



Altoona Middle School

7th Grade Course Description Handbook

2023-2024

All courses, including Career and Technical Education courses, are available without discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital status, parental status, sexual orientation, sex (including transgender status, change of sex or gender identity), or physical, mental, emotional, or learning disability, any other characteristic protected by law (“protected classes”) in any of its student programs, activities, and employment.

Required Classes

Career Connections – Every other day for a semester

Have you started to wonder what you will do for a future career? Determining what classes to take in high school, and what career path you may follow, can be a huge task. In Career Connections, students will identify their individual skills and interests and match those strengths to different career choices as well as continue to become more proficient in their keyboarding skills. As part of this class, students will explore their individual strengths and skills to determine what careers and career clusters might be a good match for them. They will also begin looking at education options for high school classes and beyond. All this exploration will help to give students a jumpstart in their journey for high school and career success.

Health – Every other day for a semester

In Health class we will discuss what it takes to be an all-around healthy person. Students will develop decision making skills that will help them when making healthy choices that range from what they eat to standing up to peer pressure. We will learn about the bones and muscles of the body and how to perform hands-only CPR. Other topics that we will discuss include mental illness, why drugs and alcohol are bad for the developing brain, and human growth and development, and many more.

English Language Arts – Every day all year

Students will become more avid and diverse readers while building comprehension and vocabulary skills through root studies and working with a variety of historical fiction and nonfiction text. Students will develop the skills of a critical thinker, learning to challenge the credibility of sources and construct new opinions. Another goal of the course is to learn how to communicate well through speaking and writing. Students will engage in the entire writing process: planning, revising, editing and rewriting, acquiring strategies to publish clear and coherent writing.

Math – Every day all year

Math 7 uses an investigative approach to introduce students to operations with positive and negative rational numbers along with an emphasis on expressions and equations (algebraic problem solving) involving variables to represent unknown quantities in various real-life context type problems. Students will build on their understanding of ratios, proportional relationships and probability. Students will also begin to explore surface area and volume of select geometric figures.

Physical Education – Every other day all year

Students will be introduced to a variety of fitness based warm-ups, followed by the specific unit activities and skill work. The following units will be taught throughout the year if time permits; net games (volleyball, team handball, tchoukball, lacrosse, tennis, badminton) invasion games (basketball, floor hockey, flag football, soccer), fitness (fitness testing, weight room), outdoor recreation (snowshoeing, cross country skiing, disc golf, archery, golf), and team building. Students will be expected to work well with a team/partner setting as well as perform the necessary skills to be successful in the units. PE is every other day all year. Students will be required to wear a PE shirt and will be given a PE locker. PE shirts are \$10 and can be purchased through the PE teachers.

PIE (Prevention/Intervention/Enrichment)

This non-graded course provides students an opportunity for additional review and instruction in the areas of math and ELA helping them stay on track. This course also provides an array of enrichment and school-community activities, as well as continuing to reinforce and review what it means to have great character and be a good citizen.

SCIENCE – 2.5 Block Classes per week all year

Science in 7th grade concentrates on the study of physical and life science. Throughout the semester, students will have opportunities to work alone and collaboratively while conducting investigations. Students will discover and practice the skills young scientists need when learning about physical and chemical changes, forms of energy, motion and forces, and organization and function of living things. Emphasis is placed on hands-on learning with the development of skills such as observing, inferring, data collection, graphing, analysis, and writing by using an interactive science notebook throughout the semester.

SOCIAL STUDIES – 2.5 Block Classes per week all year

Grade seven Social Studies is an inquiry-based survey of people and events that shape the development of human cultures around the world. Students will learn and apply mapping skills and understand how to use different maps for specialized purposes. Students will use Document Based Questions (DBQ's) to learn to use primary and reliable secondary sources to examine current events and events in history that shape the world as they know it. Students will practice critical thinking to analyze the conflicts caused by differences in cultures, make a claim in writing, and support that claim with evidence, then propose possible solutions to those problems. Students will also investigate Native American tribes, the effects of Europeans coming to the Americas, and both current and historical aspects of Native American cultures in Wisconsin.

Elective Classes – every other day for the year

Band ELECTIVE

How can students develop their skills to become a lifelong musician? 7th and 8th Grade Band is the ensemble that students become a part of after the year of 6th Grade Band. Our class is split into two sections, one with all woodwinds and one with brass and percussion. In this course, students will further develop their technical and musical skills on their instruments. A strong emphasis on fundamental skills and technical development will be taught throughout the year. The repertoire of music that students play will be more advanced than that of the beginning band. Some evening performances are required for this course. Students should practice outside of the school day to help develop their skills and promote the growth of our classroom ensemble. Please note that a purchase of a method book will be required.

Ceramics and Sculpture ELECTIVE

Three-dimensional art occupies space defined through the dimensions of height, width and depth. This class will look at three-dimensional works of art, the methods an artist used to create the three-dimensional piece, and the history of the time that shaped the artist's work. Students will complete their own works of art using a variety of techniques and problem solving skills.

Techniques that may be used to create these works of art may include modeling, carving, assemblage and paper folding. Materials to complete the projects may include clay, plaster, wood, Paper Mache, plastics, Styrofoam, paper, and other materials depending on the three-dimensional art project. A field trip to the Minneapolis Art Institute culminates this class.

Choir ELECTIVE **Required if participating in Show Choir*

We've all heard talented singers, but did you know much of this talent boils down to hard work and an understanding of how the voice works? Seventh and eighth grade choir is the next step in the journey as a choral musician. Building off of musical skills from 6th grade choir as well as the other music offerings, this choir learns and performs more advanced music. In choir, students will continue to learn the skills to maintain vocal health, master reading music, and understanding the many different elements of music. Small group and solo opportunities are available as well. All students are welcome, regardless of previous experience, though previous experience in choir is preferred. Two evening performances are required for this course.

Creative Entertainment in Pop Culture ELECTIVE

Music is a vital part of American culture. In this class, students will look at the popular music that we listen to, including rock, pop, country, and rap. Students will learn how to mix their own music, as well as create a podcast. Students will also analyze music in movies and television, and create our own soundtracks, sound effects, and music videos. There are no required performances. A love of music is all that is required!

Digital Art ELECTIVE

In today's world, media has become an essential part of our lives. It plays an incredible role in shaping the information and knowledge that is shared every day and everywhere. In this digital art class, students will continue to develop the skills of empowered learners by being innovative and creative designers, problem solvers and communicators. The learning and application of a variety of media production skills could include: stop motion, green screen, video editing, pixel art in correlation with video game design, infographics, digital graphics/marketing, social media and more.

Drawing and Painting ELECTIVE

Two-dimensional art consists of a composition which occupies length and width such as paintings, drawings, prints, and photographs. Students will learn about the artists and cultures that contribute to our rich global artistic heritage and the two-dimensional works of art that they have created. Students will learn to use multiple media and techniques for creating two-dimensional works of art. Students will also learn to analyze and critique the works of art and the artists who made them to develop an appreciation and love for art.

Techniques students may use are printmaking, collage and many other exciting mediums. Materials used to complete the projects may include acrylic, tempera and watercolor paints, oil and chalk pastels, colored pencils, or pen and ink. A field trip to the Minneapolis Art Institute culminates this class.

FABulous FabLab ELECTIVE

Utilize the awesome software and machines in the FabLab, along with your creativity and hard work, to create unique projects. We will be learning to create projects in a solid modeling program to 3D print or to create sliced cardboard creations using the laser engraver. We will create stickers and vinyl heat press t-shirts as well as posters. We will also use machines and equipment to design and create a LED night light.

Game on! (MS Game Design 1) ELECTIVE

We all love to play video games – but have you ever wanted to build your own? If you are interested in a career in technology but also want a creative outlet, This class might be for you. Learn how to build a game from the ground up in Middle School Game Design 1, an interactive and hands-on course that will teach you all the ins and outs of making your own game. You will learn the importance of game structure and discover what makes a game fun, challenging, and interesting to players just like you. You will also have the opportunity to explore the design and creative process involved in game creation, learn block-based programs, and experiment with character and story development. As a bonus, you will leave the course with a digital portfolio of everything you created in class. ***This is an online course, taking place here at school, where students work independently to achieve course goals. Taking this course requires students to work well independently at work completion while checking in with their online teacher.***

Design & Manufacturing ELECTIVE

Create hands-on projects using the awesome machines in the FabLab as well as the traditional shop machines such as band saws and drill presses. We will design and create CO2 cars, model rockets, 3D models, triangle golf tee game, Superclip, and learn about inventions

Mixed Media and Fun with Fibers ELECTIVE

Come explore the world of mixed media and be introduced to a new way of breaking the boundaries between different art forms. This class is designed to expose the student to various processes, techniques and methods related to crafts. The student will not only explore art history as it relates to various crafts and cultures, but will also learn the processes used to create art. Students will utilize more than one medium in a single piece of art and may include paint, glitter, crayons, fabric and wool, magazine/book images/quotes, found objects, ink, watercolor, oil pastel, chalk pastel, colored pencils, etc. This art form is perfect for all those who are beginners as well as those who are not very good at drawing but still want to make something to fulfill their inner need of creativity.

Music Exploration ELECTIVE

Music Exploration is a new elective music class where students will have the opportunity to learn more about music and how it interacts with the world around them. In Music Exploration, students will learn about music history, music theory, singing, dancing, world music drumming, piano, guitar, show choir, musicals, and other relevant music topics.

Spanish I A ELECTIVE

Are you ready to learn Spanish? In Spanish I A for 7th grade, students will experience a general introduction to the Spanish language. This includes pronunciation, grammatical structures, and vocabulary related to everyday life used in the listening, speaking, reading and writing of the Spanish language. Students will also experience an introduction to cultural traditions through research, project-based learning, reading literature and much more! Middle school students signing up for Spanish I A must realize that the curriculum is at the same rigorous pace that it is for high school students. It is a fun, yet fast-paced learning atmosphere. Get ready to learn new and exciting things as a student in Spanish I A! ¡Olé

Please note for Spanish 1A, 1B:

- 7th and 8th grade Spanish I A and I B is the same course as High School Spanish I, split over two years.
- Students will take the first half of the high school course in 7th grade, and the 2nd half of the high school class in 8th grade.
- Spanish I A in 7th Grade, is the prerequisite to Spanish I B in 8th Grade. If a student does not pass 7th grade Spanish I A, they will not be eligible for I B and will have to take Spanish I in high school.
- Students who enroll in Spanish I A, will automatically be enrolled in Spanish I B (when in 8th grade) unless otherwise requested by a parent.

Altoona Middle School

Extra/Co-Curricular Activities

The School District of Altoona recognizes the importance of extra/co-curricular activities as an integral part of the total educational experience. We believe the development of socially active and responsible students goes hand-in-hand with participation in school sponsored activities. Involvement will provide each student with the opportunity to learn useful skills; the awareness of the importance of teamwork, sportsmanship, fair play and the realization that a positive attitude, dedication and hard work are essential for success in life. It also challenges students by providing opportunities to attain the skills and knowledge to be mentally and physically active as part of a healthy lifestyle. In order to receive these benefits, each student must meet certain expectations for the privilege of participating in athletics and activities at Altoona Middle School.



Extra/Co-Curricular Offerings

7th Grade Students

Fall Athletics: Cross Country, Girls Tennis, Football, Volleyball, Boys Soccer

Winter Athletics: Wrestling, Boys Basketball, Girls Basketball

Spring Athletics: Boys Tennis, Track & Field, Girls Soccer

Clubs/Activities: Art Club, Best Buddies, Diversity Club, Drama Club (School Play), Fitness Club, Fuel Up to Play 60, Mathcounts, Minecraft Club, Railroader Club, In-Training Show Choir, Student Council, Yearbook

6th Grade Students

Fall Athletics: Cross Country, Girls Tennis

Winter Athletics: Wrestling

Spring Athletics: Boys Tennis

Clubs/Activities: Art Club, Best Buddies, Diversity Club, Drama Club (School Play), Fitness Club, Fuel Up to Play 60, Mathcounts, Minecraft Club, Railroader Club, In-Training Show Choir, Student Council, Yearbook

8th Grade Students

Fall Athletics: Cross Country, Girls Tennis, Football, Volleyball, Boys Soccer

Winter Athletics: Wrestling, Boys Basketball, Girls Basketball

Spring Athletics: Boys Tennis, Track & Field, Girls Soccer

Clubs/Activities: Art Club, Best Buddies, Diversity Club, Drama Club (School Play), Fitness Club, Fuel Up to Play 60, Mathcounts, Minecraft Club, Railroader Club, In-Training Show Choir, Student Council, Yearbook, 8th Grade Mentors

Instructions for Elective Planning Sheet:

- 1. Read through each course description.**
- 2. Rank your choices for all electives. Rank “1” as your first choice, “2” as your second choice, etc.**
 - a. 7th grade students rank all electives.
 - b. Indicate YES or NO for Band. If yes, also choose your section
 - c. Indicate YES or NO for Spanish
 - d. Choir must be an elective chosen in order to be in Show Choir.
 - e. If two electives are chosen from the same field, such as Art or Technology, both of those electives may not be granted in order to give opportunity to other students.
 - f. Due to scheduling constraints, students will be expected to remain in their elective choices throughout the course time or year.
 - g. Students who do not turn in an elective ranking sheet will be assigned to electives and will not be able choose different electives once scheduled.
- 3. Obtain a parent signature on the Course Planning Sheet.**

7TH GRADE STUDENTS WILL HAVE HEALTH/CAREERS, PE AND 2 ADDITIONAL ELECTIVE CLASSES.

7th Grade Middle School Elective Planning Guide

7th Grade Course Planning Guide

Health/Careers

✓ Physical Education

I would like to take Band ☐ YES ☐ NO
(if yes, select group below

_____ Woodwind/Percussion

_____ Brass

I would like to take Spanish 1A ☐ YES ☐ NO

Electives: (rank from 1 to 10)

_____ Ceramics and Sculpture

_____ Choir **Required for Show Choir participants**

_____ Creative Entertainment and Pop Culture

_____ Digital Art (Media Production)

_____ Drawing and Painting

_____ Fabulous FabLab

_____ Game On! (MS Game Design 1)

_____ Manufacturing and Design

_____ Mixed Media and Fun with Fibers

_____ Music Exploration

STUDENT NAME _____

***STUDENT SIGNATURE** _____

***PARENT SIGNATURE** _____

