WESTFIELD
MIDDLE SCHOOL

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Course Description Catalog 2024-2025

General Information

- All students are enrolled in five core subjects: Language Arts, Science, Social Studies, Math, and Wellness for a full school year.

- Students have a 7-period day, with each class lasting approximately 45 minutes.

- All students are assigned a Student Resource Time (SRT). SRT is a twenty-five minute homeroom time that takes place each day. This time may be used for academic assistance and preparation, team-building activities, service projects, announcements, club/sports information, and celebrations.

- Students will be assigned a combination of elective classes to complete their schedule. These classes offer a variety of experiences that closely align with the career pathways at the high school.

- Students with *Individualized Education Plans (IEPs)* may have additional courses. These will be discussed with students during the school day and during annual case review meetings with parents.

- ***Back-to-School Open House*** will be held before school starts in August. (date/time TBD). Parents and students will be able to tour the building, find their classrooms, bring in supplies, find their lockers, etc.

- Schedules will be sent out in the spring via parent email and students/parents may request changes for a limited time. Final schedules are made available August 1st via PowerSchool. They can also be picked up at our Back-to-School Open House.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Math

Please note that Algebra I (1-2) taken at WMS in 7th or 8th grade receives high school credit and is factored into a student's high school GPA (Grade Point Average).

Math 7

Math 7 builds on the skills students have successfully mastered in sixth grade and sets the foundation for students to take algebra in ninth grade. Concepts align with the Indiana mathematics standards for 7 grade.

Math 8

The curriculum for this course is based upon the first half of the high school Algebra curriculum. Emphasis will also be on the 8th grade Indiana state math proficiencies. Successful completion of this course qualifies the student to take algebra as a freshman.

Advanced Math 7

The material in this course is designed for students who have mastered seventh grade mathematics standards. Students in Advanced Math 7 will be further challenged by learning pre-algebra skills that will prepare them for Algebra I in eighth grade.

Algebra I (1-2)

This course provides a formal development of the algebraic skills and concepts necessary for the students who will take other advanced college-preparatory courses. The instructional program provides for the use of algebraic skills in a wide range of problem solving situations. The concept of function is emphasized throughout the course. Topics include: (1) properties of real numbers, (2) solving linear equations and inequalities, (3) operations with polynomials, (4) solving quadratic equations and systems, (5) use of exponents, and (6) introductory topics from statistics and probability. To be considered for Algebra I placement in 7th grade students must be proficient on the Algebra Prognostic Test administered in 6th grade. **This course receives a total of 2 high school credits-one credit after Semester 1 and one credit after Semester 2. Semester exams account for 15% of the semester grade. The Semester 1 and Semester 2 grades at the middle school are factored into a student's high school GPA (Grade Point Average).**

Geometry (Honors) (1-2)

This course provides students with experiences that deepen the understanding of shapes and their properties. Deductive and inductive as well as investigative strategies in drawing conclusions are stressed. Properties and relationships of geometric figures include the study of (1) angles, (2) lines, (3) planes, (4) congruent and similar triangles, (5) trigonometric ratios, (6) polygons, and (7) circles and spatial drawings. An understanding of proof and logic is

developed. Honors Geometry 1 and 2 will develop many of the same topics with greater rigor and depth to help students prepare for future higher level math courses.

Math Lab

Math Lab is a supplementary math course for students who need to strengthen their mathematical foundation skills. The course is tailored to the student's individual mathematical needs. Math Lab also reinforces skills that are being taught within the student's primary math class.

Science

Science 7

Students study the physical setting of the earth, the components that make up a living thing, and how Newton's Laws apply to humans on Earth. In the physical setting, students will learn about the processes that are involved with the ever-changing surface of Earth. In the living segment, students will study the cellular component of life and the organization of organisms. Students will gain both theoretical and experimental understandings of Newton's Laws of Motion. Students will also apply mathematical data to scientific problems. A historical perspective will be studied to gain an understanding of how new ideas and insights have affected our world.

Science 8

Curriculum is divided into four units: Scientific Process, Earth Science, Physical Science and Life Science. The Scientific Process unit begins with an in-depth study of scientific thought and process skills. Students apply mathematical data to scientific problems as well as organize and evaluate data. During the Earth Science unit, students learn about water and its role in our atmosphere. In the Physical Science unit, the focus is on an introduction to chemistry. Students learn basic atomic structure, periodic table trends, molecules and compounds and chemical reactions. Finally, during the Life Science unit, the focus is on cell division, the nucleus of the cell, DNA and its role in protein synthesis and gene expression, and heredity.

Advanced Science 8

In addition to covering all of the 8th grade science standards, students in Advanced Science go in depth with the physics and chemistry concepts in 8th grade. The curriculum incorporates an in-depth study of scientific thought. There are mathematical prerequisites for this course. Students will need to be able to apply mathematical data to scientific problems as well as being able to express scientific information verbally and in written form. A historical perspective is studied to gain an understanding of how new ideas and insights have affected our world. Advanced science is a more rigorous course requiring an increased level of understanding particularly in the areas of higher order thinking, vocabulary, and mathematics. **Geometry is the corequisite for placement in this class.**

Language Arts

Language Arts

Language Arts course provides a balance of reading, writing, speaking, listening, and grammar skills essential for student success. Students utilize critical thinking strategies to read poetry, short stories, news articles, and novels of various genres. Students write a variety of short and extended compositions including narrative, informative, argumentative, and research. The overall goal of the class is to increase the literacy and writing ability of students in order to prepare them for the rigor of high school.

Advanced Language Arts

Advanced Language Arts provides a rigorous balance of reading, writing, speaking, listening, and grammar skills essential for student success in high school. Students utilize critical thinking strategies to read poetry, short stories, news articles, and novels of various genres. Students write a variety of short and extended compositions including narrative, informative, argumentative, and research. The expectation of this class is to demonstrate higher order thinking skills through discussion and exemplary writing. The overall goal of the class is to increase the literacy and writing ability of students in order to prepare them for the rigor of high school and beyond.

Language Arts Lab

Students receive specific and intensive instruction in language arts in order to improve reading comprehension, fluency, and vocabulary while reading a variety of materials. Students learn and practice a variety of specific reading strategies that they can use when reading fiction and non-fiction texts. In addition, students focus on writing in response to text and test taking strategies and skills.

Social Studies

Social Studies 7

7th grade Social Studies is a chronological and historical focus from ancient civilizations up to the present. Students study and compare various civilizations and empires from the past and note each one's contribution to the present. The areas highlighted are: Africa, South Asia, Southeast Asia, East Asia, Middle East, and the former Soviet Union.

Social Studies 8

The 8th grade Social Studies class is focused on American History. The curriculum begins with the colonial period in the pre-Revolutionary era and concludes with the Reconstruction period following the Civil War. The study of this time period is done on both a thematic and chronological approach. Major topics are the American Revolution, the United States

Constitution, growth and expansion of the country, development of American culture, the Civil War, and Reconstruction.

Wellness

The goal of this year-long course is to teach students the tools necessary to maintain a healthy lifestyle in the areas of physical, mental, emotional, and social health. In the classroom, students learn how to take responsibility for their health and make educated decisions pertaining to overall health and safety. In the gym, students learn about important fitness concepts and engage in regular physical activity through a variety of fitness and sports activities. Students evaluate their own personal health and learn how to make changes that can be applied to their lives for total well-being.

Music-Choir

Tenor/Bass Choir

This is a non-auditioned choir ensemble for 7th and 8th grade students who sing in the tenor and bass vocal ranges. This ensemble best fits students who are preparing for a voice change or are in the middle of the voice change. Proper breathing and beginning/intermediate vocal technique, singing in 2 and 3-part harmony, sight-singing, music theory, stage presence, and working as a team are concepts that will be emphasized during the year. This ensemble is a fantastic group for tenors and basses to learn about the changing voice and how it grows/evolves over time. This ensemble is open to new AND experienced singers. Students in this ensemble may combine with one of the soprano/alto ensembles from time to time to sing songs together in a mixed group (for concerts). **This is a year-long commitment**. Students are required to participate in evening concerts and, potentially, one after-school rehearsal per concert. There are approximately 4 concerts per year. Concert attire includes a choir shirt (purchased from the school for $15-20) as well as black pants (provided by the student).

Soprano/Alto Choir

Soprano/Alto Choir is a non-auditioned choir open to any upper voices. Proper breathing and beginning vocal technique, singing in 2 and 3-part harmony, sight-singing, music theory, stage presence, and working as a team are concepts that are emphasized during the year. This ensemble is designed to help beginning/intermediate voices learn how to use their voices properly and begin harmonizing. Students in this ensemble may combine with the Tenor/Bass Choir from time to time to sing songs together in a mixed group (for concerts). Those with choir experience will find that they will still learn new things in this ensemble. **This is a year-long commitment.** Students are required to participate in evening concerts and, potentially, one after-school rehearsal per concert. There are approximately 4 concerts per year. Concert attire includes a choir shirt (purchased from the school for $15-20) as well as black pants/skirt (provided by the student).

Advanced/Show Choir

This **auditioned** choir is open to all 7th and 8th grade singers. Students must pass an audition in March of the previous school year in order to be placed in this advanced, year-long class. Auditions are announced well in advance at WIS, WMS, and local private schools. Proper breathing and vocal technique, singing in harmony, sight-singing, music theory, stage presence, and working as a team are concepts that are emphasized during the year. This group does perform as a "Show Choir" often, but will also sing traditional choral music without choreography. Performing as both a traditional and a show choir allows students to be exposed to a wider variety of choral music. Stage presence is highlighted as a foundation for this experience. Students are required to rent their performance attire (black dress for girls, tuxedo for boys) annually. This group performs in the community somewhat often, but the performance schedule does not prevent students from participating in athletics. Attendance at concerts and after-school rehearsals is required. Students who are new to the district *may be allowed* to audition to be in this group (if they missed the auditions the year prior) at the discretion of the choir director. This group does not have many more after school rehearsals than the other year-long choirs.

Music-Band

Students who are interested in performance, learning more details of their instrument, and want to learn different styles of music as well as proper performance techniques should sign up for this year-long class. This class also requires after school rehearsals (at least 3 per semester) and performances (2 per semester). These dates are given on a calendar passed out at the beginning of the year. **Band is a yearlong commitment and meets every day.**

Band Prerequisites: Students must know how to play an instrument from the previous year. If a student is interested in changing instruments or is joining band for the first time, we will strongly encourage them to receive private lessons outside of school. This will greatly enhance each students' ability to be successful! **Percussionists:** Due to the number of instruments, it is recommended that students have private lessons outside of school hours.

Financial Commitment for Band

1. Each student is responsible for his/her instrument. If you are renting an instrument from the school, a rental contract will be issued at the beginning of the school year.

2. Students are responsible for the purchasing of necessary items to maintain their instrument in the proper playing order. (**Care kits, valve oil, reeds, etc**.)

3. Students are responsible for the required performance outfit. This includes black pants (no jeans or leggings), black dress shoes, and a black button down or blouse. The shirts and blouses are ordered through the school (approx. $20-$30), and more information will be provided during the first month of school.

Beginning Band

This class is for students who missed the opportunity to join band in intermediate school.

Concert Band

Concert Band may be divided into two or three periods by similar instruments (woodwinds, brass, percussion). After-school rehearsals are expected in order to help prepare for concerts and contests. **Prerequisite: WIS Band**

Symphonic Band

This band meets as a full group during the school day. The after-school commitments are for concerts, rehearsals, and contests. **Prerequisite: WIS Band**

Jazz Band

Jazz Band consists of saxophone, trumpet, trombone and a rhythm section (drumset, piano, vibraphone, bass, and guitar) but non-traditional jazz instruments may be accepted on a case-by- case basis. This is a course that requires prior experience in playing an instrument as well as currently being a part of a band class. Jazz Band will perform at concerts throughout the year as well as travel to festivals and contests that are around the state.
Prerequisite: WMS Band Concurrent Enrollment & prior experience.

Wind Ensemble

Wind Ensemble is an auditioned group. In addition to after-school concerts and contests, these students participate in the solo and ensemble competitions. **Prerequisite: WIS Band**

Fine Arts

2-D Art

This course will focus on 2-dimensional work, exploring a variety of tools, media and techniques. The 2-D projects may include painting, drawing, mixed media, printmaking and more. Students develop their artistic skills and apply art elements, art history, color theory and art vocabulary to their work. Projects incorporate a sketchbook for planning, research, drawing and writing. There will also be opportunities for creative writing, problem solving and developing designs with a personal meaning.

3-D Art

This course focuses on 3-dimensional work, exploring a variety of tools, media and techniques. The 3-D projects may include relief sculpture, sculpture in the round, subtractive/additive sculpture, clay handbuilding techniques and more. Students develop their artistic skills and apply the art elements, art history, color theory and art vocabulary to their work. Projects incorporate a sketchbook for planning, research, drawing and writing. There are also

opportunities for creative writing, problem solving and developing designs with a personal meaning.

Exploring Music

In this class, instruction is designed to enable students to perform and create music, respond to music, and integrate music study into other subject areas. Activities and experiences in music are designed to develop students' appreciation of music as an art form, to build the foundation for music literacy, and to understand music as it relates to history, culture, and the community. More specifically, studies often include learning to play a variety of instruments (such as hand drums and bucket drums), studying the musical history of a variety of time periods and musical styles, composing electronic music using loops, reading a small amount of music notation, and learning about the basic elements of music.

PLTW/STEM

(Project Lead the Way & Science-Technology-Engineering-Math)

The middle school Project Lead the Way (PLTW) Gateway Program engages students in activities that build knowledge and skills in areas of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) including computer science, engineering, and biomedical science. The classes also empower students to develop essential skills such as problem solving, critical and creative thinking, communication, collaboration, and perseverance.

Medical Detectives

This 9-week course allows students to play the role of real-life medical detectives as they collect and analyze medical data to diagnose disease. Students solve medical mysteries through hands-on projects and labs, measure and interpret vital signs, dissect a sheep brain, investigate disease outbreaks, and explore how a breakdown within the human body can lead to dysfunction.

Automation/Robotics

In this 9-week long course students trace the history and development of automation and robotics. They learn about structures, energy transfer, machine automation, and computer control systems. Students acquire knowledge and skills in engineering problem solving and explore requirements for careers in engineering.

Exploring Agricultural Science

This course provides students with an overview of various aspects of the agriculture industry. Topics to be covered in this course can include: leadership, supervised agriculture experience, plant and soil science, natural resources,animal science, agribusiness, food science, and power, structure, and technical systems. Along with the current academic standards for this subject, the Science/Technical Studies Content Area Literacy Standards are incorporated with the expectation of a continuum of reading and writing skills development.

World Language

Exploratory Spanish

Students develop communication strategies and learn basic Spanish vocabulary and grammar. Students practice listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. Students are introduced to various aspects of Hispanic culture. Please note that the content of the exploratory courses is different each year, so students can opt to take Exploratory Spanish each year.

Exploratory French

Students develop communication strategies and learn basic French vocabulary and grammar. Students practice listening, speaking, and reading skills. Students are also introduced to various aspects of Francophone culture. Please note that the content of the exploratory courses is different each year, so students can opt to take Exploratory French each year.

Level I Courses – 8th Grade Only

Level I world language courses are year-long and are offered to 8th grade students only. It is recommended that students choosing to take a level 1 world language have an 80% average or higher in language arts. Students receive a total of 2 high school credits-one credit after semester 1 and one credit after semester 2. Semester exams account for 15% of the semester grade. The semester 1 and semester 2 grades at the middle school are factored into the student's high school GPA.

Spanish I (1-2)

Emphasis is placed on developing the skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing within the cultural context. Students become familiar with various Hispanic cultures. Students learn how to communicate basic needs, express likes and dislikes, as well as describe family, friends, and home. They ask and answer simple questions and participate in brief guided conversations related to their needs and interests. Students read short narrative texts on simple topics and learn to comprehend brief written directions and information. They write familiar words and phrases in appropriate contexts and respond in writing to various situations. As a result of this class, students will have basic vocabulary and structures for minimal communication and a basic understanding of Hispanic culture.

French I (1-2)

This course introduces the French language and francophone cultures to students. Emphasis is placed on developing the skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing within cultural context. Students are introduced to various francophone cultures and learn to communicate basic needs and express likes and dislikes. They also learn to describe family, friends, and home, and talk about leisure time and school activities. As a result of this course, students will have the basic vocabulary and structure for minimal conversation and will have a basic understanding of francophone cultures. Students will comprehend brief written directions and read short narrative texts on simple topics and write familiar words and phrases.

Information Technology

Computer Science

This 9-week course incorporates the computer science standards for grades 7-8 and improves keyboarding skills to provide a seamless transition to introductory high school coursework. The standards focus on Indiana's Five Core Computer Science Concepts: Data and Information, Computing Devices and Systems, Programs and Algorithms, Networking and Communication, and Impact and Culture. Focusing on these domains offers students the opportunity to experience and apply a variety of computer science concepts in order to build a solid foundation for possible future courses in high school.

Communication

Students will gain experience in a host of communication applications, from developing podcasts, advertisements, public service announcements, or blogs to writing scripts, news reports, short stories, and/or speeches.This course prepares students for as many communication situations as possible by teaching presentation and cooperation skills.

Broadcast Journalism *(application required)*

Students collaborate and record the WMS daily announcements. Students will need to be able to read expressively from a teleprompter, and improvise short transition statements on camera. Students will learn the different functions of broadcasting a daily program including: anchor, sound, teleprompter, camera work, titles, editing, publishing, and introductory writing.

Yearbook *(application required)*

Yearbook is a 7th & 8th grade **year-long course** where students have the opportunity to produce our nationally recognized, award-winning yearbook. It is designed for highly motivated, independent, and creative individuals. By creating this publication, students will acquire skills in the following areas: photography, interviewing, journalism, teamwork & collaboration, creativity, student leadership, graphic design, advanced computer software programs (Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Illustrator, eDesign), editing, communication, critical thinking, business & marketing, and writing copy. In addition, students learn important life skills such as organization, meeting strict deadlines and working in and with a team. Students must be able to attend some out of school events. Students should also have strong writing skills. Because the interest in this opportunity is high and the work is demanding, students **must apply for this class, not all students who apply will be selected.**

Career & Technical

Exploring College and Careers

This class offers an overview experience of six components of College and Career Readiness.

Students survey and study post-secondary career and credential options through online curriculum in Naviance, a career and college readiness tool. They examine self-knowledge gained through exploration of their learning preferences, interests, and personal goals. Students explore elements of non-cognitive skills for relevance, application and personal skill development. They research, compare and analyze careers, career clusters from various vantage points – economic, knowledge, skills needed, most common associated tasks, and projections for jobs. Students explore personal finance, banking (checking/savings accounts), financial planning, borrowing basics, and credit (credit cards, credit score, etc). Students explore a career pathway that helps to guide decisions for high school, post-secondary training, and a chosen career.

Family and Consumer Sciences (FACS)

FACS is a 9-week course with a focus on topics that prepare students for their journey toward becoming independent, productive, and responsible citizens. This is a combined 7/8 grade class that focuses on nutrition and wellness, life skills, and resource management. In this lab-based class, students take part in hands-on experiences including, but not limited to, nutrition, food safety, and food preparation techniques, teamwork and leadership development, personal resource management, and responsible decision-making, problem-solving, and critical thinking.

Student Support/Multidisciplinary

Study Skills

Study Skills is a 9-week course with the objective to help students learn how to study and succeed in the classroom. This is accomplished through short class discussions and/or assignments over various study skills topics, including but not limited to: organization, time management, note-taking, learning styles, test-taking, writing papers, and decision-making strategies. Students are graded on class preparation, class participation, completion of assignments and following of classroom procedures and rules. The course also allows students ample time each day to study and complete other class assignments.

Peer Facilitation

In Peer Facilitation students learn to interact with and assist students with disabilities. This allows students the opportunity to learn teaching and behavior management techniques, terminology related to handicapping conditions, and values and issues related to integration of students with substantial handicaps in the school and community.We will send out a form link for students, via Canvas, to express interest in this class and adjust their schedules accordingly. ***Space in this course is limited and dependent upon many scheduling parameters.***

Office Assistant

Students working in the office assist office personnel with a variety of tasks. Because they work with the public, teachers, and staff members, students are expected to act in a courteous and friendly manner. They are given the opportunity to learn organizational skills, public relations, and work with peers and adults in a cooperative manner. We will send out a form

link for students, via Canvas, to express interest in this class and adjust their schedules accordingly. ***Space in this course is limited and dependent upon many scheduling parameters.***

Language Arts Lab (LA Lab)

Students will receive specific and intensive instruction in language arts to improve reading comprehension, fluency, and vocabulary to improve their ability to read a variety of materials. Students will learn and practice a variety of specific reading strategies to use when reading fiction and non-fiction texts. In addition, students will focus on writing in response to text and test taking strategies and skills.

AVID

Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) is a College Readiness System transforming leadership, instruction, and culture to focus on the academic and social skills needed for success in a four year college and beyond. The mission of AVID is to close the opportunity gap by preparing students, and supporting them, in challenging courses throughout high school. The AVID elective class is a year-long elective focusing on writing, inquiry, collaboration, organization, and reading (WICOR) strategies needed for success in rigorous coursework. Students participate in inquiry-based study groups, known as tutorials, in addition to other instructional time spent on analytical writing, note taking, research, and college/career exploration.

Basic Skills Development

Basic Skills Development is a multidisciplinary course for students with IEP's which provides opportunities to improve basic skills that are essential for middle school with an emphasis on academics, social emotional health and high school readiness. Determination of the skills to be emphasized in each course is based on the student's Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) and the General Education curriculum.