

**WHITEFISH BAY MIDDLE SCHOOL
COURSE DESCRIPTIONS & STUDENT SCHEDULING INFORMATION
GRADE 8**

We are proud of our ability to provide our grade 8 students with a wide variety of exciting electives and required courses. Our grade 8 students have a great deal of choices in rounding out their schedules. Please take the necessary time to go through this course description packet and select courses that are of interest to you. In grade 8 the Literature requirement is one quarter instead of a whole year. We strongly recommend every student taking at least one additional Literature offering. We are pleased with the student choice offerings in the Literature area. These student choice Literature offerings will continue to emphasize the critical thinking skills necessary for high school and beyond.

REQUIRED COURSES:

All **eighth** grade students are required to take the following “core” academic classes:

**Language Arts-8
Literature A (One Quarter)
Literature B (One Quarter)
Level III or IV (Algebra) Math
Science-8
Social Studies-8**

All students are required to use the agenda notebook provided by the school. If a student loses his/her agenda notebook, he/she must purchase a new one from the office.

Directions:

- **BE SURE TO TURN IN BY REQUIRED DATE**
- **BE SURE TO HAVE PARENT SIGNATURE**

- **MAKE COURSE SELECTIONS VERY CAREFULLY.**
- Once a course selection is made, students will be expected to stay with their decision, i.e., schedules will not be changed.

- The middle school elective courses are important to a student’s learning in that they provide:
 - Education in an area of the student’s interest.
 - Career awareness information
 - Incorporation of basic skills such as – reading, writing, listening, and expressing oneself
 - A broadening of the student’s life learning experiences.

- **IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS REGARDING YOUR CHILD’S EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM, PLEASE FEEL FREE TO CONTACT YOUR CHILD’S SCHOOL COUNSELOR.**

REQUIRED COURSE DESCRIPTIONS:

Language Arts 8	Students will learn to become proficient and confident readers, writers, speakers, and listeners. Language arts skills are integrated with the genre and themes in literature. In eighth grade, students will know and understand various skills at a grade appropriate level in the following areas: composition, grammar, vocabulary, and literature. In composition, the students will write persuasive, personal, descriptive and causal essays. Poetry and the writing of a research paper will also be completed. In the students' writing, they will utilize the writing process of prewriting, writing, revising, proofreading and publishing. The students will learn grammar, usage and mechanics, including quotations and ellipsis, pronouns, clauses, and sentence structure. In vocabulary, the words are selected from the stories read and integrated into the language arts instruction. And finally, in the literature portion of the course, the student will read the different genres of short stories, poetry and plays.
Literature A Literature B	Literature A and Literature B each are a one-quarter long class in which students will analyze themes of courage, prejudice, determination, and survival. Activities that students will engage in are: class discussion, composition, grammar, vocabulary usage, editing, projects and presentations.
Level III Math -or- Level IV (Algebra)	<p>The purpose of mathematics education is to build the high levels of mathematical skills, processes, thinking, and problem solving necessary to meet the challenge of a changing technological society. This course is designed as a preparation for high school algebra/geometry. In Level III Math, students will know and understand arithmetic at a grade appropriate level –including number theory, fraction concepts, rational and irrational numbers, ratios, proportions and percents, and data analysis and probability. Students will also know and understand algebra – including integers, equations, inequalities and graphing. Finally, the students will know and understand geometry – including circles, polygons, surface area and volume.</p> <p>The level IV Algebra program is an accelerated math course that parallels that of the algebra course at the high school. Students who successfully complete this course receive a statement on their high school transcript stating such completion, but do not receive high school credit. The course covers the foundation skills of linear algebra, including the rules of algebra, linear equations, linear inequalities, systems of equations, powers and exponents, quadratic equations, polynomials, factoring, proportions, functions and connections to geometry. Students will also be introduced to problem solving, aided by the use of school provided graphing calculators. Students who successfully master concepts covered in this course will be placed in geometry their freshman year at the high school.</p>
Science 8	<p>The eighth grade science course consists of 3 major units and several minor units. Organisms: From Macro to Micro will allow students to explore ecosystems, life cycles of plants and animals, structures and functions of various species, cell division and related processes, and more. We will do so using ponds, plants, microscopic organisms, and more. Catastrophic Events will teach us about storms, including hurricanes, and plate tectonics, including volcanoes and earthquakes. Energy, Motion & Machines will allow us to explore these concepts through many hands-on activities, including the opportunity to build your own model roller coaster. In addition to these major units, we will have mini-units on PHEOC: The Scientific Method, Measurement, and Chemistry.</p> <p>Students will develop and apply the scientific knowledge, skills, and attitudes that enable them to make informed use of science concepts. The mix of science units covered will provide students with an understanding of the connections among and between the various branches of science, and the application to their daily lives. A broad range of instructional approaches will be used, including hands-on activities, inquiry based labs, class discussion, projects and research. Activities are designed to activate prior knowledge, generate questions, and develop an extensive understanding of science concepts.</p>
U.S. History 8	<p>The goal of this course is to provide students with a comprehensive examination of United States History from pre-colonial times through the Civil War. More importantly, the end goal of this course is to provide students with the ability to interpret primary source materials recognizing their content, main ideas, and limited perspectives. It is also to have students be able to support generalizations with specific evidence and to present information in a clear and credible fashion. Finally, it is the goal of the course to have students become productive citizens who can think critically about issues, construct an informed opinion and defend an argument.</p> <p>This yearlong course is organized into units based on historical time periods. There are eleven units which include, but are not limited to: Discovery and Exploration, Settlement and Colonization, Native Americans with a Wisconsin Focus, Beginnings of An American Identity, The Road to Revolution, Confederation to Constitution, Launching a New Government, National and Regional Growth, A Changing Nation, The Nation Breaking Apart, and The Civil War. Some units will include a project or simulation; all will use primary sources.</p>

HEALTH & PHYSICAL EDUCATION: MEET EVERY OTHER DAY

Health 8 (meets every other day with Physical Education)	The eighth grade health program emphasizes the importance of responsible decision making to a student's overall wellness. Wellness is a state of physical, intellectual, emotional, and social well-being. To maintain good health throughout life, a person must be concerned with wellness throughout life. Students will attain adult CPR certification in this course. The following units are covered in the eighth grade curriculum: Mental and Emotional Health, Nutrition, Diseases and Disorders, Human Growth and Development, Substance Abuse, Violence Prevention, and Injury Prevention and Safety.
Physical Education 8	The physical education program in 8 th grade expands upon the activities and fitness skills taught in 6 th and 7 th grade with the addition of higher level lifetime activities and personal fitness. Sportsmanship and cooperation are stressed at all grades. Advanced knowledge of rules and regulations as well as strategy in team and individual sports is taught. New skills and lifetime skills introduced are golf, lacrosse, spinning, archery, 1 wall handball and weight lifting. A portion of each class is devoted to individual fitness. The curriculum enhances lifetime personal physical fitness with the use of heart rate monitors and pedometers and engages students in learning cardiorespiratory fitness, endurance, flexibility, agility, balance, muscular strength, speed, power, and coordination.

ELECTIVE COURSES: MEET DAILY ALL YEAR

Band	Band provides the opportunity for students to study instrumental music, with public performance as an end result. The literature used exposes the students to a variety of forms and styles, as well as instruction in music elements. In addition to full band rehearsals, band members will receive a small group lesson each week. Concert etiquette is stressed.
Choir	Choir provides the opportunity for students to study vocal music, with public performance as an end result. The literature used exposes musical styles in three and four parts, as well as instruction in musical elements. Concert etiquette is stressed.
Orchestra	Orchestra offers continued study for students who desire to advance in ability to play a stringed instrument. Depth of sound and musical expression is seriously pursued for a mature ensemble experience. Based on availability, small group lessons are occasionally provided. Solo and small ensemble performance is encouraged. Several public concerts representing varied musical forms and styles are presented.
World Languages French, German or Spanish (Level 1c)	These courses are a continuation of the seventh grade world language class. Together, the 6 th through 8 th grade courses are comparable to the Level I courses at the high school. They include the five basic language skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing and culture). Only students who earn a passing grade in the prerequisite Level 1a courses or who have had comparable experience in the language may take the Level 1b course. By satisfactorily completing Levels 1a, 1b and 1c in the middle school, students are able to advance to Level II at the high school. In general, only Levels 1a, 1b and 1c students in middle school will be able to take the 5 th advanced placement (AP) course in their senior year of high school.

ELECTIVE COURSES: MEET DAILY FOR 9 WEEKS

Advanced Design & Construction	<p>Various engineering and design concepts will be emphasized in this 9-week course. Structural design, laws of motion, acceleration/deceleration forces, passenger restraint and “crumple zones” are investigated when students design, build and test a CO2 balsa wood crash vehicle. Vehicles will be designed to carry four paintball “passengers” and will be performance tested in a high-speed crash at speeds up to 60mph.</p> <p>Problem solving, innovation and creativity are stressed as students work in teams to design and build a “wacky” multi-step Rube Goldberg machine. The goal is to build a machine that will perform a simple task in as many creative steps as possible. The Rube Goldberg project will utilize simple machines such as ramps and levers as well as independently without “human intervention” after it is started.</p>
Dollars and Sense	<p>This class will introduce students to the world of finance and daily money management. Students will learn knowledge and skill that will enable them to be a wise and knowledgeable consumer, saver, investor, user of credit, money manager and citizen of a global workforce.</p>
Digital Video Production	<p>This hands on production course will allow students to create and produce original video projects which examine specific genres i.e., short documentaries, interviews, sports, school related activities and entertainment.</p>
Fitness & Conditioning	<p>This class provides exploration and experiences with many different activities, which will enable students to make educated decisions when selecting a personal fitness program for later life. Activities may include: jogging, walking, aerobics, rope jumping, stretching, biking, aerobic games, (heart rate monitors) weightlifting, cross-country skiing, and swimming. All activities are dependent on the weather and the availability of workout areas.</p>
Hands on Music (Guitar)	<p>This class provides instruction on <u>guitar</u>. Flat-picking and finger-picking styles will be explored. Ensemble playing and lifetime musical skills will be emphasized. If a guitar is needed, a rental fee will be assessed.</p>
Hands on Music (Drumming)	<p>This class provides instruction on <u>drumming</u>. Students will experience a variety of percussion instruments through hands on experience. Study of world drum instruments as well as the creative use of everyday items, such as garbage cans, chairs, and music stands will be used to create unique sounds and rhythms. The introduction to reading rhythm notation will be part of the class. Ensemble playing and individual study will allow for student creative expression.</p>
Leadership Skills	<p>The leadership development course will include lessons in goal setting, problem solving, communication and social skills training. In addition, the concepts of emotional intelligence, and the effects of peer pressure with how to counteract its effects are explored. Other aspects of this class include how to develop a healthy self-concept and healthy relationships in and out of school.</p>
Ceramics	<p>Clay, clay and more clay! We'll learn more about a variety of hand-building techniques such as slab building, coiling, pinching and many others. You'll create several beautiful fired and glazed items that you can use or give as gifts.</p>

ELECTIVE COURSES: MEET DAILY FOR 9 WEEKS CONTINUED

<p>Creative Publications: Writing</p>	<p>Students who enroll in this class should be comfortable writing, as they will explore the craft of poetry, short stories and play writing. For many projects students will be paired up with those from the Advanced Art course for collaborative work. The aim of this class is to teach advanced techniques, emphasize collaboration, give effective critiques and link creative writing with the visual arts.</p>
<p>Creative Publications: Art</p>	<p>Students who enroll in this class should be very comfortable working with drawing and sculptural media. For many projects, students will be paired up with those from the creative writing course for collaborative work. The aim of this class is to teach advanced techniques, emphasize collaboration, give effective critiques and link creative writing with the visual arts.</p>
<p>Pop ART</p>	<p>This is the class for you if you're a pop culture fan! We'll be exploring a variety of subject matter, such as: celebrities, cartoons, food and advertising. Besides the use of contemporary images and ideas, we'll also be learning about several well known Pop artists, as we use their techniques in our own creations.</p>
<p>2D Techniques: Painting, Print Making and Computer Imaging</p>	<p>Do you like to draw and paint? This is the course where you'll learn those tricks and techniques that artists use to make their drawings and paintings better. Everyone is welcome, and we'll have you creating beautiful artwork in no time!</p>
<p>3D Techniques: Ceramics & Sculpture</p>	<p>This course is perfect for students who don't mind getting a little messy. We explore several different types of sculpture techniques, such as ceramics, plaster and found object construction.</p>
<p>Study Hall</p>	<p>Those students who need extra support with academic classes are encouraged to select a study hall. (Students may sign up for a study hall for 9 weeks, 18 weeks, 27 weeks, or an all year study hall that meets daily.)</p>

8TH GRADE SUPPORT SERVICES:

Believing that all students can learn, Whitefish Bay Middle School provides a variety of support systems for students' academic success. These programs are designed to assist students in developing basic skills and productive work habits to better meet the expectations of our academic curriculum.

<p>Support Skills</p>	<p>Support Study skill is designed to give academic assistance, where needed. Support teachers will be in regular contact with classroom teachers to monitor assignments and progress.</p>
<p>Math Support</p>	<p>In addition to the regular mathematics classroom instruction, students receive instruction in the basic factual and functional math skills. Daily work also consists of homework practice and review for quizzes and tests. This class is for students with below average grades in mathematics. Students may be placed in math support based on teacher recommendation, classroom performance and testing results.</p>
<p>Reading Language Arts with Read 180 Integration</p>	<p>Reading and Language Arts (RLA) are taught in a two period block for students who require intensive, differentiated reading and writing skills practice to attain grade level proficiency. Writing instruction follows the scope and sequence of regular RLA classes with minor changes in amount of required writing and more individual attention for students.</p> <p>The reading component of the course includes whole group direct instruction in reading grade level trade books as well as individualized instruction in the computer based Read 180 program. The Read 180 computer program provides differentiated, adjusted instruction and practice in word study, vocabulary, fluency, spelling and comprehension. Students also read and respond independently to full-length books they have chosen.</p> <p>Eligibility for the Reading/Language Arts with the Read 180 Integration Program is determined by a student's need for improvement in the areas of reading and writing. Recommendations by classroom teachers, special education staff, or counselors are required to be enrolled in the course. Previous test scores, grades, classroom performance, and IEP's are possible criteria for enrollment.</p>

