

BADGER RIDGE MIDDLE SCHOOL



COURSE HANDBOOK

EIGHTH GRADE

2020-2021

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

Sincerely,

Alan Buss, Principal

EIGHTH GRADE

Required Classes

Language Arts
Math
Science
Social Studies/History
Physical Education
Health

Elective Classes (Full Year)

Band
Orchestra
Choir
German 1, Spanish 1, or Mandarin 1
Spanish Language Arts 1 (For students from Spanish-speaking homes)

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 and Robotics

3-D Design and Build

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS – EIGHTH 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.

Math

The 8th grade math curriculum is built off of the Common Core Mathematics Standards.-Topics include, but are not limited to the following: (1) formulating and reasoning about expressions and equations, including modeling an association in bivariate data with a linear equation, and solving linear equations and systems of linear equations; (2) grasping the concept of a function and using functions to describe quantitative relationships; (3) analyzing two- and three-dimensional space and figures using distance, angle, similarity, and congruence, and understanding and applying the Pythagorean Theorem. . Stretch topics come from Algebra coursework, and include application of the above topics, as well as solving linear inequalities and systems of linear inequalities, factoring polynomials, and quadratic equations and functions.-Some students will be continuing coursework in Geometry, while other students will spend time developing strong foundational Algebra skills. All students are also expected to practice and demonstrate the standards for mathematical practice.

Science

The 8th grade science curriculum focuses on chemistry and physics concepts including energy, matter, and motion and forces. 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: structure and properties of matter; chemical reactions; motion, forces and interactions; energy, waves and electromagnetic radiation; engineering and experimental design; human impacts on the world; and reading, comprehending, and analyzing informational text.

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 the process of inquiry and service learning, as well as the discovery, exploration, and the founding of a new nation, its growth and expansion, developing sectionalism, the Civil War, 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 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, proactive, 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.

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 at both BRMS.

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

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

Choir

Students who learned vocal music in seventh grade, may continue their learning in eighth grade choir. Eighth grade choir meets every day during the school year. Students in this class continue their learning in music literacy, vocal tone production, listening, reflection, and critical thinking. Students in eighth grade choir participate in four evening concerts each year.

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 most colleges. More competitive colleges, such as UW-Madison, prefer that students take four 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 he/she 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, French, Mandarin.

Eighth grade World Language classes meet every day for the entire year. After successfully completing the 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 cultures of the people who speak Spanish and become more knowledgeable of the world around us.

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

Spanish Language Arts is a class for students that have grown up in Spanish-speaking homes. Students will continue to develop and improve literacy skills in Spanish as they work through thematic units that include literature, hands-on activities, public speaking, and writing short essays and poetry. Students that successfully complete Spanish Language Arts 1 can take Spanish Language Arts 2 at the high school.

Mandarin as a World Language

This introductory course is for eighth-grade students who are interested in learning Mandarin as a world language. Students will develop basic listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills and acquire a basic understanding of the structure and sound of Mandarin Chinese while learning about Chinese culture and heritage.

SEMESTER ELECTIVE CLASSES

***Designates a course fee may be charged for this elective.**

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 and Robotics

Want to code your own games? Are you interested in building and coding your own robot? This course provides the opportunity to gain a more in-depth knowledge of JavaScript and Computer Science skills. Students will also be introduced to common computer languages for coding robots. Currently, 100,000 of the highest paying and rewarding careers are not being filled per year because of a shortage of people qualified to do this important work. By completing this course, you will have fun creating and gain a real sense of if computer science and robotics could be for you.

3-D Design and Build

Do you love creating and building your own projects? Does the idea of building your own dragster sound fun? How about designing your dream home? Do you have something you would like to build? Students will also be introduced to measurement techniques, safe use and technique with common hand and power tools, and how to create scaled drawings as part of the design process in creating unique projects out of various materials. There are several fun projects that will apply these skills throughout the semester. The integration of 3-D design software and printing will also be part of this course.

SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

The middle school offers programs that meet the needs of all of our students. 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 which includes planning with regular education teachers. This model 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 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.

