**EIGHTH GRADE PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

Each student is assigned to a team composed of five teachers, each of whom specializes in one academic area (English, social studies, math, science, or special education), and a counselor.  The team organization provides an opportunity for teachers to meet daily to exchange ideas concerning curriculum and to discuss ways to provide the best possible learning environment for each student.

The school day consists of eight instructional periods and a lunch period, each approximately thirty-nine minutes in length.  Eighth grade periods include the following:

1. A daily period of instruction in each of the four academic **team** subjects (English, math, earth science and social studies)
2. Earth science lab for one period on alternating days
3. A daily period of instruction in LOTE (Languages Other Than English: Spanish, French, Hebrew, or Chinese) or ENL (English as a New Language)
4. A daily period of instruction in required **exploratory** subjects (health for 20 weeks, technology for 10 weeks and computers for 10 weeks)
5. Physical education for one period on alternating days
6. An opportunity to choose additional exploratory subjects\*, a special education service, or an academic intervention (English Learning Center and/or Math Learning Center)
7. Lunch

\* The number of additional exploratory courses a student can take is dependent upon individual program needs. Some eighth graders will have room for one course in their schedule, some will have room for two and others will not have room for any. (See list of exploratory classes below).

**ACADEMIC INTERVENTION**

Academic intervention classes are designed to provide remediation in concepts and skills.  Students with scores of 1 or 2 on the New York State Assessments in Language Arts and/or Math are required to take academic intervention classes. Other students may be recommended by their teachers for academic intervention.

ENGLISH LEARNING CENTER

The English Learning Center is designed for students who need additional assistance in language arts.  The staff focuses on supporting regular class instruction, improving reading and writing skills and helping students meet the New York State English Language Arts learning standards.

MATH LEARNING CENTER

The Math Learning Center is designed for students who need additional instruction in mathematics. The staff focuses on supporting regular classroom instruction and improving understanding of mathematical concepts, computation skills and real world problem solving. In addition, support and practice designed to help students meet the New York State Mathematics learning standards are provided. The small class size allows time for focused practice, hands-on activities, computer applications and individualized instruction.

**EXPLORATORY COURSES**

*It should be understood that the availability of all courses and programs described on this website is subject to recommendation by the administration of the school district and to final action and authorization by the Board of Education as the Board develops its school budget for next year.*

ART

Art Foundation 9

In line with requirements in the high school, the Art Department offers an accelerated course in art.  This course is the beginning of the high school sequence in art and is demanding as well as broad in scope.  It provides varied and exciting experiences in drawing, painting, sculpture, and computer graphics.  Art appreciation, art criticism and advanced problem solving are all integral aspects of this course.  *Students will receive one unit of high school credit upon successful completion of this course and their final grade will appear on their high school transcript.*

Prerequisite:  Successful completion of Art 7, Department approval and placement exam

Studio Art

This course is designed to expose students to a variety of materials and subject matter in art. It expands upon key concepts addressed in Art 6 and Art 7 as well as introduces new onekeeping in alignment with the New York State Learning Standards for Visual Art and student interests.

COMPUTERS

Exploring Multimedia

This course is designed to broaden students’ knowledge of different forms of media and intensify the skills they acquire throughout their experiences in North Middle School computer classes. This course is project-based and driven by students’ skill-set and interest. Projects may include creation of music videos, animated videos, original soundtracks, calendars, and advanced photo editing. Some programs used are Adobe Photoshop, Go!Animate, Garageband, iMovie, and FinalCut Express.

ENGLISH

Public Speaking/Creative Writing

The Public Speaking part of this class is for students who love to speak…and for students who are nervous about speaking in public! Academic situations, the world of work, and everyday life present us with opportunities to convey our ideas and feelings. With the proper tools at his or her disposal, a strong speaker can command the attention of a room and influence important decisions.

This class will provide you with those tools. You will learn how to speak effectively, with plenty of opportunities to practice. Speeches will vary as to purpose, type, and length. You will deliver speeches to entertain, to inform, and to persuade. You will speak from prepared notes, you will work from written speeches, and you will speak spontaneously.

During the Creative Writing part of the class, you will read, discuss, evaluate, and emulate various pieces of literature from different genres. You will write based off of prompts, questions, thoughts, experiences, themes and more.  The culminating activity will be the publishing of a creative writing portfolio, showcasing the best of your work.  Just some of the genres that you will be exploring are plays, poetry, realistic fiction, fantasy, science fiction, songs, and even blogs.

HOME AND CAREERS

Exploring Home and Career Skills

This course consists of three units: sewing, culinary skills, and entrepreneurship. The sewing unit will teach intermediate machine sewing skills and will culminate in the production of two projects, one of which will be a community service project.  During the culinary unit, students prepare several recipes and learn how to prepare nutritious foods. While working through the entrepreneurship unit, students are thrown into the North Middle School “Shark Tank” as aspiring entrepreneurs who pitch their food based business idea to a panel of potential investors in hopes that someone on the panel likes their business enough to bite! Do you have what it takes to start a business? ​​

MUSIC

Music Appreciation

Students will discover and explore introductory concepts used in music sequencing, notation and recording. No prior musical experience is needed, however, having training on an instrument or voice is helpful. Students will create music using GarageBand and drum machines software. Those interested in the current methods of music creation and production should consider taking this course. Projects will include creating music for movie soundtracks, creating ringtones, music for commercials, dance music and sound fx soundboards for the musical and one act productions.

Chorus

Students who are interested in singing in a group may elect chorus. They will work on proper singing technique: individual vocal tone quality, intonation, projection, breath control, and articulation of vowels and consonants. The chorus performs a wide variety of musical selections in three-part harmony, including popular and Broadway songs, as well as music from the master composers. Students who participate in NYSSMA in the spring will have the opportunity to be considered for the All-County Festival. Chorus participation culminates in two evening concerts. After school rehearsals are required two weeks prior to concerts.

Band

All students who play brass, woodwind and percussion instruments and have successfully completed the seventh grade band course (or one year of private study) may register for eighth grade band.  The band rehearses as a full concert band ensemble and incorporates basic technique, drills and warm-ups with the rehearsal of concert band repertoire.  After school rehearsals are required two weeks prior to concerts.

Orchestra

All string players who have successfully completed the seventh grade orchestra course (or one year of private study) may register for eighth grade orchestra. The orchestra rehearses as a full string ensemble and incorporates basic technique, drill and warm-ups with rehearsal of string orchestra repertoire.  After school rehearsals are required two weeks prior to concerts.

SCIENCE

Science Research

This course includes the development and implementation of scientific research procedures and instruction in the use of selected laboratory equipment and other essential technology.  Students will participate in various science competitions and contests, such as the Long Island Science Congress and Science Olympiads.  While this course is NOT a prerequisite for the North High School Research Program, it is a fine preparation for this form of scientific exploration.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Law and Justice/Economics

During this class, students will explore social science topics related to Law and Justice as well as Economics. Students will learn about the workings of the legal system in the United States, the rights and freedoms guaranteed to us under the law, and the actions and consequences set in motion when laws are violated. Landmark court decisions from the past and cases in the news will be researched, discussed, and debated. For the Economics portion, students will investigate where money comes from and where it goes. They will learn about investing in the Stock Market by participating in *Investopedia,* an on-line game. They will also research companies and create a business plan.

TV PRODUCTION

Intro to Film and Video

Using the latest green screen technology and video equipment, this class will introduce students

to the concepts and skills required to produce high quality professional media content. Students

will gain hands-on experience working with a multiple camera setup in a real studio and an

attached control room. The focus will be on critical thinking, communication, collaboration and

creativity. Students will have an understanding of all the key roles involved in producing a

variety of live productions from conception to production, including: talk shows, variety shows,

commercials, TV news, and game shows. Students will utilize NewTek hardware and software

to take advantage of virtual sets and backgrounds.

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

**GRADES AND GRADING**

Report cards are posted and can be viewed on the parent portal four times a year. The letter symbols listed below indicate academic achievement.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| A+ = 97-100    A   = 93-96 A-  = 90-92 B+ = 87-89  B   = 83-86 B-  = 80-82 | C+  = 77-79  C    = 73-76 C-   = 70-72 D    = 65-69 F     = 64 and below |

Progress reports will be posted halfway through each marking period.  They allow the teacher to communicate with the family regarding their child's academic progress.

**Please note: Most of our eighth graders take courses which bear high school credit such as Earth Science, Algebra, Art Foundation 9 and all the third year LOTE classes. The final grade for these classes will appear on the high school transcript.**

**EXTRA HELP**

Extra help is offered by teachers to all students.  It may be scheduled before school, during lunch or after school.

The **Homework Center** in the library is open Monday through Thursday from 3:00 p.m. to 4:25 p.m.  Two staff members are assigned to the center to assist children with homework in all academic areas. Bus transportation is available at 3:45 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. If you have any questions or concerns about extra help, we urge you to contact your child's teacher or his/her guidance counselor.