



# ALTOONA MIDDLE SCHOOL

## 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Course Description Handbook

2020-2021

### Art

In this seven week class students will learn about several artists, art styles and art history. We will be painting, coloring, drawing and sculpting. Color theory, coil pottery and portraiture are some of our main topics. So whether you consider yourself artistically talented or not, prepare to roll your sleeves up and have some fun learning while creating art and making yourself a well-rounded individual. "Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once we grow up." Picasso

### Beginning Band - ELECTIVE

Beginning Band is the first opportunity for middle school students to begin the process of learning an instrument and performing with an ensemble. Students will try out different instruments, and with parent and teacher guidance, determine which instrument to play. The first year of instruction will have a strong emphasis on music fundamentals and beginning technical skills, as well as learning instrumental music.

Parents and students will be responsible for the financial obligations of instrument upkeep, such as valve oil, reeds or methods books. Because this is a performance-based class, students will also have the obligation to practice outside of the school day and attend evening concerts.

### Choir - ELECTIVE

We've all heard talented singers, but did you know much of their talent boils down to hard work and an understanding of how the voice works? In choir, students will learn the skills needed to improve and take care of the voice...vocal health. Along with that the class will work together to master reading music and understanding the different aspects of music. This will be done through game-based learning and by using different music from around the world. Small group and solo opportunities are available as well. Some evening performances are required for this course. This supports the development and enjoyment of music not only as a listener, but also as a performer.

### English Language Arts

English Language Arts (ELA) encompasses the Common Core Standards of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Language arts skills are acquired through a variety of experiences. Targeted areas of instruction involve developing comprehension reading strategies, gathering, organizing and interpreting information from multiple sources/multiple mediums, researching and citing specific textual evidence, and presenting using written and oral communication. Students continue to develop a level of literacy that enables them to become informed and productive in all areas of the curriculum.

## **Information Processing**

Information Processing 6 is a seven week required class. In this class, students will continue to develop their keyboarding skills as well as explore a variety of different programs. Programs such as Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Publisher will be used. A portion of this class will also be spent discovering student career options. Students will be issued a career exploration account in Xello in which they will be able to continue investigating their career possibilities.

## **Math**

Math 6 encompasses the Common Core Standards of ratios and proportional relationships, the number system (fractions and decimals), expressions and equations (algebra), geometry and statistics and probability. We focus on relating math concepts to real-world applications.

## **Physical Education**

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, tennis, badminton) invasion games, (basketball, lacrosse, team handball floor hockey, soccer), fitness, (fitness testing, partner fitness), outdoor recreation, (Frisbee golf, winter games, ultimate, track & field), and team building. Students will be expected to work well in a team/partner setting as well as perform the necessary individual and group skill work to be successful in the units.

## **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 time also serves as an opportunity to work on homework and receive additional assistance from teachers. In addition, this course provides our students an array of enrichment and school-community activities, helping stretch the minds of our students in unique ways as well as continuing to teach and review what it means to have great character and be a good citizen. This course takes place daily within the Math and ELA courses.

## **Science**

This course is based on the Next Generation Science Middle School Standards and is designed to help students think like a scientist. Students will have opportunities to develop questions, create models, collect, analyze, and evaluate data. Topics include populations (the energy cycle, adaptations, limiting factors, heredity, and natural selection), weather and climate (air pressure, air masses, wind, convection, weather fronts, and atmosphere), waves (types and properties of waves, uses of wave) and engineering (the design process).

## **Social Studies**

This course will explore ancient civilizations and uncover the secrets of the human experience through geography, economics, history, art and culture. In social studies we connect the past to the present in an inquiry based program allowing students to use mind-on, hands-on, and individual strengths to gain understanding of complex systems.

## **Spanish**

In 6th grade, students get the opportunity to take Spanish! Some material covered in 6th Grade Spanish includes: learning how to have a basic conversation, being able to share information about yourself and ask questions to others, identifying numbers, talking about the date/time of the year, and much more! In this class there are many hands-on activities, and we end each unit with a project to show learning!

### **Tech Ed A:**

We will be focusing on problem solving skills using the design process steps while collaborating with others in a group to create a few open-ended projects. We will also make a take home project using tools and machines in the FabLab, as well as utilizing our newly practiced measurement skills.

### **Tech Ed B:**

We will practice our measurement skills by creating a project to race across the floor. Through the use of Lego Mindstorms, we will apply simple machine properties. We will also use our creative skills to create a picture frame/magnet with the laser engraver.

## **Extra-Curricular Opportunities**

The following athletic and club opportunities are available to 6<sup>th</sup> grade students:

**Fall Athletics:** Cross Country, Girls Tennis

**Winter Athletics:** Wrestling

**Spring Athletics:** Boys Tennis

### **Clubs/Activities:**

Mathcounts, In Training Show Choir, Yearbook, Art Club, Forensics, Student Council, Dungeons & Dragons Club, Running Club