

BADGER RIDGE MIDDLE SCHOOL



COURSE HANDBOOK

SEVENTH GRADE

2020-2021

Dear Parents and Students:

This handbook has been developed to provide information for parents and students about the courses and curriculum at Badger Ridge Middle School.

The curriculum features a strong skills development program, experiences of an exploratory nature, and extensive use of inquiry and discovery. It is our aim that every student is put on a path to be “High School Ready.”

The middle school creates a learning environment that provides stability, promotes self-confidence and is sensitive to the needs of each child. Within this environment, we strive to provide an education that allows the student to be exposed to a wide variety of positive educational experiences.

Badger Ridge continues with a Two-Way Immersion (TWI) program in sixth and seventh grades. Students in TWI are a part of the house concept, will learn social studies in Spanish in 6th grade, and science in Spanish in 7th grade, as well as enroll in Spanish Language Arts class. Also, instead of the World Language introductory class, students enrolled in TWI will take $\frac{1}{4}$ of Spanish Literature.

Additionally, school staff is working to provide more personalized experiences for students to access, engage in, and express knowledge, understanding, and application of expected learning.

We hope you will find the handbook to be a practical guide as you examine the required and elective course offerings.

If you do have any questions relating to our courses, please call Badger Ridge Middle School at 845-4100.

Sincerely,

Alan Buss, Principal

SEVENTH GRADE

Required Classes

Language Arts

Math

Science*

Social Studies

Physical Education

Music** (Band, Choir, Orchestra)

Exploratory Classes:

- Art
- Family and Consumer Science
- Information and Technology Literacy
- World Language: Spanish*, Introduction to Spanish Language Arts, or German

*Students in the Two-way Immersion Program will receive Science in Spanish and Spanish Language Arts during R2S time. They will also participate in an additional quarter of Spanish Literature 7 in place of a World Language.

**Students will be enrolled in the seventh grade music performance class (band, choir, or orchestra) that they took in sixth grade.

REQUIRED CLASSES

Language Arts

The English/Language Arts classroom is taught using a workshop model with an emphasis on writing and reading skills. Our units of study in writing include narrative, informational, and opinion pieces. Grammar and usage are studied throughout the year. The writing process and speaking and listening skills are integral parts of instruction. During reading, the focus is on increasing reading comprehension using these strategies: predicting, inferring, questioning, connecting, summarizing, visualizing, synthesizing, and evaluating. Our units of study include elements of both fiction and non-fiction, and use novels, short stories, and a variety of other texts to read for information and enjoyment. Student choice, small group discussions, and speaking and listening skills are an integral part of instruction.

The 7th grade math curriculum is built off of the Common Core Math Standards. Topics at the 7th grade level include numeration, algebra, geometry, statistics and probability. Numeration topics include a particular focus on ratios, decimals, percents, proportions, and integers. Topics in algebra include order of operations, rates, functions, one and two step equations, and commutative and distributive properties. Geometry topics include three-dimensional figures, triangle and angle properties, corresponding angles and sides, scaling and similarity. Statistics topics include mean, median, mode and range, and extensive graphing. Probability topics include independent and dependent events, combinations and permutations. Throughout the year students are encouraged to explore topics, develop a meaningful understanding of concepts, and hone the skills necessary to develop these more abstract concepts. All students are also expected to practice and demonstrate the standards for mathematical practice.

Science

The 7th grade science curriculum focuses on life science topics including cell structure and function in single-celled and multicellular organisms, genetics, natural selection and adaptations, and interdependent relationships in ecosystems. Skills emphasized include safely using laboratory equipment to perform both group and individual experimental inquiries, designing quality experiments, collecting and analyzing data, and communicating results with evidence and reasoning. Strategies to read, comprehend and analyze informational science text from a variety of sources are also incorporated throughout the school year. Standards addressed are: cell structure and function; structure and processes of single-celled and multicellular organisms; genetics, heredity and reproduction of organisms; natural selection, diversity and adaptations of organisms in a variety of ecosystems; engineering and experimental design; human impacts on the world; and reading, comprehending and analyzing informational text.

TWI Science

Students enrolled in the District's Two-way Immersion program take Life Sciences in Spanish at seventh grade. Bilingual units of study parallel the units of study in the monolingual classrooms and include classification, cells, genetics, natural selection, viruses and bacteria, human body systems, and ecosystems. Students learn lab safety, data collection and analysis, and how to design, implement, and report on experiments.

Social Studies

In seventh grade social studies, the primary focus is on the Eastern Hemisphere. 7th graders delve into the process of inquiry, and service learning, as well as the discovery of cultures and geography. Students review geography skills while they learn about this region of the world.

The school year is divided into the following units of study: the development of early civilizations and cultural diversity of the continents in Africa, Asia, Europe, and Australia. As they study these continents, students will focus on modern-day cultures and current events around the world.

Physical Education

The main emphasis of the middle school physical education program is developing healthy bodies and healthy minds. Cardiovascular fitness and the development of lifelong fitness skills are a main focus at all grade levels. Instructors strive to boost student self-image through positive reinforcement.

Activities include: Soccer, fitness testing, team sports, individual sports, flag football, racquet sports, adventure education, creative dance, and cooperative games.

R2S

R2S stands for Read to Succeed. The main emphasis of R2S is for students to engage in and build stamina around independent choice reading as well as activities that will immerse them in a literacy rich environment with the help of our LMC director and literacy staff. Students will be assessed using a common rubric that supports the following standard: “Independent reading of a variety of genres at a child’s independent reading level” which will be reported to families on the progress report cards.

Spanish Language Arts

Students in Two-way Immersion take Spanish Language Arts instead of R2S as part of their bilingual pathway. The Spanish Language Arts curriculum focuses on reading, writing, speaking, and listening in Spanish using the Spanish Language Arts Standards. Students will read novels, articles, poetry, short stories, and nonfiction in Spanish while they work to improve written and oral communication skills in Spanish.

EXPLORATORY CLASSES

Each seventh grader takes art, a world language, family and consumer education, and information and technology literacy for a nine-week period. A brief description of each class is listed below:

Art

The art course in seventh grade continues to promote an understanding of art through hands on learning experiences. This course encourages the student to be an artist and explore art materials, art mediums and techniques. This class offers a balance of directed instruction, focused on the elements and principles of design along with offering student choice. Students develop a portfolio of their work and continue to grow in artistic vocabulary and their ability to reflect and discuss art.

Family and Consumer Science

Students look more in-depth at the following topics: Nutrition, Human Growth & Development, Bullying Prevention and Community Service. In addition, students will practice their decision-making skills and learn how to respond proactively to life situations, both as an individual and with others.

Spanish Language Arts

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TECH 2.0

Tech 2.0 provides students with the opportunity to expand their understanding of The Design Process and Computer Science. While working on the design process, we integrate spreadsheet skills, 3-d design software, safe tool use and assembly techniques, presentation software (google slides, iMovie), and productivity tools into our activities as well. While working on Computer Science topics, we expand our understanding of Javascript to manipulate objects we have coded with keyboard inputs. Time permitting, we will continue to expand our abilities in robotics programming as well.

WORLD LANGUAGES

Students are required to take either German or Spanish as a quarter-long course. The eighth grade course is an advanced yearlong class.

<p><u>Spanish</u> In seventh grade Spanish, students will build upon the Spanish vocabulary learned in sixth grade and continue learning concepts including telling time, body parts, classroom objects, singular and plural nouns and articles. Students will continue learning in more depth about the culture in the Spanish speaking countries. Students will develop Spanish skills through interactive lessons involving reading, writing, speaking and listening.</p> <p><u>Introduction to Spanish Language Arts - (for students not in TWI)</u> Introduction to Spanish Language Arts is a class for students that have grown up in Spanish-speaking homes but are not part of the Two-way Immersion program. Students will develop and improve literacy skills in Spanish as they work through thematic units that include literature, hands-on activities, public speaking, and writing.</p>	<p><u>German</u> Seventh grade German students begin developing skills in all four areas of language: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Topics include the numbers, days of the week, classroom vocabulary, family, and simple conversations. Students will also learn about the characteristics and cultures of the German-speaking countries. In addition to targeting the four main areas of communication, lessons incorporate a variety of activities such as educational apps, videos, and interactive games.</p> <p><u>Advanced Mandarin 7-8</u> This course is for students who, having successfully developed basic language skills, are ready to increase proficiency in listening comprehension and in the speaking, reading and writing skills of Mandarin Chinese. Readings focus on the goal of developing vocabulary and fluency. Written and oral precision will be emphasized. Instruction includes cultural content. Prerequisites include participation in the Verona Area International School, VASD Mandarin Zero-Hour class, or a similar Mandarin immersion program from another school district.</p>
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MUSIC

Seventh graders will be enrolled in the same performance music class (band, choir, or orchestra) that they took in sixth grade.

Band

Students who learned a band instrument in sixth grade will continue their learning in seventh grade band. Seventh grade band meets every day during the school year. Students in this academic class develop and enhance their learning in music literacy, tone production, musical independence, critical thinking, goal-setting and self-assessment. Students in seventh grade band participate in three to four evening concerts each year.

Orchestra

Students who learned a string instrument in sixth grade will continue their learning in seventh grade orchestra. Seventh grade orchestra meets every day during the school year. Students in this class learn music literacy, bowing technique, and left hand accuracy. Students in seventh grade orchestra participate in three to four evening concerts each year.

Choir

Students who learned vocal music in sixth grade, will continue their learning in seventh grade choir. Students in this class develop and enhance their skills in music literacy, vocal tone production, listening, reflection, and critical thinking. Students in seventh grade choir participate in four concerts each year.

SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

The middle school offers programs that meet the needs of every student. Special education services address the individual needs of any student who meets state eligibility criteria for special education. Our special education program follows a cross-categorical service delivery model. This model provides specially designed services for students with learning, speech, language, emotional, behavioral, physical, health, hearing, visual, developmental and/or cognitive intellectual disabilities. Each student identified as having special education needs has an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) as determined by an IEP team. Students may receive services on an individual basis, in small groups, and/or in the classroom.

RESOURCE AREAS

We believe strongly in providing additional resources beyond the classroom materials to facilitate the learning of our students. The Library Media Center (LMC), which includes our library staff and technology staff, is a functional and integral part of instruction, and is used on a regular basis by all students. Additional resource areas are available for small group instruction, collaborative projects, and homework assistance.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

School Counselors

The counseling program is designed to help develop academic success, emotional awareness, and career exploration as students grow and develop throughout middle school. Counselors address these issues in classrooms, small groups, individual meetings, and parent conferences.

Guidance groups are offered to all students. Those who express interest may be invited to join a group related to one of the following topics:

- Family Issues: How to live with parents and siblings
- Stress Management: How to relax and reduce stress
- Family Change: Separation, divorce and remarriage issues

- Concerned Persons: Caring about someone's abuse of drugs or alcohol.
- Grief/Loss: How to cope with the death or loss of a family member

Parents and guardians are encouraged to contact the counseling staff at any time with questions or concerns.

School Social Worker

The primary function of the school social worker is to promote the emotional, social and mental well being and adjustment of students. The school social worker provides direct and indirect services to students, parents and school staff. Services may include counseling and family intervention, groups, consultation with staff or parents, liaison with community agencies, classroom instruction, and coordination and implementation of district programs. The school social worker role includes advocacy for children and families in the school system and community programs.

School Psychologist

The school psychologist at the middle school is an integral team member in helping to determine the educational needs of students who are experiencing difficulty finding success at school. The psychologist conducts formal evaluations of students to determine placement in special education programs and informal evaluations of students to determine learning and/or behavioral difficulties. Other services provided by the school psychologist include teacher consultation, parent consultation, individual counseling sessions with students, and small groups focused on social/emotional/academic development.

Curriculum and Learning Specialist

It is the philosophy of the Verona Area School District that, given time and resources, every child can learn. The purpose of Curriculum and Learning Specialist is to ensure that students receive instruction based on their individual learning styles, needs, strengths, and weaknesses. Some of the tasks associated with this position include, but are not limited to:

- Collecting and disseminating information about programmatic needs of students
- Consulting with teams to develop strategies to meet individual student needs
- Facilitating the administration and scheduling of required state and local standardized assessments
- Facilitating curriculum development, revision, and articulation
- Providing professional staff development

UNITY Services

UNITY, Understanding the Needs and Individual Talents in Youth, is a resource to help support students who have traditionally struggled in the school setting--academically, socially, and/or emotionally. It services students in sixth, seventh and eighth grade with the greatest need. UNITY staff provides additional support in classrooms, student check-ins, small group support, find opportunities to connect with students during the day.

Reading Support Services

Badger Ridge Middle School is committed to enhancing the reading performance of all students. To address the varying needs of middle school readers, a variety of approaches are used within the regular and resource classrooms. Each student's progress in reading is monitored through formal and informal assessments and observations. Students are identified for reading support based on multiple measures including standardized assessments and fifth grade teacher recommendations. Our Reading Specialist collaborates, plans and co-teaches with teaching staff, and is an integral part of universal classroom and best practices in literacy instruction.

Programs for English Learners

We welcome students from all cultures and backgrounds. In addition to learning science, math, social studies, language arts, and other academic content, English learners (ELs) must also become proficient in English (speaking, listening, reading, and writing). In order to meet students' needs and follow federal and state laws, Badger Ridge provides the following programs which allow EL students to learn grade level content and English.

ESL and Bilingual in-class support

An English as a Second Language or Bilingual certified teacher works in collaboration with the classroom teacher in general education classes. The teacher works with students within the classroom, supporting individuals or small groups.

Accommodations made by the Grade Level and Encore Teachers

Grade level teachers modify the way they teach to make the content more understandable. They use visuals, realia (objects from real life used in the classroom), pacing (slower, explain difficult vocabulary), provide more individual help, repeat directions, use visual representations, post content and language objectives, etc. These accommodations are designed to ensure that ELL students receive the same content as native speakers.

Assessment

In December and January, all English learners take ACCESS for EL.