles. Throughout the course, students undertake significant work to broaden their mathematical foundation, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of key concepts.

GRADE LEVEL: 6th
CATEGORY: Fulfills one year of middle school math requirement
PREREQUISITE: 5th grade Mathematics
LENGTH: 1 year

Language Art 6

In this course, students will explore the world of literature and language through a variety of engaging activities. They enhance their reading comprehension skills by delving into diverse texts, analyzing characters and plots, and identifying literary elements. Additionally, students develop their writing proficiency by crafting narratives, essays, and other forms of expressive communication, honing their ability to convey ideas effectively and creatively.

GRADE LEVEL: 6th
CATEGORY: Required
PREREQUISITE: 5th grade Language Arts
LENGTH: 1 year

Language Arts 6 Honors

In this course, students delve into an enriched curriculum. Aligned with the regular Language Arts 6 course, the honors level demands higher performance standards and provides students the opportunity to select honors activities for each major unit. As a culmination of their efforts, students will engage in reflective portfolio assessments each trimester, showcasing their achievements in the honors components of the course.

GRADE LEVEL: 6th
CATEGORY: Fulfills Language Arts 6 requirement
PREREQUISITE: ISASP Scores or Parent Request
LENGTH: 1 year

Literacy 6 Honors

In this course, students delve into an enriched curriculum. Aligned with the regular Literacy 6 course, the honors level demands higher performance standards and provides students the opportunity to select honors activities for each major unit. As a culmination of their efforts, students will engage in reflective portfolio assessments each trimester, showcasing their achievements in the honors components of the course.

GRADE LEVEL: 6th
CATEGORY: Fulfills Language Arts 6 requirement
PREREQUISITE: ISASP Scores or Parent Request
LENGTH: 1 year

Condensed Math 6/7

In this course, students delve into the study of area and surface area concepts before progressing to ratios, rates, and percentages. They develop a nuanced understanding of these concepts through various representations like number line diagrams, tape diagrams, and tables, exploring fractional and decimal representations of rational numbers. The curriculum extends to equations and expressions, including solving linear equations in one variable and basic equations with exponents, paving the way for the examination of proportional relationships with a focus on the circumference and area of a circle. Students also explore percentage concepts, touching on applications such as sales tax, tipping, and markup, and broaden their arithmetic understanding to include negative numbers. The course concludes with a brief study of data and statistics, offering students an optional opportunity to synthesize their learning through various applications.

GRADE LEVEL: 6th (accelerated)
CATEGORY: Fulfills one year of middle school math requirement
PREREQUISITE: Math 5
LENGTH: 1 year

Social Studies 6

In this course, students will explore the diverse cultures, geography, and history of different societies around the world. They learn about ancient civilizations, such as Mesopotamia, Egypt, Greece, and Rome, and gain an understanding of how these societies shaped the modern world. Additionally, students use an inquiry process to delve into basic principles of government, economics, and geography, fostering a foundation for critical thinking and a broader perspective on global interconnectedness.

GRADE LEVEL: 6th
CATEGORY: Required
PREREQUISITE: 5th grade Social Studies

LENGTH: 1 year

Science 6

In this course, students will explore the fascinating world of life science, physical science, and Earth science. They learn about the characteristics of living organisms, delve into the properties of matter and energy, and investigate Earth's processes, including weather, rocks, and ecosystems. Through hands-on experiments and engaging lessons, 6th graders develop a foundational understanding of the scientific principles that shape our natural world.

GRADE LEVEL: 6th
CATEGORY: Required
PREREQUISITE: 5th Science
LENGTH: 1 year

Physical Education 6

In this course, the primary objective is to equip each student with the knowledge, concepts, and skills essential for maintaining a physically active and healthy lifestyle throughout their lives. Through a diverse range of activities, the course emphasizes the development of students' gross and fine motor coordination, engaging them in individual, cooperative, and team-based endeavors. The curriculum also incorporates a focus on health-related fitness, lifetime physical activity, and health/wellness concepts, encouraging active participation in class activities to instill the belief that leading an active and dynamic life is crucial for overall well-being.

GRADE LEVEL: 6th
CATEGORY: Required
PREREQUISITE: None
LENGTH: 1 year

Band 6

In this course, building on experience in 5th grade band, students embark on a musical journey spanning various styles and historical periods, mastering both performance and understanding. They rehearse within regular school hours and receive weekly small group lessons. Throughout the year, the band showcases their skills through two to three public concerts, which are mandatory for course completion. Additionally, students have the opportunity to apply for various honor bands, further enriching their musical experience.

GRADE LEVEL: 6th
CATEGORY: Elective
PREREQUISITE: 5th grade band, Band/Orchestra 101, or consent of instructor
LENGTH: 1 Year - will alternate days with PE

Choir 6

In this course, students will engage in a predominantly treble/unchanged voice choir, where they will explore various styles and genres of vocal music, including primarily unison and two-part compositions. The class emphasizes the ongoing development of singing skills and a strong foundation in music fundamentals. Throughout the course, students will also be required to participate in public choral performances outside of regular school hours, providing a culminating experience for their study in this subject.

GRADE LEVEL: 6th
CATEGORY: Elective
PREREQUISITE: None
LENGTH: 1 Year, will alternate days with PE

Music Applications

Music Applications is a year-long, comprehensive general music class for 6th grade students. Students learn and create music in small groups, ensembles, and individually, using singing, percussion instruments, piano, guitar, recorder, and digital tools. Students develop personal music preferences by exploring a variety of special interest areas and engaging in several music projects. This course provides a well-rounded introduction to the possible 7th and 8th grade music electives for those interested in pursuing a particular area of music more deeply. No pre-requisite required.

GRADE LEVEL: 6th
CATEGORY: Required (for students not taking Band, Choir, or Orchestra)
PREREQUISITE: None
LENGTH: 1 year, will alternate days with PE

Orchestra 6

In this course, building on experience in 5th grade orchestra, students explore a diverse array of music styles and historical periods, honing their musical skills. Orchestra 6 offers rehearsals during school hours and weekly lessons dedicated to technique improvement. Additionally, students perform at least two to three evening concerts annually. For advanced students, opportunities to audition for honor orchestras become available in the second and third trimesters, enhancing their musical journey.

GRADE LEVEL: 6th
CATEGORY: Elective
PREREQUISITE: 5th grade orchestra or consent of instructor
LENGTH: 1 Year, will alternate days with PE

Health

In this course, students build key skills outlined in the National Health Education Standards, including analyzing influences, accessing accurate and credible resources, communicating clearly, resisting pressure using refusal and negotiation tactics, decision-making, goal setting,

and self-management. This skills focus helps students build confidence, deal with pressures, and avoid or reduce risk behaviors.

GRADE LEVEL: 6th
CATEGORY: Required
PREREQUISITE: None
LENGTH: 1 Trimester

Future Ready Foundations

AVID is an acronym for Advancement Via Individual Determination. In this course, students will develop the academic habits they will need to be successful in middle school. Students will learn about organization, study skills, communication, and self-advocacy. The course offers engaging activities for students to participate in activities that incorporate strategies focused on writing, inquiry, collaboration, organization, and reading to support their academic growth. Additionally, students engage in activities centered around exploring college and career opportunities and their own agency.

GRADE LEVEL: 6th
CATEGORY: Required
PREREQUISITE: None
LENGTH: 1 Trimester

Art

In this course, students will explore the exciting world of visual expression through various mediums and techniques. They learn to use colors, shapes, and lines to communicate their ideas and emotions, fostering creativity and self-expression. Projects may include drawing, painting, and sculpture, allowing students to develop their artistic skills while discovering the joy of creating unique and meaningful artwork.

GRADE LEVEL: 6th
CATEGORY: Required
PREREQUISITE: None
LENGTH: 1 Trimester

LANGUAGE ARTS

Language Arts 7

In this course, students undergo a holistic writing journey, which includes prewriting, drafting, revising, receiving peer feedback, and refining their work. Through a variety of writing tasks, such as argument essays, belief essays, personal narratives, poetry, speeches, and research papers, students explore their creative and analytical capabilities. The curriculum's ultimate goal is to significantly improve students' writing skills across a wide spectrum of genres, offering a comprehensive and skill-enhancing approach to language arts.

GRADE LEVEL: 7th
CATEGORY: Required
PREREQUISITE: None
LENGTH: 1 year

Literacy 7

In this course, students will gain valuable strategies to enhance their reading skills, promoting active engagement, critical thinking, and cultural awareness. The curriculum encompasses a wide array of text types, including informational, literary, and multimodal materials, enabling students to navigate diverse genres in personal and academic settings. Ultimately, this comprehensive approach aims to nurture well-rounded readers who can effectively analyze and interpret texts in various aspects of their lives.

GRADE LEVEL: 7th
CATEGORY: Required
PREREQUISITE: None
LENGTH: 1 year

Language Arts 7 Honors

In this course, students delve into an enriched curriculum. Aligned with the regular Language Arts 7 course, the honors level demands higher performance standards and provides students the opportunity to select honors activities for each major unit. As a culmination of their efforts, students will engage in reflective portfolio assessments each trimester, showcasing their achievements in the honors components of the course.

GRADE LEVEL: 7th
CATEGORY: Fulfills Language Arts 7 requirement
PREREQUISITE: ISASP Scores or Parent Request
LENGTH: 1 year

Literacy 7 Honors

In this course, students delve into an enriched curriculum. Aligned with the regular Literacy 7 course, the honors level demands higher performance standards and provides students the opportunity to select honors activities for each major unit. As a culmination of their efforts, students will engage in reflective portfolio assessments each trimester, showcasing their achievements in the honors components of the course.

GRADE LEVEL: 7th
CATEGORY: Fulfills Language Arts 7 requirement
PREREQUISITE: ISASP Scores or Parent Request
LENGTH: 1 year

Language Arts 8

In this course, students will develop essential lifelong learning skills, promoting independence and collaboration, with a strong emphasis on language as a means of communication, imagination, and meaning construction. The curriculum incorporates a wide variety of activities to continuously strengthen and improve critical thinking, speaking, reading, and writing abilities. The ultimate objective is to equip students with linguistic proficiency that goes beyond academic achievement, enabling them to excel in effective communication and creative expression throughout their lifetime.

GRADE LEVEL: 8th
CATEGORY: Required
PREREQUISITE: None
LENGTH: 1 year

Language Arts 8 Honors

In this course, students delve into an enriched curriculum. Aligned with the regular Language Arts 8 course, the honors level demands higher performance standards and provides students the opportunity to select honors activities for each major unit. As a culmination of their efforts, students will engage in reflective portfolio assessments each trimester, showcasing their achievements in the honors components of the course.

GRADE LEVEL: 8th
CATEGORY: Fulfills Language Arts 8 requirement
PREREQUISITE: None
LENGTH: 1 year

Writers' Workshop

In this course, students will engage in various styles of writing. Assignments may include photojournalism, creative writing, reflection, and poetry. Students will work to hone their

writing skills by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, and trying a new approach in their writing style.

GRADE LEVEL: 7th - 8th
CATEGORY: Elective
PREREQUISITE: None
LENGTH: 1 Trimester

Theater Workshop

This course offers students a dynamic exploration of drama-based learning throughout the trimester, designed to immerse them in all aspects of theatre. Students will engage in diverse performance-oriented activities that deepen their understanding of the theatrical arts, enabling them to grow as artists and collaborate with peers in scene work. Through a combination of informal performances and reading assignments, participants will gain practical insights into the intricacies of dramatic expression. The hands-on structure of the course allows students to actively participate in performances, fostering a meaningful and passionate connection to dramatic art.

GRADE LEVEL: 7th- 8th
CATEGORY: Elective
PREREQUISITE: None
LENGTH: 1 Trimester

Book Club

Too busy to read? Can't find time in your busy schedule to enjoy the latest cool books? Then this is the class for you. Read, talk with others, read, do a project, read, book-talk, read, read, read. This class is for anyone who likes to read and reads independently. In addition to reading, students will participate in classroom activities, which may include literature circles, literary letters, book talks, and book projects.

GRADE LEVEL: 7th - 8th
CATEGORY: Elective
PREREQUISITE: None
LENGTH: 1 Trimester

MATH

Math 7

In this course, students advance their understanding of rates and ratios, focusing on equivalent ratios and proportional relationships. The curriculum expands their comprehension of fractions to encompass all rational numbers, fostering comfort in manipulating and comparing expressions and equations. Throughout the course, students apply these mathematical skills to solve both theoretical and real-world problems, emphasizing the practical application of their knowledge.

GRADE LEVEL: 7th
CATEGORY: Fulfills one year of middle school math requirement
PREREQUISITE: Math 6
LENGTH: 1 year

Math 8

In this course, students tackle exciting new ideas and concepts in preparation for work in high school. They extend earlier understandings of proportional relationships to study linear relationships and work with linear equations in one and two variables. Among other things, they are also introduced to the idea of functions and have their first encounter with irrational numbers.

GRADE LEVEL: 8th
CATEGORY: Fulfills one year of middle school math requirement
PREREQUISITE: Math 7
LENGTH: 1 year

Condensed Math 7/8

In this course, students embark on a comprehensive exploration of mathematical concepts, starting with transformational geometry, where they delve into rigid transformations, congruence, scale drawings, dilations, and similarity. The curriculum advances to a deeper understanding of linear equations in one and two variables, equivalent expressions, and proportional relationships, leading to the study of linear relationships expressed through equations, tables, and graphs. Students extend their knowledge to systems of equations, apply linear relationships to contextual data with variability, and explore functions as a special type of relationship. The course also covers the extension of exponents to include all integers, orders of magnitude, scientific notation, and the introduction of irrational numbers, concluding with an optional unit allowing students to synthesize their learning through various applications.

GRADE LEVEL: 7th (accelerated)
CATEGORY: Fulfills one year of middle school math requirement
PREREQUISITE: Condensed Math 6/7
LENGTH: 1 year

Algebra I

In this course, students embark on their High School mathematical journey, laying the foundation for further academic pursuits. It marks the first of three mandatory courses for entry into numerous four-year colleges, with Geometry and Algebra 2 to follow. Throughout the curriculum, students develop vital skills in symbolic and graphical reasoning, focusing on key concepts like equation writing, graphing, and solving linear and quadratic equations. This comprehensive approach, blending visual and symbolic representations, underscores the significance of reading and problem-solving in unveiling unknown variables, setting a robust groundwork for students progressing into Geometry or Geometry Honors.

GRADE LEVEL: 8th (accelerated)
CATEGORY: Fulfills one year of middle school math requirement
PREREQUISITE: Math 8
LENGTH: 1 year

Geometry Honors

This course is designed for students in the accelerated mathematics program. Topics are studied with great rigor and at a rapid pace. Geometry is the study of the properties of figures in space. It includes right-triangle trigonometry, the study of transformations, and three-dimensional geometry. Inductive and deductive thinking skills are used in problem-solving situations, including applications to the real world. Proofwriting is included, as students prove properties of geometric figures, including polygons and circles. This course will prepare students for the study of Algebra 2 Honors.

GRADE LEVEL: 8th (accelerated)
CATEGORY: Fulfills one year of middle school math requirement
PREREQUISITE: Algebra 1
LENGTH: 1 Year

SCIENCE

Science 7

In this course, students explore a comprehensive range of scientific concepts, encompassing life, physical, and earth sciences. Utilizing diverse learning modalities, the course ensures accessibility, aligning with ICCSD standards and benchmarks to provide a well-rounded understanding of fundamental scientific principles.

GRADE LEVEL: 7th
CATEGORY: Required
PREREQUISITE: None
LENGTH: 1 year

Science 8

In this course, students delve into a comprehensive exploration of general science, covering essential concepts in life, physical, and earth sciences.Employing a diverse range of learning modalities, the course prioritizes accessibility, ensuring that science is approachable for all students while meticulously aligning with the ICCSD standards and benchmarks.

GRADE LEVEL: 8th
CATEGORY: Required
PREREQUISITE: None
LENGTH: 1 year

Earth & Space Science

In this course, students get to explore how science connects to society and the natural world by doing hands-on lab work and activities. The lessons focus on how earth and space science relate to everyday life and important issues. Students will learn about topics like Earth's place in the Universe, the different systems on Earth, and how human actions affect our planet. They'll take on the role of scientists, ask questions, do investigations, and even create their own experiments.

GRADE LEVEL: 8th
CATEGORY: Fulfills high school science requirement
PREREQUISITE: This course is taken concurrently with Science 8 if the student wished to challenge themselves academically and is planning to enroll in Algebra I or Geometry as an eighth grader.
LENGTH: 1 Year

STEM Explorers: Imagine, Create, Innovate

In this course, students actively participate in interactive and hands-on activities aimed at honing their skills in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM). This hands-on, choice-based course empowers students to explore exciting activities like 3D modeling, robotics, game design, and more, fostering creativity and collaboration. Join us to build technical skills while engaging in a vibrant community of innovators.

GRADE LEVEL: 7-8th
CATEGORY: Elective
PREREQUISITE: None
LENGTH: 1 Trimester

Science and Technology of Food

In this course, students actively participate in hands-on activities, projects, and problem-solving exercises that replicate key concepts within the food science industry. Exploring topics such as food chemistry, processing, product development, and agricultural concepts, students engage in practical simulations to deepen their understanding. The course places a strong emphasis on research and experimental design, guiding students through investigative processes to enhance their skills in the field of food science.

GRADE LEVEL: 7th-8th
CATEGORY: Elective
PREREQUISITE: None
LENGTH: 1 Trimester

Flight and Space

In this course, students explore the exciting world of aerospace come alive. Students become engineers as they design, prototype, and test models to learn about the science of flight and what it takes to travel and live in space. They solve real-world aviation and space challenges.

GRADE LEVEL: 7th-8th
CATEGORY: Elective
PREREQUISITE:
LENGTH: 1 Trimester

SOCIAL STUDIES

Global Studies

In this course, students examine cultures and geographic characteristics of selected world areas emphasizing interdependence, the scarcity of resources, environmental problems, different governments, and cultural diversity. The concept-focused curriculum features inquiry lessons, role-playing, simulation activities, and skill exercises to achieve the objectives of each unit. A major goal for students in Global Studies is to understand the world as a global system, see themselves as participants in that system, and recognize the benefits, costs, rights, and responsibilities inherent in such participation.

GRADE LEVEL: 7th
CATEGORY: Required
PREREQUISITE: None
LENGTH: 1 year

American Studies

In this course, American Studies offers students a comprehensive exploration of American history spanning from 1600 to 1900, emphasizing the formation and evolution of the United States. The curriculum delves into the rich tapestry of the American experience, highlighting the diverse array of individuals, events, and perspectives that have shaped the nation. Through this study, students are not only expected to gain a heightened awareness of historical occurrences but also to enhance their abilities in reading, writing, listening, and analytical thinking, fostering a deeper understanding of how past events continue to impact contemporary society.

GRADE LEVEL: 8th
CATEGORY: Required
PREREQUISITE: None
LENGTH: 1 year

PHYSICAL EDUCATION & HEALTH

Recreation & Fitness Activities

In this course, students will primarily engage in team sports and recreational activities, complemented by fitness exercises. The emphasis is placed on fostering participation in both collaborative team endeavors and individual fitness pursuits. Throughout the curriculum, students are encouraged to actively partake in a variety of activities that contribute to their overall physical well-being and promote a balanced and active lifestyle. Health 8 lessons may be included.

GRADE LEVEL: 7th and 8th
CATEGORY: PE
PREREQUISITE: None
LENGTH: 1 year

Performance

In this course, students will undergo training aimed at enhancing their strength, power, agility, speed, and endurance, incorporating a multifaceted approach that includes form and technique training along with weight and agility exercises. The curriculum focuses on a comprehensive development strategy, addressing both the refinement of specific skills and the improvement of overall physical capabilities. Through this combination of training methods, students are poised to enhance their athletic performance and overall fitness. Health 8 lessons may be included.

GRADE LEVEL: 7th and 8th
CATEGORY: PE
PREREQUISITE: None
LENGTH: 1 year

Personal Fitness & Group Activities

In this course, students will primarily engage in fundamental fitness and wellness activities, supplemented by small group games and activities. The curriculum centers on cultivating basic fitness principles and fostering overall well-being, emphasizing participation in activities that contribute to physical health and personal wellness. Through a combination of fitness exercises and interactive small group games, students are encouraged to adopt a holistic approach to maintaining a healthy and active lifestyle. Health 8 lessons may be included.

GRADE LEVEL: 7th and 8th
CATEGORY: PE
PREREQUISITE: None
LENGTH: 1 year

Health 7

In this course for 7th, the focus is on personal development and health, encompassing critical concepts related to expressing and comprehending personal thoughts, feelings, and opinions. The curriculum extends to fostering critical thinking skills across various dimensions of health, including the physical, mental, emotional, and social aspects. Students are equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to enhance their overall well-being, prevent illness, and minimize risky behaviors, empowering them to make informed and healthy decisions throughout their lives.

GRADE LEVEL: 7th
CATEGORY: Health
PREREQUISITE: None
LENGTH: 1 Trimester

Health 8

This course provides students with the knowledge and skills to make informed health decisions and develop lifelong healthy habits. Students will explore topics including nutrition, hydration, sleep, water safety, online safety, first aid, and infectious and non-infectious diseases. Additional health topics may be incorporated to address student needs. Through decision-making, goal-setting, communication, and advocacy, students will learn strategies to reduce health risks and promote personal and community well-being.

GRADE LEVEL: 8th
CATEGORY: Health
PREREQUISITE: None
LENGTH: 1 Trimester

ART

Artistic Exploration and Discovery

In this course, students embark on an exploratory journey, delving into a diverse array of art techniques and media. They are not only encouraged to think critically and foster their creativity but also to share their ideas, explore innovative approaches, and gain a deeper appreciation for the rich cultural diversity inherent in the world of art. This course serves as a foundational stepping stone, motivating students keen on art to begin their discovery journey.

GRADE LEVEL: 7th- 8th
CATEGORY: Elective
PREREQUISITE: None
LENGTH: 1 Trimester

Studio Art

In this course, students are offered the opportunity to further explore concepts, and media and develop their own styles for making art. Students will spend time creating art, working in groups, and researching artists. The emphasis is on hands-on production and exploration of uses of media to create art. Students will practice refining concepts, skills, techniques, and creative expression will be emphasized. Inventive, creative, and experimental solutions will be required to fulfill assignments. This course may be repeated for credit.

GRADE LEVEL: 7th - 8th
CATEGORY: Elective
PREREQUISITE: None
LENGTH: 1 Trimester

Digital Art

In this course, students are provided an introduction to digital multimedia, covering principles and processes related to digital media and design, with a focus on production. Students will work on various multimedia projects, such as sports team posters and personal identity presentations.
This course may be repeated for credit.

GRADE LEVEL: 7th - 8th
CATEGORY: Elective
PREREQUISITE: None
LENGTH: 1 Trimester

Stop Motion Animation

In this course, students will be exposed to Stop Motion Animation over the course of the class. They will create their own short stop motion film. The storyline may be written in their English class, the animation will then be created in Art, and lastly, music for the animation may be composed in Music. This course may be repeated for credit.

GRADE LEVEL: 7th - 8th
CATEGORY: Elective
PREREQUISITE: None
LENGTH: 1 Trimester

BUSINESS

Computer Essentials Keyboarding

In this elective course designed for 7th and 8th graders, the primary focus is on keyboard fundamentals, with a substantial portion of the trimester dedicated to mastering the touch method of typing and enhancing speed and accuracy. Additionally, students will delve into desktop publishing, formatting, and coding during the course. Scheduled every other day, this elective provides students with valuable skills in keyboarding and related technological applications.

GRADE LEVEL: 7th and 8th
CATEGORY: Elective
PREREQUISITE: None
LENGTH: 1 Trimester

Introduction to Financial Literacy

In this course, students delve into the fundamental principles of personal finance, gaining invaluable insights that lay the foundation for future financial success. Through comprehensive lessons, participants learn to make informed decisions, understand potential pitfalls such as debt, and empower themselves to achieve their long-term financial goals. Ultimately, this curriculum serves as a vital tool, equipping students with the essential money management skills necessary to navigate and secure a sound financial future.

GRADE LEVEL: 7th
CATEGORY: Elective
PREREQUISITE: None
LENGTH: 1 Trimester

FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCE

Family Consumer Science I

Family and Consumer Sciences I introduces students to essential life skills, including financial literacy, food and nutrition, wellness, safety and sanitation, human development, relationships, and career exploration. Students will also explore introductory sewing and design technologies while developing communication, collaboration, problem-solving, and other employability skills.

GRADE LEVEL: 7th or 8th
CATEGORY: Required
PREREQUISITE: None
LENGTH: 1 Trimester

Family Consumer Science II

Family and Consumer Sciences II builds on essential life skills while preparing students for greater independence in their personal lives and future careers. Students will explore housing and interior design, consumer awareness and advertising, sewing and design technologies, food and nutrition, workplace safety and sanitation, and regulations in the hospitality industry. Through hands-on experiences, students will develop practical skills in communication, collaboration, problem-solving, and other 21st-century employability skills.

GRADE LEVEL: 8th
CATEGORY: Elective
PREREQUISITE: Family Consumer Science I
LENGTH: 1 Trimester

Food & Nutrition

Food and Nutrition explores the science of food preparation, food production, and nutrition. Students will learn about essential nutrients and apply food science principles through hands-on food preparation experiences. Students will also develop skills in workplace safety, sanitation, and hospitality industry regulations. This course is ideal for students interested in exploring careers in the food service and hospitality industries.

GRADE LEVEL: 8th
CATEGORY: Elective
PREREQUISITE: Family Consumer Science I
LENGTH: 1 Trimester

Clothing & Design

Clothing and Design introduces students to the world of fashion, apparel, and design. Students will explore color, fashion trends, fabrics, figure types, wardrobe planning, consumer

choices, apparel production, and the elements and principles of design. Students will create fashion flats, learn hand and machine sewing techniques, and use sewing and design technologies through hands-on projects. The course also introduces careers in fashion design, fashion merchandising, and related design industries.

GRADE LEVEL: 8th
CATEGORY: Elective
PREREQUISITE: Family Consumer Science I
LENGTH: 1 Trimester

INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGY

Applied Technology

Applied Technology is a hands-on, project-based course using the Project Lead the Way (PLTW) curriculum to introduce students to Applied Science, Technology, Engineering, and Manufacturing (ASTEM) through the engineering design process and real-world problem solving with VEX Robotics® and industry-standard software. Students design, build, program, and test devices and systems while building technical, employability, and measurement skills across the full engineering design process. Throughout the course, Career Instruction, Exploration, and planning are integrated, so students develop a clear occupational identity and ICAP-aligned plans for high school CTE, course selection, and postsecondary pathways

GRADE LEVEL: 8th
CATEGORY: Required Elective (Applied Tech or Industrial Tech I)
PREREQUISITE: None
LENGTH: 1 Trimester

Industrial Technology I

In this course, students receive an introduction to woodworking techniques, tools, manufacturing processes, and workplace safety protocols. The curriculum involves hands-on learning, allowing students to build small projects in the workshop while mastering the safe use of both power and hand tools. Additionally, the course integrates units on Career Exploration, fostering students' occupational identity, employability skills, and 21st Century Skills through practical, experiential learning of technical skills.

GRADE LEVEL: 8th
CATEGORY: Required Elective (Applied Tech or Industrial Tech I)
PREREQUISITE: None
LENGTH: 1 Trimester

Industrial Technology II

In this course, students develop into the intricacies of woodworking, tools, manufacturing, and workplace safety, advancing their understanding and proficiency in these areas. The curriculum places a strong emphasis on hands-on learning, as students enhance their skills in the secure utilization of power tools and hand tools through the construction of small projects within the workshop setting. This practical approach ensures a comprehensive and experiential learning process for students interested in developing their expertise in woodworking.

GRADE LEVEL: 8th
CATEGORY: Elective

PREREQUISITE: Industrial Technology 1 or consent of teacher.
LENGTH: 1 Trimester

Introduction to the World of Metalworking

In this hands-on Career and Technical Education (CTE) course, students are introduced to metalworking, fabrication techniques, and skilled trades through authentic project-based learning. This course aligns with Iowa CTE Middle School Applied Science, Technology, Engineering, and Manufacturing (ASTEM) standards, with a strong emphasis on workplace safety, precision measurement, and foundational metalworking skills, including cutting, forming, joining, and finishing metal. Students gain technical competencies and professional skills essential for careers in welding, machining, metal fabrication, and other skilled trades, while creating real-world projects in a fully equipped metals lab.

GRADE LEVEL: 7th - 8th
CATEGORY: Elective
PREREQUISITE:
LENGTH: 1 Trimester

Intro to Home Handyperson Maintenance

In this course, students are equipped with the knowledge and practical skills needed for fundamental home maintenance and repairs, covering aspects like safety, tool usage, and project cost considerations. It caters to both aspiring DIY enthusiasts and those considering careers in vocational trades such as carpentry, electrical work, and plumbing. This also builds valuable career job experience, as students apply their learning in collaborative project-based learning environments that simulate real-world scenarios. Through hands-on application, the course builds a deep understanding of essential tools and equipment, preparing students for success in their future professional pathways.

GRADE LEVEL: 7th-8th
CATEGORY: Elective
PREREQUISITE:
LENGTH: 1 Trimester

INFORMATION SOLUTIONS

Computer Science Discoveries

In this introductory course, students are encouraged to explore computer science as a means of fostering creativity, communication, problem-solving, and enjoyment. Students are introduced to problem-solving related to programming while learning valuable skills such as debugging, using resources, and teamwork. Students will create programmatic images, animations, interactive art, and games. Additionally, students are allowed to showcase their knowledge through classroom presentations about the computer, enhancing their understanding of computer science in practical and engaging ways.

GRADE LEVEL: 7th
CATEGORY: Elective
PREREQUISITE: None
LENGTH: 1 Trimester

Artificial Intelligence- Generative AI

In this course, students will use machine learning to make predictions, investigate bias in machine learning applications, and use generative AI Tools to create original works of art, to name a few. Generative AI and Machine Learning can be a solid foundation for future research or study in the field of Computer Science and AI. Students explore how computers learn from data to make decisions, and then develop machine-learning projects around real-world data. The unit culminates in designing a machine learning app to solve a personally relevant problem.

GRADE LEVEL: 7th - 8th
CATEGORY: Elective
PREREQUISITE:
LENGTH: 1 Trimester

Social Media

In this course, students learn essential social media skills using digital production tools to create social media posts. The course also explores marketing and demonstrates how to leverage social media effectively for personal, academic, and professional purposes, dispelling the notion that it's just for social connections and photo sharing.

GRADE LEVEL: 8th
CATEGORY: Elective
PREREQUISITE: None
LENGTH: 1 Trimester

MUSIC

Band/Orchestra 101

In this course, designed specifically for students with limited prior experience in band or orchestra, participants can expect a focused one-trimester program. Meeting daily, the class emphasizes fundamental music reading and instrument-specific skills, preparing students to seamlessly integrate into their regular grade-level ensemble. By the end of the trimester, students will have the tools and knowledge needed to become valuable members of their 7th or 8th-grade large ensemble.

GRADE LEVEL: 7th/8th grade
CATEGORY: Elective
PREREQUISITE: None
LENGTH: 1 Trimester (Fall Trimester)

Concert Band (7th Grade)

In this band program, students engage in a comprehensive course of study aimed at cultivating their enjoyment, appreciation, and performance of music across various styles and historical periods. Rehearsals for the Concert Band occur daily during regular school hours, accompanied by weekly small group lessons. The program includes formal public concerts and district-wide band festivals in the spring, offering students valuable performance experiences that are mandatory for the course. Additionally, students have opportunities to audition for the jazz band in the fall, and advanced students can apply or audition for various honor bands.

GRADE LEVEL: 7th
CATEGORY: Elective
PREREQUISITE: 5th/6th grade band, Band 101, or consent of instructor
LENGTH: 1 Year

Symphony Band (8th Grade)

In this band program, students partake in a comprehensive course of study aimed at fostering enjoyment, appreciation, and performance of music across diverse styles and historical periods. Symphony Band rehearsals take place daily during regular school hours, complemented by weekly small group lessons. The curriculum includes a focus on marching band fundamentals during the first month, preparing students for performances at high school football games, and throughout the year, students engage in formal public concerts, district-wide band festivals, and optional opportunities such as auditioning for the jazz band in the fall or various honor bands.

GRADE LEVEL: 8th

CATEGORY: Elective
PREREQUISITE: 7th Grade Band, Band 101, or consent of Instructor
LENGTH: 1 Year

Tenor-Bass Choir (7th/8th Grade)
In this course, students will explore the evolving demands of choral music, adapting to the changing voices of choral students. They will delve into various styles and forms of choral music, specifically focusing on compositions written for two and three-part harmonies. Throughout the course, students will prioritize the development of singing skills and a solid understanding of fundamental musical principles. The culmination of their studies will be showcased through mandatory public choral performances held outside of regular school hours.

GRADE LEVEL: 7th and 8th
CATEGORY: Elective
PREREQUISITE: None
LENGTH: 1 Year, may be alternate days depending on the school

Treble Choir (7th Grade)
In this course, designed for novice choral students, participants will explore a wide array of choral music styles written in two and three parts. The curriculum places a strong emphasis on honing singing abilities and mastering essential music fundamentals. As a culmination of their studies, students are expected to take part in mandatory public choral performances held outside of regular school hours.

GRADE LEVEL: 7th
CATEGORY: Elective
PREREQUISITE: None
LENGTH: 1 Year, may be alternate days depending on the school

Treble Choir (8th Grade)
This course continues the study of many styles and types of choral music written in three parts. Students will work to improve vocal techniques, sight-reading skills, and music fundamentals. Required public choral performances given outside the school day are a culmination of this study.

GRADE LEVEL: 8th
CATEGORY: Elective
PREREQUISITE: None
LENGTH: 1 Year, may be alternate days depending on the school

Concert Orchestra (7th Grade)

In this course, the orchestra program offers a comprehensive study designed to cultivate students' enjoyment, appreciation, and performance skills across diverse musical styles and historical periods. Specifically tailored for 7th-grade students, the daily rehearsals of the Concert Orchestra focus on delivering high-quality musical renditions in authentic styles, supported by weekly lessons during school hours to enhance technical proficiency. As part of their musical journey, students showcase their talents through required evening concerts and district-wide festivals, while advanced learners can choose to audition for esteemed honor orchestras.

GRADE LEVEL: 7th
CATEGORY: Elective
PREREQUISITE: 5th/6th grade orchestra, Orchestra 101 or consent of instructor
LENGTH: 1 Year, may be alternate days depending on the school

Symphony Orchestra (8th Grade)

In this course, the orchestra program offers a comprehensive study aimed at fostering students' enjoyment, appreciation, and performance of music across diverse styles and historical periods. Specifically tailored for 8th-grade students, the Symphony Orchestra engages in daily rehearsals during school hours, presenting high-quality musical pieces in authentic styles. Alongside weekly lessons to enhance technical skills, students in the Symphony Orchestra showcase their musical talents through mandatory evening concerts and district-wide festivals, with advanced learners having the opportunity to apply for or audition for various honor orchestras.

GRADE LEVEL: 8th
CATEGORY: Elective
PREREQUISITE: 7th grade orchestra, Orchestra 101 or consent of instructor
LENGTH: 1 Year, may be alternate days depending on the school

Global Percussion Ensemble

Global Percussion is a trimester long music elective for 7th and 8th grade students. Students develop their musicality by participating in small ensembles that explore the rich rhythms and traditions of percussion music from around the world. Students learn and perform songs from diverse genres, including drumming styles of Ghana and the clave rhythms of Central and South America. The course includes the study of music genres and instruments from a historical perspective as well as hands-on performance experience in a non-competitive and inviting environment. Through this approach, students develop improvisation skills and an understanding of texture and form.

Grade Level: 7/8

Category: Elective
Prerequisite: None
Length: 1 Trimester

Introduction to Digital Music Production

Students explore the basics of creating music using digital audio workstations (DAWs). Students learn to record, edit, and mix tracks while incorporating beatboxing, loops, virtual instruments, and sound effects. Throughout the course, students produce several original music mini-projects to showcase their unique sound.

Grade Level: 7-8
Category: Elective
Prerequisite: None
Length: 1 Trimester

Movie and Video Game Music

Students evaluate and interpret examples of movie and video game music in order to understand how composers use music to express ideas. This course is project-based, and includes opportunities for students to select music for movie scenes and to compose music for a video game character. Students will engage with music online, using open source media, Chrome Music Lab (Song Maker), and WeVideo.

GRADE LEVEL: 7th or 8th
CATEGORY: Elective
PREREQUISITE: None
LENGTH: 1 Trimester

Guitar Skills

In this course, students learn the fundamentals of guitar playing. The emphasis is placed on acoustic guitar with opportunities to explore the electric guitar. Students develop chord proficiency, build a repertoire of songs, and hone music theory skills pertaining to guitar.

GRADE LEVEL: 7th or 8th
CATEGORY: Elective
PREREQUISITE: None
LENGTH: 1 Trimester

Rock Band

In this course, students delve into popular music styles such as rock, pop, hip-hop, and more, based on interest and experience. Students learn to play instruments like acoustic guitar, electric guitar, electric bass, piano keyboard, drums, and vocals. Students learn about the process of songwriting and build a combination of music theory understanding and practical

skills so that they are uniquely prepared to express themselves musically in collaborative small-group bands in a culminating project.

GRADE LEVEL: 8th
CATEGORY: Elective
PREREQUISITE: Consent of Instructor for 8th Graders
LENGTH: 1 Trimester

WORLD LANGUAGES

Exploratory French

In this course, students are introduced to the French language, focusing on fundamental language skills, basic vocabulary, and cultural awareness. The course allows students to decide whether they want to pursue French 1 in 8th grade for high school credit after gaining exposure to the language. Emphasis is on communicating in French-using appropriate introductory grammar and vocabulary.

GRADE LEVEL: 7th
CATEGORY: Elective
PREREQUISITE: None
LENGTH: 1 Trimester

Exploratory Spanish

In this course, students are introduced to the Spanish language, focusing on fundamental language skills, basic vocabulary, and cultural awareness. The course allows students to decide whether they want to pursue Spanish 1 in 8th grade for high school credit after gaining exposure to the language. Emphasis is on communicating in Spanish using appropriate introductory grammar and vocabulary.

GRADE LEVEL: 7th
CATEGORY: Elective
PREREQUISITE: None
LENGTH: 1 Trimester

French 1

In this course, students receive a comprehensive foundation in language learning, covering listening comprehension, speaking, reading, writing, and culture. The emphasis is on effective communication, incorporating appropriate grammar and vocabulary. Language skills are developed through real-life scenarios and the cultural context of French-speaking countries, encompassing various aspects such as pronunciation, greetings, conversation, vocabulary for different topics, cultural insights, and grammar structures. Additionally, students engage in daily activities and homework to enhance their language proficiency, with progression to the next trimester or level contingent on maintaining passing grades at the end of each trimester.

GRADE LEVEL: 8th
CATEGORY: Elective
PREREQUISITE: None

LENGTH: 1 year

Spanish 1

In this course, students receive a comprehensive foundation in language learning, encompassing listening comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing skills. The curriculum is designed to immerse learners in everyday situations while exploring the cultural aspects of Spanish-speaking countries. Topics covered include greetings, conversation, food, numbers, weather, family, and more, with a strong focus on communication using proper grammar and vocabulary. Students engage in various activities and regular homework assignments to develop proficiency, and they have the option to continue their Spanish studies with Spanish II or Spanish II Honors upon completion of this course.

GRADE LEVEL: 8th
CATEGORY: Elective
PREREQUISITE: None
LENGTH: 1 year

ADDITIONAL COURSES

Some of these Additional Courses may not be available at every school.

AVID

In this course, known as AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination), students engage in a college readiness program meticulously crafted to foster the skills essential for success in higher education. Participants benefit from supplementary academic, social, and emotional support, tailored to empower them in navigating the challenges of their school's most demanding courses. Emphasizing the development of critical skills such as writing, critical thinking, teamwork, organization, and reading, students interested in the program must undergo an application process for acceptance.

GRADE LEVEL: 7th, 8th
CATEGORY: Elective
PREREQUISITE: Application and interview process
LENGTH: 1 Year

ELP 6, ELP 7 and ELP 8

ELP 6, ELP 7 and ELP 8 are elective courses for 6th grade, 7th grade or 8th grade students who have been identified to receive services from the Extended Learning Program. The class is designed for students with high academic abilities and strong motivation to exchange ideas in research and discussion formats, and may also include opportunities for project-based learning. ELP 7 and ELP 8 meet throughout the year every other day. Students will work on studies that culminate in individual projects each trimester. Eligibility for enrollment is determined by previous ELP participation or approval through the district's ELP Self-Nomination Form, with additional information available at www.IowaCitySchools.org/ELP.

GRADE LEVEL: 7th and 8th
CATEGORY: Elective
PREREQUISITE: Qualify for Extended Learning Program
LENGTH: 1 year (Alternate Days)

Video Production

In this course, students eager to grasp the fundamentals of television production can enroll in this elective, where they will delve into the intricacies of planning and executing a daily news program. The curriculum spans one trimester, offering a comprehensive exploration of video production, and is accessible to all eligible eighth-graders. Beyond routine class sessions and standard course obligations, participants will actively contribute to the creation of a daily announcement show broadcast every morning.

GRADE LEVEL: 8th
CATEGORY: Elective
PREREQUISITE: None
LENGTH: 1 Trimester, may be alternate days depending on the school

Leadership

In this course, students keen on developing leadership skills and applying them in practical scenarios are encouraged to enroll in this elective, which spans one trimester and is available to all eighth graders. A mandatory requirement for those aspiring to hold positions in the Northwest Student Congress, the class is essential for individuals aiming to contribute to the planning of school activities through committee work. In addition to the standard curriculum, students will actively engage in committee participation, collaborating on the organization of events like spirit days, parties, and special assemblies throughout the trimester.

GRADE LEVEL: 8th
CATEGORY: Elective
PREREQUISITE: None
LENGTH: 1 Trimester, may be alternate days depending on the school

Volunteer

In this course, students will undergo training in the principles of volunteer work as part of a dedicated program. Participants will be assigned to various work sites within the school building, often involving placements in special education classrooms, where they will collaborate with a staff supervisor. This hands-on experience aims to cultivate valuable skills and contribute to the student's understanding of community service.

GRADE LEVEL: 8th
CATEGORY: Elective
PREREQUISITE: None
LENGTH: 1 Trimester

Career Connections

JA It's My Future introduces students to essential career-readiness skills through engaging, hands-on activities. In this elective, students explore career clusters, identify personal strengths, and learn how interests connect to real-world jobs. They practice foundational employment skills such as resume writing, interviewing, and developing a personal brand. The course also emphasizes the importance of both technical and soft skills for future success. Students engage in reflective discussions and practical tasks that build confidence and career awareness. By the end of the program, participants leave with a clearer sense of their goals and the steps needed to pursue their future pathways.

GRADE LEVEL: 7th, 8th
CATEGORY: Elective
PREREQUISITE: None
LENGTH: 1 Trimester

ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS

English Language Learner Program

The English Language Learner Program offers high-quality English language instruction and support for ELs to meet academic standards through curriculum aligned to IA Core and English Language Proficiency Standards in all subject areas. Students who are not yet proficient in the English language are assessed according to state/federal guidelines and placed in language development courses as part of their general education program. Courses are offered for beginning, intermediate, and advanced English learners and provide explicit instruction in all of the language domains (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) with an emphasis on developing academic language proficiency. Sheltered content courses for ELs provide support in learning core subject matter while promoting language development.

CASL

CASL, a cross-curricular Approach to Student-driven Learning, is a cross-curricular project-based learning environment blending science, social studies, and language arts. The 7th grade model includes Language Arts 7, Global Studies, and Science 7. The 8th grade model includes Language Arts 8, American Studies, and Science 8. CASL incorporates innovative instructional strategies as well as community connections within student projects. In addition, the CASL Program incorporates the 5Cs (communication, critical thinking, connectedness, creation, and collaboration), fostering collaboration at both the student and teacher levels. The 7th and 8th grade teacher teams work together closely to provide rich cross-curricular learning opportunities for all students. CASL is a project-based learning initiative that allows students to engage in deep and meaningful learning, moving their knowledge from beyond the individual subject level to life beyond the walls of school. With both CASL programs, the grade-level teacher teams (Science, Social Studies, and Language Arts), work together to determine which standards for each subject area will be evaluated for each project-based learning activity. The teams discuss and develop the path in which they will assess students on their understanding of those standards, incorporating all three subject areas. They also develop formative assessments throughout the unit to be able to differentiate instruction to tailor lessons and activities to reach individual student needs and develop mini-lessons or activities to assist students in reaching the desired outcome for unit standards. Students will have a voice and choice in how they will show their understanding of each unit project, using the guidelines provided by the teacher teams on how their work will be assessed. The CASL program also has the freedom to manipulate the school's daily schedule to meet their needs. CASL uses three class periods as a block of time where they can choose to ignore the traditional bell schedule, as well as the class schedule, allowing the teachers to determine how best to use their time to reach desired standards and outcomes.