

# ***BADGER RIDGE MIDDLE SCHOOL***



**COURSE HANDBOOK**

**EIGHTH GRADE**

**2018-2019**

Dear Parents, Guardians, and Students:

This handbook has been developed to provide information for parents, guardians, 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.

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 curriculum, please call Badger Ridge Middle School at 845-4100.

Sincerely,

Michael Murphy, Principal

# **EIGHTH GRADE**

## **Required Classes**

Language Arts  
Math  
Science  
Social Studies/History  
Physical Education  
Health

## **Elective Classes** (Full Year)

Band  
Orchestra  
Choir  
German 1 *or* Spanish 1

## **Elective Classes** (Semester)

### **Art**

Drawing and Painting  
Ceramics and Sculpture  
Design Arts – It’s All in the Design!

### **Family and Consumer Education**

KFC-Kids, Food and Cooking  
Designs in Living  
“Business Wanna-Bees” – Kub’s Closet

### **Tech 2.0**

Computer Science (Coding, Programing, and Robotics)  
3-D Design and Build

# **COURSE DESCRIPTIONS – EIGHTH GRADE**

## **REQUIRED CLASSES**

### **Language Arts**

Students explore writing through persuasive writing, creative writing, narrative writing, a research paper, poetry and responses to literature. They learn to refine their writing through paragraph writing structure (MEL-Con) and the Six Traits of Writing (ideas, organization, word choice, voice, sentence fluency, and conventions).

Students are encouraged to become critical, interactive readers through discussion, journaling, research, vocabulary study, and other activities. They are exposed to various types of literature including novels, poetry, and nonfiction. Students learn to recognize specific literary devices and to appreciate reading as a leisure activity.

Students practice the communication skills of speaking and listening through formal and informal oral presentation. They practice technology skills such as word processing, internet searches, and using library resources. Students will make connections with the social studies curriculum.

### **Math 8:**

All 8th grade students will engage in learning foundational math skills and Algebraic concepts through our Math 8 plus Algebra course. This opportunity will allow all of our 8th graders to engage in learning and practicing skills that are core to understanding Algebra, as well as opportunities for students to stretch their learning when ready for more complex Algebraic learning. Topics covered in the area of prealgebra and algebra include operations with rational numbers, exploring ratios, similarity, solving equations, representing data, identifying coordinates and functions, direct variation and modeling with linear equations. Students develop their abilities to explore and solve mathematical problems to think critically, to work cooperatively with others, and to communicate ideas clearly.

Students who have demonstrated mastery in Math 8 plus Algebra concepts during their 7th grade experience will be able to experience Geometry during 8th grade. Geometry topics will include: (1) midpoint formula; (2) distance formula; (3) the Pythagorean Theorem; (4) slope and angle relationships; (5) properties of triangles; (6) similarity and congruence; (7) properties of polygons; (8) area and perimeter of polygons; (9) circles and composite figures; (10) angles and chords in circles; (11) arc length and area of sectors; (12) volume and surface area of 3-dimensional shapes; (13) special right triangles and right triangle trigonometry. Learners will need a scientific calculator. Based on their performance on standards throughout the year, students may have the opportunity to be placed in Advanced Algebra in High School.

There are multiple math pathways for students to pursue upon entering high school. The pathways are based upon what standards each student has mastered. If the student has demonstrated evidence of mastery of 8th grade math concepts, they will take Algebra upon entering high school. If they also demonstrate mastery of Algebraic concepts over the course of their 8th grade year, they will be ready to take Geometry upon entering high school.

## **Science**

The eighth grade science curriculum emphasizes physical science topics representing introductory concepts in chemistry and physics. Chemistry topics include density, phase changes, solubility, separation of substances, atomic structure, the periodic table, and physical and chemical changes. Physics topics include motion, force, work, energy, power, thermal energy, heat, light and sound.

Skills emphasized throughout the curriculum are metric measurement, data collection and analysis, use of scientific problem solving, retrieving information from science textbooks and periodicals, and competency in the safe use of laboratory procedures and equipment. Design and construction activities are also incorporated to challenge and help develop problem-solving skills.

## **Social Studies**

The eighth grade social studies course of study focuses on early US History with an emphasis on civics.

The class is designed to give students a basic appreciation of US History prior to 1876. The units studied include discovery and exploration, the founding of a new nation, its growth and expansion, developing sectionalism, the Civil War conflict, reconstruction, and industrialization. The civics component aims to give students a fundamental understanding of US Government structure based on the US Constitution, the continuing development of the political system, and the rights and responsibilities of American citizens. In addition, the class is structured to build on basic social studies concepts and skills involving charts, graphs, map skills, and research methods; as well as developing higher level thinking skills such as translation, interpretation, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

## **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 constantly strive to boost student self-image through positive reinforcement.

Activities include: Softball, fitness testing, team sports, individual sports, adventure education, racquet sports, cooperative games, speed & acceleration, and eclipse ball.

## **Health**

Health class is a required comprehensive nine-week class. It encourages skills for living by preparing the individual to make healthy, pro-active, choices now and in the future. Issues concerning human growth and development are included in the curriculum. Parent/guardian permission is required for this section of the curriculum. All curriculum is available for preview by contacting the school office or the instructor.

## **ELECTIVE CLASSES**

**Every effort is made to accommodate elective course requests. However, due to budget constraints, student enrollment in courses is subject to change. Elective class changes must be made only during the first three days of that semester through the recommendation of the counselor.**

### **Full Year Classes**

#### **Band**

Eighth grade band is a logical extension of the experience for students that have been enrolled in seventh grade band. This class continues to develop skills and talents that have been introduced during earlier years, as well as introducing more advanced techniques. As the musical expectations increase in this ensemble, so do the expectations for mature and serious rehearsals. Students must have consent of teacher and/or prior playing experience to be in this group. Incoming eighth graders may not start band as a beginner in the fall of eighth grade.

Eighth grade band performs several times during the year, and on a few occasions in combination with older musicians from the High School ensembles. Members of this band may also be asked to perform as Wind players for the Orchestra. Students from this group are invited to perform in the solo and ensemble festival and the Jazz Ensemble as well. In addition to a sound musical education, players in the eighth grade band will continue to develop the skills of cooperation, dedication, personal control and responsibility...skills that last a lifetime!

#### **Orchestra**

Eighth grade orchestra meets every day, and is open to any student with prior string playing experience. Musicians in this ensemble develop intermediate to advanced performance skills, including bowing styles, musical phrasing, shifting and playing in higher positions. The music performed by this ensemble will be on a higher level and will prepare them to continue their musical development in high school. This orchestra gives three to four evening concerts each year, and occasionally participates in clinics or hosts guest musicians. Students in the eighth grade orchestra are eligible to participate in the Wisconsin School Music Association (WSMA) Solo/Ensemble Festival

#### **Choir**

Eighth grade choir is the advanced ensemble at the middle school. Don't let the title scare you away! Every singer or non-singer is welcome. Teacher and students help each other develop the vocal and musical skills for success. Students work toward independence through reading music, working on tone production, and even a solo (*if you want*). Choir students sing a variety of music from Classical to Contemporary, incorporating piano, instrumental and a cappella music into the program. Group interaction, dedication and an open mind about all music are emphasized in this class.

A separate class period for a boys 7/8 choir will be held. In addition to the skills stated above, boys will explore how to use their voice while experiencing a voice change. This is an environment where boys will be singing with others with similar voices.

## **Why take a music class in middle school?**

There are many compelling reasons to study music in middle school. Many research studies have linked music instruction to higher achievement in math, reading, and general cognition scores. Music is academic, and the study of music in the ensemble setting combines these academic pursuits with the skills of teamwork, perseverance, and focus.

Music educators around the world argue for the inclusion of music in every child's education, not because they expect all students to become professional musicians, but because they believe that the skills gained in the music classroom are beneficial to all learners no matter what field of study they eventually pursue.

The BRMS music department feels that these academic and social skills are an important part of learning, but offers one additional reason to study music in middle school. Over the years we have met many students who had little experience singing or on an instrument when they entered sixth grade, but discovered a true passion for music once given the opportunity. This is not something that we take lightly. Regardless of whether or not it becomes a student's career choice, we strongly believe that students should take every opportunity to learn more about a subject which they are, or could become, passionate about.

## **World Language Class Advancement**

### **SHOULD I TAKE A WORLD LANGUAGE?**

Students and their parents often wonder whether it is a good idea to take a world language in eighth grade. The following information is provided to help you make an informed choice.

A world language is not required for high school graduation; however, two years are required to attend many colleges. More competitive colleges, such as UW-Madison, prefer that students take four years or, if possible, five years of a world language in high school. After successfully completing four years of a foreign language, students have a choice of enrolling in a fifth level during their senior year; one is a class without a fee and the other one with a fee which will then allow seniors to earn 14 retroactive credits through UW- Green Bay. If a student begins a world language in middle school, then they will be able to reach Level 5 by the time they are a senior. A student may start in middle school or choose to wait until high school to take a world language, as Level I classes are offered at the High School in Spanish, German, and French.

### **PROS:**

- Learning a language is fun
- A second language is a great skill
- One can speak with others in the world today
- Different type of learning than other classes
- Allows student to acquire 4-5 years of a world language by the time they graduate from high school
- Prepares student for college and workplace
- Strengthens English and improves SAT/ACT scores
- Helps student acquire healthy insight into other cultures

Eighth grade World Language classes meet every day for the entire year. After successfully completing the ~~seventh and~~ eighth grade course, students will have completed the equivalent of one year of world language at the high school. While

eighth grade students do not receive high school credit for the eighth grade course, students are taught at the same pace and with the same expectations as Spanish 1 and German 1 at the high school.

### **Spanish 1**

Eighth grade classes focus on listening, speaking, reading and writing in Spanish. We cover topics such as school, leisure activities, family and food. As students continue growing their vocabulary through these various thematic units, there is more emphasis on the structure and grammar of the Spanish language. Students will also learn about the culture of the people who speak Spanish and become more knowledgeable of the world around them.

### **German 1**

Eighth grade students will continue to expand their knowledge of the German language and culture. Topics covered throughout the year include: geography, telling time, family and friends, house and cities, hobbies and free-time activities. As students build their vocabulary, we take a closer look at the structure and grammar of the language. Students focus on four main areas of communication: listening, speaking, reading and writing in German. Students will also be exposed to a variety of German musicians, follow the German soccer league, and compare and contrast the German and American cultures. Through language learning students become more knowledgeable of themselves and the world around them.

### **Spanish Language Arts 1**

The goal of Spanish Language Arts is to practice the language, grammar, and literature in Spanish. The prerequisites of this class is that the students speak Spanish fluently and are comfortable with the language. In this class, students will practice and improve their listening, speaking, reading and writing skills in Spanish.

***Note: For students wanting to continue on with Spanish 2 or German 2 at the high school, the following criteria will be used to determine whether a student is adequately prepared: an average grade of a C-, receive at least a C on three common eighth grade/high school assessments, and students must be recommended by their Spanish or German teacher to continue on to Spanish 2 or German 2 at the high school.***

## **SEMESTER ELECTIVE CLASSES**

*\* - This course has a \$25 supply fee.*

### **ART**

#### **Drawing and Painting** \*

If you really want to learn how to draw, then this is the class for you! We explore new drawing materials – pen and ink, pastels, conte', scratchboard, colored pencils, charcoal, etc. You will learn how to draw portraits of people and amaze yourself! Other subject themes include still life, animals, landscape, and fantasy art. Allow your creativity to shine as you gain more experience painting with acrylics and watercolors. By the end of this class, you will have created your own personal gallery of awesome originals. If time permits, we may explore some digital paint programs.

#### **Ceramics and Sculpture** \*

If you enjoy working with your hands, this class is for you! This three-dimensional adventure in art will allow you to experience the potter's wheel. Other clay projects may include modeling imagination creatures and creating beautiful slab vases, platters, and fanciful village buildings. The first half of the semester is working with clay and learning glaze techniques.

The sculpture projects may include awesome animal masks, paper-mache animal sculptures, carved figures and metal sculptures. Creations will earn oohs and aahs!

#### **Design Arts – It's All in the Design!** \*

From computer images to fantastic painted furniture, students will create artworks using many different and unique tools. Journey into the art world of the designer. While exploring art products in society, students will design artworks using the computer; they will recycle materials to create Upcycled Art (record clocks), explore bookmaking by creating a beautiful metal embossed photo album, and learn basic jewelry making techniques. Students will create their own idea of art using practical, everyday pieces of furniture. The role of function versus non-function is emphasized when designing a clay teapot and with the shoe project. Students will get a chance to experiment on the Potter's Wheel. This class is for the adventuresome student with a large mixture of art materials explored.

## **FAMILY AND CONSUMER EDUCATION**

#### **KFC – 'Kids, Food and Cooking'** \*

Do you like children? Does cooking sound like fun to you? Then here is a class for you! The first nine weeks you will learn how children grow and develop. You'll experience being a parent by taking care of a chick for one week. Learning happens by taking fun field trips and listening to exciting guest speakers. The remaining weeks you'll become an expert in the kitchen with lots of cooking and baking labs. A mass quantity food sale is one of the many learning experiences you will have in KFC.

#### **Designs in Living** \*

Does redecorating your room or constructing a fashionable piece of clothing appeal to you? Do you feel you are artistically inclined? This class will particularly appeal to those students who enjoy hands-on creations of home and personal design. Explore historical and recent fashion through clothing and housing design. Use paint, sewing techniques and real housing materials to create your own personal style. This course will help you better understand your role in the consumer market of design.

### **“Business Wanna-Bees” – Kub’s Closet \***

Have you ever considered starting your own business? Do you like talking with students and staff at the middle school? Then Business Wannabee’s is the class for you! You will organize, run and manage the school store. You will choose, order, and price products to sell. As an entrepreneur, you will market new items at the store, visit businesses that focus on exciting new ideas, and hear guest speakers who are experts in business.

## **Tech 2.0**

### **Computer Science (Coding, Programing, and Robotics)\***

Exploring the technological world, this class begins with an in-depth study of today’s definition of technology and its impacts in our modern-day society. Independent learning is encouraged as students work to master “The Design Process,” problem solving through a step-by-step process, which puts your brain to the test as you design and construct individual and group programming and coding projects. The integration of technological concepts with a hands-on curriculum results in the creation of a number of exciting projects. Projects include an introduction to computer programming, experimenting with digital music tools, creating and programing robots and much more. If you are looking to get a jumpstart on your career in robotics, creating apps, games, webpages, and other awesome technology that helps our world, this may be the perfect course for you.

### **3-D Design and Build \***

Do you love to create and make with your hands? Does designing and making a race car dragster sound cool? Have you ever considered designing your dream home? Does building shelves, cabinets, sheds, and other projects that you can take home sound like something you would like to do? How about making things for others in need or selling what you make for a profit? If so, you this class as we cover all aspects of making real creations come to life. Designing using CAD software, using a variety of tools and techniques to create, and finishing the projects to look professionally made are all things you can look forward to:) We will also explore careers that use the skills taught in this class every day.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES**

The middle school offers ~~programs~~–services that meet the needs of all of our students. Special education services address the needs of any student who meets state eligibility criteria for special education. Our special education program follows a cross-categorical service delivery model which includes planning with regular education teachers. This model ~~can~~ provides- specially designed services for students with learning, speech, behavioral, physical, health, hearing, visual, developmental and/or 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 to facilitate the learning of our students. One key resource area is our Library Media Center ( LMC) which includes our literacy and technology staff. The LMC is a functional and integral part of our classroom instruction and is used on a regular basis by all students. This resource area is facilitated by a certified Library Media Specialist and an Information Technology coordinator. Additional resource areas are grade level Learning Labs staffed by certified resource staff. Learning Labs are available for small group instruction, collaborative projects, and homework assistance.

## **STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES**

### **School Counselors**

The counseling program is designed to help develop decision making skills, coping skills, communication skills, and study skills in 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/guardians are encouraged to contact the counseling staff at any time with questions or concerns.

### **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 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 Curriculum and Learning Specialist facilitates the improvement of student and staff learning by providing leadership in the areas of curriculum development and implementation, professional development, instructional coaching, collaborative planning and data analysis.

### **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. Our Literacy staff collaborates, plans and co-teaches with teaching staff, and is an integral part of universal classroom and best practices literacy instruction.

## **Programs for English Language Learners**

We welcome students from all cultures and backgrounds. In addition to learning science, math, social studies, language arts, and other academic content, English language learners (ELLs) 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 ELL students to learn grade level content and English.

### **English as a Second Language (ESL)**

A certified ESL teacher teaches ESL as a daily scheduled class. Topics may include survival vocabulary, basic conversation, as well as listening and pronunciation of the English language. Emphasis is placed on practical everyday English and communication skills.

### **ESL and Bilingual in-class support**

An ESL or bilingual teacher works in collaboration with the classroom teacher in general education classes. The teacher works with ELL students within the classroom, supporting individuals or small groups. Content area classes may include writing, reading, math, science or social studies vocabulary development. Content area classes may include vocabulary development in writing, reading, math, science or social studies.

### **Accommodations made by the Grade Level and Encore Teachers**

Grade level teachers modify the way they teach to make the content more accessible and 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.