



**COMMUNITY MIDDLE SCHOOL &
THOMAS GROVER MIDDLE SCHOOL
PROGRAM OF STUDIES
2019 - 2020**

REQUIRED COURSES

The WWPRSD Middle School Program of Studies is a valuable reference manual for students, parents, and school personnel actively involved in curriculum planning and course selection. It is a complete guide to the possible course offerings at Community (CMS) and Grover (GMS) Middle Schools. Each department has described its specific course offerings, highlighting the chief components of each course.

Middle school students are scheduled for four core courses (integrated reading and language arts, social studies, science, and math) which are taught within a team of teachers. These teachers are specialists in their content areas, but work cooperatively to create interdisciplinary experiences. The team of teachers outlines common expectations for their group of students, meets together with counselors and child study personnel, and provides coordinated information for parents. Additionally, students chose the language they will study when entering 6th grade, and are scheduled in that language for 7th and 8th grade. Students in 6th and 7th grade select one elective while 8th grade students select two electives. After-school clubs and interscholastic sports are also available.

INTEGRATED READING AND LANGUAGE ARTS

The goal of an integrated reading and language arts program is for students to read and write proficiently and with stamina for a variety of purposes. As students read text in various genres such as essays, short stories, plays, and poetry, their reading and language arts instruction supports writing in each of the genres. Writing instruction, in a writer's workshop model, supports all components of the writing process, and students apply their writing skills with attention to revision and editing. Additionally, students read quality literature encouraging critical thinking and an appreciation for the richness and complexity of language. Students demonstrate comprehension and respond to literature through reader response journals and in whole class and small group discussions. The readings, both fiction and nonfiction, provide opportunities for students to explore and develop intellectually, socially and emotionally due to the rich diversity of the themes presented in the readings.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Social Studies enables students to internalize knowledge and to develop the skills, content, and attitudes necessary for effective and responsible citizenship in a democratic society and in the global community. The sixth grade program focuses

on early human development and ancient civilizations and their relationship to the world of today. The seventh grade program focuses on the geography and history of the United States. Students learn about the Constitution and the development of the United States grappling with the question of, “Are we the nation we set out to be?” The historical focus of the eighth grade social studies curriculum is on the post-Classical period of 500 to 1500. The major themes of this historical era are how civilizations expanded, how power shifted, how religion spread, and how the world moved from parallelisms and tentative contacts between individual civilizations to one of encounter and exchange – producing a dynamic global framework that led to the spread of ideas, goods, technology, and disease. The 6-8 social studies program focuses on the development of critical thinking skills and empowering students to think, read, and write like historians.

SCIENCE

The science program is designed to encourage curiosity, exploration, and scientific thinking by designing and asking testable questions, designing experiments, collecting and analyzing data through observation and investigation, and drawing conclusions. In all grades, students continue to build their knowledge and enhance their skills through discovery and problem-solving activities. The middle schools believe that science is to be enjoyed and thus, promotes a student-centered and collaborative approach where children work together to uncover the wonders of their natural world. While the learning of content is a critical component, the emphasis is on the Science and Engineering Practices, and hence content area assessments are only part of the experience. Science is integrated with other curricular areas in order to appreciate the significance of important discoveries and their effects on society. In support of our district 1-1 Initiative, technology is also an essential component of our program. Students use technology to gather and report data, locate primary sources, and to take part in simulations. By involving these early adolescents in science issues, we hope to produce informed and committed young citizens who are pro-active and responsible in their communities.

MATHEMATICS

The middle school math programs address the content and practices mandated by the New Jersey Standards for Learning. All courses stress the Mathematical Practices outlined in the standards in every unit of study.

Students will:

- Make sense of problems and persevere solving them

- Reason abstractly and quantitatively
- Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others
- Model with mathematics
- Use appropriate tools strategically
- Attend to precision
- Look for and make use of structure
- Look for an express regularity in repeated reasoning.

In Grade 6, instructional time will focus on four critical areas: (1) connecting ratio and rate to whole number multiplication and division and using concepts of ratio and rate to solve problems; (2) completing understanding of division of fractions and extending the notion of number to the system of rational numbers, which includes negative numbers and developing fluency with the computation of rational numbers; (3) writing, interpreting, and using expressions and equations; and (4) developing understanding of statistical thinking.

In Grade 7, students are enrolled in Math 7 or Math 7 Honors. Instructional time will focus on four critical areas: (1) developing understanding of and applying proportional relationships; (2) developing understanding of operations with rational numbers and working with expressions and linear equations; (3) solving problems involving scale drawings and informal geometric constructions, and working with two- and three-dimensional shapes to solve problems involving area, surface area, and volume; and (4) drawing inferences about populations based on samples

In grade 8, students are enrolled in Algebra I, Algebra 1 Honors or Math 8. Instruction will focus on simplifying expressions, operations with rational numbers, polynomials, and radicals. Students will solve and graph equations and inequalities including linear, quadratic, absolute value and exponential functions.

The criteria to be considered eligible for an honors class is posted on the district website under *Departments/Mathematics/Program overview*

Honors and Accelerated Mathematics is an accelerated and enriched program for students who have met the assessment criteria to be placed into the class. Students in grade 6 study Pre-Algebra. Students in grade 7 study Algebra 1 and students in grade 8 study Algebra 2. All courses cover material at the equivalent of an honors, high school level course and include enrichment topics appropriate to the ages and abilities of the students.

WORLD LANGUAGE

All students are required to take a World Language. Learning experiences are designed to be practical and useful in order to develop the ability to communicate and interact in a foreign culture. Language choices include Chinese, French, German and Spanish. Students choose when entering sixth grade and will continue with the same language throughout their middle school experience. The middle school language program is designed for new learners of a language; students who already speak a language will study a different language in middle school. Students will have an opportunity to switch or add an additional language upon entering high school. Interdisciplinary connections are an essential component of the World Language program.

CYCLE COURSES

Cycle courses are required courses offered in rotation that allow students exploration of art, computer, health, life skills, music, and technology.

Art (Grades 6, 7, 8): During this course students will be challenged to use a variety of media to solve creative design problems. Students will utilize the Elements and Principles of Design to create two and three-dimensional works of art. The experience will also include participation in self and group critiques of student and master works of art. There will also be opportunities for students to develop their sense of aesthetics, helping them to better understand their exposure to the ever-growing visual world.

6th Grade Computer Cycle: The 6th grade computer cycle is a computer literacy & research class that promotes the use of technology tools to enhance learning, increase productivity, and foster creativity.

7th Grade Computer Cycle: The 7th grade computer cycle is a computer literacy & research class that expands and builds on the knowledge and skills learned in the 6th grade computer cycle. This class promotes the use of technology to gather, analyze, manipulate, and communicate information and data in an effective, efficient, and appropriate manner.

Health (Grades 6, 7, 8): Health classes are designed to help students work to meet the challenges for living a long and healthy life. The courses of study are used to guide them to make responsible, well informed choices and decisions based on knowledge and skills that they have learned and practiced. In sixth grade students

begin with a unit titled the Dimensions of Wellness, followed by a unit on diseases and disease transmission, HIV/AIDS, and the immune system. The students will also explore topics on body image, eating disorders, making healthy choices and safety. In seventh grade students study topics dealing with goal setting and goal attainment, peer pressure, media pressure, growth and development, puberty and human reproduction. The focus of the eighth grade curriculum is addiction and brain function, alcohol and drug awareness, controlled substances and over the counter drugs. Students also explore decisions related to responsible personal behavior. Students are encouraged to “live what they learn” by becoming health literate and by practicing healthy behaviors.

Life Skills (Grades 6, 7): Life Skills cycle classes are designed as a "hands on" program. In sixth grade, the students are encouraged to improve their practical talents while learning the basics of nutrition, consumerism, cooking, and anti-bullying strategies. Practical experience is gained through actual food preparation tasks and clothing repair skills. In seventh grade the primary emphasis will be food preparation as well as nutrition. Students will be encouraged to make healthy food choices while learning basic cooking techniques. This class is in a laboratory setting with students working in small groups. Nutrition components will stress the importance of limiting high fat, high cholesterol foods while incorporating fruits, vegetables and whole grains to the daily diet.

Music (Grades 6, 7, 8): Students participate in a music program that provides a variety of musical experiences, exposure to music of many cultures, opportunities to listen and perform music, and a foundation in music literacy. Students sing, play keyboards, hand chimes, Orff instruments and small percussion as tools to compose and improvise in different keys and meters.

Study Hall (Grade 6): A time for students to complete classwork and homework in a quiet study setting.

Technology (Grade 7): Is a hands-on program where seventh grade students learn to solve technical problems creatively through the use of a systematic process. Students study various problems, research information, brainstorm ideas, design and plan, build models and devices and do various testing and evaluation of their solutions. They learn technical processes, tools, materials, planning, problem solving and teamwork while applying science, math and other knowledge and skills.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Physical Education is an important program stressing fitness, teamwork and individual achievement. The focus of the program is for students to attain such fundamental skills and objectives that include: balance, cardiovascular fitness, strength training, team building, agility, flexibility, endurance training, and good sportsmanship.

ESL

The English as a Second Language program is divided into levels: Level 1 – Beginners, Level 2 – Intermediate and Level 3 – Advanced. The purpose of the ESL program is to strengthen the four language skills; speaking, listening, reading and writing. The curriculum also includes a cultural component. In addition, the ESL program provides a comfortable and nurturing environment that eases the difficult transition the ELLs (English Language Learners) must face as they assimilate into a new academic setting and culture.

PRISM

PRISM (Performance Revealing Individual Students' Magic) is a Renzulli based multi-disciplined program designed to accelerate and enrich students with identified talents in the arts and humanities. PRISM students have the option to pursue accelerated levels of independent and group research and problem solving. Students are considered for PRISM candidacy based on their past consistent motivation and task commitment, creative problem solving, and high ability. There are many ways for students to meet their potential in middle school. PRISM is one way students can realize their exceptional potential.

SPECIAL SERVICES

Students with Individualized Education Program (IEPs) have their programs designed to meet requirements as dictated by student need. All individual program needs are discussed at a student's IEP Annual Review meeting with the IEP Team.

ELECTIVE COURSES

Art (Grades 7 & 8): This is an advanced art course intended to meet the needs of students who are excited about art. Students will express themselves through drawing, painting, printmaking, sculpture, ceramics, and mixed media. This elective builds on skills learned in cycle art and involves in-depth art experiences approached through creative problem solving, material exploration, skill building, aesthetics, and art history. In Art Elective you will discover your inner artist!

Band (Grades 6, 7, 8): This group rehearses a wide variety of music literature, from marches to musicals and everything in between, in order to prepare for formal concerts, festivals, and recitals. The majority of students in the 6th and 7th grade bands have 1-2 years of experience and the majority of students in the 8th grade band have 2-3 years of experience. Each student also receives a regularly scheduled small group lesson, which is an integral part of the program's success.

Broadcast Journalism (Grade 7 Only): Do you want to be a TV reporter? Then, this is the place for you. Broadcast Journalism is designed for the innovative student who is interested in writing, producing, editing, creating, and reporting news stories for broadcast. The student will learn the techniques used in researching & reporting a story, developing questions, conducting interviews, writing scripts, and investigating stories. Students will gain skills in communication, collaboration, planning, and researching information in a very self-directed & responsible learning environment.

Choir (Grades 6, 7, 8): This group rehearses a wide variety of music literature in order to prepare for formal concerts, festivals, and recitals. Emphasis will be placed on proper vocal production including breathing, posture and tone quality. Goals include developing the voice of each student, expanding appreciation for choral literature, strengthening the ability to read music, and enabling artistic performance. Choir is open to all students, regardless of previous singing experience.

Communication Arts (Grade 6 Only): This elective will introduce each student to public speaking and develop the skills to become calm, confident and effective speakers. This class will develop these skills through storytelling, debating, multimedia presentations and hands on activities. Students will also demonstrate the speaking, listening, and interpersonal skills necessary to be effective communicators in academic settings, in the workplace, and in the community. Scheduling: This course is offered as an alternative to the 6th grade music electives.

Computer Applications (Grade 7 Only): Computer Applications is an elective course designed to permit exploration and learning through a variety of software applications. A “hands on” approach is used to encourage the use of the computer as a problem-solving tool and resource. Projects include graphic design, multimedia presentations, animations, web page design, research, and photo editing.

Computer Graphics (Grade 8 Only): Computer Graphics is an elective course designed to enhance students’ experience combining art and the computer. This course will cover a variety of computer applications that teach various drawing and painting techniques. Students will learn to use the basic functions of these programs and combine these skills with their own creative ideas to create original works of art. Digital cameras may also be used to create both still images and video. Images and video will be edited and altered using a variety of programs and techniques.

Computer Programming (Grade 8 Only): Computer Programming is an elective course designed to introduce and enhance students’ experience in programming applications. This course will challenge students to analyze tasks, predict outcomes, and solve problems. Students will learn programming fundamentals such as program design, flow of control, variables, and data handling. Programming projects include graphic design, mathematical challenges, game programming, mobile app and game development, and more. Students will also explore robotics by using hands-on construction to engineer and build, program, test, and evaluate a robot’s behavior.

Creative Baking and Cooking (Grade 8 Only): This elective course is designed to expose students to general cooking and baking principles as well as the chemistry of recipe production. By working in groups, students will be preparing foods such as muffins, breads, cookies, and soup in a “hands-on” laboratory setting. Making nutritious food choices and adapting recipe ingredients to conform to today’s health standards will also be stressed. If you enjoy cooking and baking as well as trying foods from various food groups of the pyramid, then this elective may be for you!

Creative Woodworking (Grades 7 & 8): Students in this class will be involved in designing and building projects, with wood being the main component. Other materials such as hardware may be used as well. All projects will initially need a plan selected from a text and later of student design. Students will use basic hand tools, portable electric tools and stationary machine tools to fabricate, assemble and finish wood products such as tool boxes, shelves, jigsaw puzzles, birdhouses, game boards and other basic wood projects. Student projects will be based on experience and ability. There is no prerequisite. Woodworking can be taken in either grade 7 or grade 8 or both.

Exploring Design and Engineering (Grades 7 & 8): Students in this course will be involved in designing and building all types of structures, mechanisms and vehicles that are needed to solve specific problems. They will develop creative ideas, make plans and build solutions to engineering problems using basic hand tools, portable electric tools and stationary machine tools. It will involve using a variety of materials and many different processes to cut, shape and fasten these materials, in order to create solutions to the problems. Examples of projects would be support structures, bridges and vehicles that use alternative energy to travel on land, sea and air, such as CO₂ race cars, boats, planes and simple rockets. There is no prerequisite. Design and Engineering can be taken in either grade 7 or grade 8 or both.

First Period Paws* (GMS Only - Grades 7 & 8): This elective will meet from **7:00 to 7:40 am every morning**. First Period Paws is designed for the student who is interested in creating, writing, and reporting broadcast news. The student will learn the techniques used in researching, investigating, and reporting a story, developing questions, conducting interviews, appearing on camera, and writing scripts. Parental permission is required.

***If you are selected, this course is taken in addition to your other elective(s).**

Foods Around the World (Grade 8 Only): The goal for this elective class is to introduce students to foods and meal patterns of various countries around the world. Students will gain experience using a variety of cooking utensils and ingredients native to other cultures. Tasting foods such as chocolate mousse from France, pasta with various sauces (pesto, alfredo, etc.) from Italy, stir-fry's from China, hummus from the Middle East, spaetzle from Germany, or fresh salsa from Mexico will be a major component of the course. By understanding how holidays, religions, and climate affect food customs, students can begin to appreciate how families in their community live and eat.

Orchestra (Grades 6, 7, 8): Orchestra ensembles rehearse and perform different genres of music literature, from baroque to contemporary. The Orchestras perform in several concerts, festivals, and recitals throughout the year. The majority of students in the 6th and 7th grade orchestras have 2-3 years of experience and the majority of students in the 8th grade orchestra have 3-4 years of experience. Each student also receives a regularly scheduled small group lesson, which is an integral part of the program's success.

Performing Arts (Grades 7 & 8): Public Speaking is both performance and persuasion. This course will give students the opportunity to develop techniques and strategies that will develop student's ability to persuade, inform, entertain and connect with an audience. Theatre techniques are blended with developing the student's individual and authentic style. Students will explore Improvisational theatre /theatre games to help overcome fear, anxiety and build confidence. Students will work with debating, focusing on Ethics and the art of persuasion. Students will progress to developing TED Talks and performances that will highlight their personal presentation style. Seventh grade students develop their acting skills by playing theatre games, creating character scrapbooks and performing in short skits and television commercials. Students explore the world of Broadway Musicals through music, dance, costume design, playbill design, and live performances in the classroom. Eighth grade students learn the fundamentals of Improv theatre with fun-filled, impromptu games and live evening performances. A full study of Silent Films and Melodrama will have students writing, producing, acting, filming, and finally presenting their work in front of an audience.

STEM: Explore, Discover & Apply (Grade 8 Only): In this course, we will ignite students' passion for STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) through independent and group challenges in a double elective year-long course that meets every day. This hands-on, project-oriented class will emphasize collaboration, critical and analytical thinking, problem solving, creativity and effective experimental design. Students will be exposed to projects and activities that combine Computer-Programming with Mechanical & Electrical systems and Material Fabrication. Topics of study may include: Arduino / Raspberry Pi Programming, Amusement Park Physics & Maker Innovation.

Television & Film Production (Grade 8 Only): This rigorous elective is designed for the student who loves television, video and film. Students will meet every other day throughout the school year and need to be self-disciplined, responsible and highly motivated. Meeting deadlines and being able to work in small groups are essential to a student's success. Time will be spent studying the art of television, video, and film production, television and video camerawork, working with digital editors, writings scripts, creating storyboards, producing and directing. The focus of this class is on project-based learning and individual student expression.

SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

CMS and GMS offer a variety of after school activities, clubs and interscholastic sports. Student interest dictates offerings, which are frequently updated. Late bus service is provided to accommodate the various time schedules of the activities.

Clubs and Activities: Offered in the Fall and Winter will be determined each season based upon student interest. CMS and GMS offer similar activities, but school-specific activities are available on each school's web pages.

Interscholastic Sports: Completed sports packets, which can be downloaded on district website, and current physicals are required to try-out and participate.

Fall

Boys Soccer (7 & 8)
Girls Soccer (7 & 8)
Field Hockey (6, 7 & 8)
Cross Country (6 – 8)

Winter

Boys Basketball (7 & 8)
Girls Basketball (7 & 8)
Cheerleading (6, 7 & 8)
Wrestling (6 – 8)

Spring

Boys Baseball (6, 7 & 8)
Girls Softball (6, 7 & 8)
Track and Field (6 – 8)
Boys Lacrosse (6, 7 & 8)
Girls Lacrosse (6, 7 & 8)
Tennis (7 & 8)

Should you have any questions about the middle school program of studies, please feel free to contact your child's counselor or the appropriate content area supervisor:

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| Business/Computers/Engineer. | Dr. Russ Wray | 716-5000 – ext. 7329 |
| Fine & Performing Arts | Mr. Jeff Santoro | 716-5000 – ext. 5262 |
| Language Arts | Ms. Cathy Reilly | 716-5000 – ext. 7307 |
| Math | Ms. Andrea Bean | 716-5000 – ext. 5264 |
| Science | Mr. Richard Stec | 716-5000 – ext. 5268 |
| Social Studies | Mr. Carl Cooper | 716-5000 – ext. 5155 |
| World Languages | Ms. Sherry Sizemore | 716-5000 – ext. 5120 |