



PLATTEVILLE
MIDDLE SCHOOL

COURSE HANDBOOK

YOUR EDUCATION RESOURCE

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Fifth & Sixth Grade

The 5th & 6th grade curriculum for all students consists of reading & language arts, math, science, social studies, general music, art, and physical education. A daily 30-minute Intervention/Enrichment (Pride) period gives students the opportunity to concentrate on academic skill development or participate in a range of enrichment mini-courses. Teachers put an emphasis on quality work and positive reinforcement. Courses include learning opportunities for computer skills, performance skills, and healthy life-style skills.

In 5th & 6th grade, course work is integrated when possible. Phone calls, newsletters, Family Access/Message Center, Schoology, and electronic progress reports are used to enhance communication with parents. Portfolio collections of student work are used to conference with parents and students.

All students are encouraged to become involved in a wide range of electives, co-curricular, and extracurricular activities. In 5th grade, Strings is an option. Strings, band, choir, and STEM 6 are electives for 6th grade students. Plays are other examples of activities offered.

Special education support and services are available for students who require additional support to be successful. Remedial as well as enrichment opportunities are provided for students. Students have access to a well-equipped and staffed Instructional Materials Center.

The Parent-Teacher Organization, (PTO), hosts family activities each year and everyone is welcome to become involved.

Students are encouraged to explore and try new skills. Fifth and Sixth grade is a time for the middle school student to grow and mature while developing a love for learning.

GRADE 5 – Required Courses

Reading & Language Arts 5 - is a required course for all fifth graders that meets for an 80-minute period every day for the year. The fifth grade curriculum stresses identifying key ideas and details, craft & structure and the integration of knowledge and ideas. Students will increase their vocabulary and knowledge of language. Students will be expected to build their independent reading level through our Independent Reading Program.

Math 5 - is a required course for all fifth graders that meets for an 80-minute period every day for the year. Mathematics in the fifth grade is based on recommendations made by the Common Core State Standards and the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, Curriculum and Evaluation Standards for School Mathematics. Students will focus on operations and Algebraic thinking, number and operations in base ten and fractions, measurement and data analysis, and some Geometry concepts.

Science 5 - is a required course for all fifth graders that meets for an 80-minute period every other day for the year. Students will cover a variety of topics such as the Scientific Method, Ecosystems, Space, Matter, Earth Science and Environment.

Social Studies 5 - is a required course for all fifth graders that meets for an 80-minute period every other day for the year. A fifth grade social study focuses on American History. It begins with the first Americans coming to this continent and continues through the periods of exploration, colonization, the Revolutionary War, westward expansion, the Civil War, and U.S. geography.

Arts 5 - is a required course for all fifth grade students that will meet every other day, one 45-minute period for the year. Students experience a variety of different methods and materials to be used both independently and cooperatively. Students will learn art elements and principles through studying, viewing and discussing art history, artists and artwork. Art is used as a method of expression, problem solving and creativity.

Music 5 - is a required course for all fifth grade students that will meet every other day, one 45-minute period for the year. Students will read music, notate music and/or compose music within specified guidelines. Students will work on singing technique and be exposed to American Folk Songs and World Music.

Physical Education 5 - is a required course for all fifth grade students that will meet every other day, one 45-minute period for the year. Students will continue to work on motor skills within a variety of activities. They will apply knowledge of concepts, strategies and tactics within those activities. The main focus will be for students to be able to recognize the value of physical activity for health and enjoyment.

STEM 5 - is a required course to all fifth grade students and will only meet every other day for 1 semester. This is a project-based class that will explore coding, math, science and technology.

Elective Courses

Strings 5 - is an elective class that is open to all fifth grade students that meets for one 50-minute period every other day for the year. Students are introduced and learn basic performance skills on their instrument and basic music reading skills in both small and large group lessons.

*If a student enrolls in Strings, they will have 1 semester of Art (Fine Arts 5) and 1 semester of Music (General Music 5)

GRADE 6 – Required Courses

Reading & Language Arts 6 - is a required course for all sixth graders that meets for an 80-minute period every day for the year. The sixth grade curriculum stresses comprehension, word identification, vocabulary development, library, study and research skills, and gaining an appreciation of literature. This course teaches grammar, writing, listening, spelling, punctuation, dictionary, speaking, and research skills. It also teaches the use of the computer as an integral part of effective communication skills. Students will be expected to continue building their independent reading level through our Independent Reading Program.

Math 6 - is a required course for all sixth graders that meets for an 80-minute period every day for the year. Mathematics in the sixth grade is based on recommendations made by the Common Core State Standards and the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, Curriculum and Evaluation Standards for School Mathematics. The curriculum emphasizes conceptual understanding, mathematical modeling, and problem solving with an emphasis on the latter as a context for learning and applying mathematics. Communication about mathematics and mathematical reasoning is used throughout the curriculum. Areas of study include measurement, decimals, geometry, fractions, area, ratio, percent, probability, algebra and statistics.

Science 6 - is a required course for all sixth graders that meets for an 80-minute period every other day for the year. Emphasis is placed on the processes of science, which are incorporated throughout each unit of study. Major units for Science 6 are forces and motion, plants, geology, chemistry, and the environment.

Social Studies 6 - is a required course for all sixth graders that meets for an 80-minute period every other day for the year. This curriculum emphasizes an understanding and appreciation for early world cultures and their people. Geography, history, political structures, economics, and sociology are integrated into all major units. Areas of emphasis include early man, Egypt, Greece, Rome, Medieval Europe, the Renaissance, and the formation of modern nations.

Fine Arts 6 - is a required course for all sixth grade students that will meet every other day, one 45-minute period for a semester. Students experience a variety of different methods and materials to be used both independently and cooperatively. Students will learn art elements and principles through studying, viewing and discussing art history, artists and artwork. Art is used as a method of expression, problem solving and creativity.

General Music 6 - is a required course for all sixth grade students that will meet every other day, one 45-minute period for a semester. Students participate through singing, playing recorder and bell sets, listening to and moving to music, drumming in an African Drumming Circle, as well as studying music history and composers. There is an emphasis on becoming music readers and on the elements of music, particularly form and style.

Physical Education 6 - is a required course for all sixth grade students that will meet for one 45 minute period every other day for the year. Students are expected to change into appropriate dress for most units. This course is designed to provide students with an opportunity to experience a variety of activities, which emphasize skill development, interpersonal relationships, fitness, rhythms, and healthy lifestyles.

Elective Courses

Strings 6 - is an elective class that is open to all sixth grade students that will meet every other day, one 45-minute period for the year. Students learn and refine basic performance skills on their instrument and basic music reading skills in both small and large group lessons.

Band 6 - is an elective course open to all sixth graders that will meet every other day, one 45-minute period for the year. Individual and small group lessons are also scheduled. This course is an introduction to wind and percussion instruments through small and large group lessons, rehearsals, and performances.

Choir 6 - is an elective course open to all sixth grade students who like to sing. It will meet every other day, one 45-minute period for the year. Students are introduced to unison, two- and three-part music, as well as music reading skills. Basic foundations of good vocal production, choral technique, listening skills, and performance round out the choir experience. This course meets all year on alternate days.

STEM 6 - is an elective course to all sixth grade students who enjoy hands-on learning. This is a project-based class that will explore coding, math, science and technology. This course meets all year on alternate days.

Seventh Grade

The required curriculum for all seventh grade students consists of Reading, Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies, and Physical Education. A daily 30-minute Intervention/Enrichment (Pride) period gives students the opportunity to concentrate on academic skill development or participate in a range of enrichment mini- courses. Teachers put an emphasis on quality work and positive reinforcement. Courses include learning opportunities for computer skills, performance skills, and healthy life-style skills.

In seventh grade, required courses are taught by a team of teachers working together to integrate curriculum when possible. Phone calls, Google Classroom, Family Access/ Message Center, Schoology and electronic progress reports are used to foster communication with parents. Student performance and progress reports are used to conference with parents and students.

All students are encouraged to become involved in a wide range of electives, co- curricular, and extracurricular activities. Strings, Band, Choir, Art, Spanish A and Exploratory Spanish, Technology 7 and Lifetime Fitness are electives for seventh grade students. Plays, Student Council, Science Olympiad, and Junior Optimus are other examples of activities offered.

In seventh grade, programs are also available for a wide range of special needs students. Remedial as well as talented and motivated opportunities are provided for students. Students have access to a well-equipped and staffed Instructional Materials Center.

The Parent-Teacher Organization, (PTO), hosts family activities each year and everyone is welcome to become involved.

Students are encouraged to explore and try new skills. Seventh grade is a time for the middle school student to grow and mature while developing a love for learning.

Curriculum

There are two components of the curriculum: required classes and elective classes. Required classes meet every day (except P.E.). Elective classes meet every other day for the entire year. All seventh graders are required to take a minimum of one elective for the year. The middle school curriculum is designed to teach students basic skills as well as to allow them an opportunity to explore new areas.

GRADE 7- Required Courses

Reading 7 – Seventh grade reading class is designed to enable students to improve their reading skills while studying and learning literary techniques, vocabulary, figurative language, and plot elements of novels. Students will analyze, synthesize and evaluate fiction and non-fiction literature to further develop critical thinking skills. In addition, students will be expected to continue building their independent reading level through the Independent Reading Program. Students will also be writing about literature through such essays as: literature response, comparison/contrast, cause/effect, and book analysis. Students will be given opportunities to present in front of others via projects, papers and opinions during discussion groups and class presentations.

Language Arts 7 – This class is designed to enable students to develop good communication skills in oral and written formats. Students learn to identify and properly use all parts of speech, study spelling and writing conventions, employ research skills, and then apply all of those language skills in the writing process. Writing instruction is based on the Six Traits of Writing as follows:

1. Ideas-using various ways to develop and expand them.
2. Organization-learning that pieces of writing are organized differently according to the type of writing.
3. Sentence Fluency-techniques for combining sentences while avoiding fragments and run-ons.
4. Voice-techniques to give writing individuality, perspective, and authenticity.
5. Word Choice-selecting appropriate words by using specific nouns, dynamic verbs, and understanding word meanings and connotations.
6. Conventions-using accurate spelling, capitalization, punctuation and grammar to help clarify.

Students compose both narrative and expository pieces throughout the year, including descriptive, compare/contrast, and a persuasive essay/speech. By producing several drafts, peer revising drafts for specific traits, conferencing with the teacher, and publishing a final copy, students are expected to steadily improve all aspects of their communication skills.

Mathematics 7 - Seventh grade general mathematics is designed to help students develop basic number sense, computation skills, and conceptual understandings of important mathematical concepts. Students will expand their skills and understandings with rational numbers of all types (fractions, decimals, and percent) and will develop proportional reasoning. Concepts of data analysis and probability will also be included.

Science 7 - The seventh grade science class is designed to cover a wide variety of science topics. The main emphasis is to develop basic skills in using scientific methods to help solve problems. It is also designed to develop knowledge of laboratory skills and use a variety of scientific tools to gain an appreciation and better understanding of science. Units covered are: scientific method, ecology, human systems, animal development and behavior, dissection, weather, and sound and light.

Social Studies 7 - The seventh grade social studies curriculum is called "Global Connections." Students study the "ever-shrinking" world by learning about various cultures, our own multicultural, diverse society, major religions and holidays of the world, world geography, and current events.

Physical Education 7 – This class will meet every other day for the year. Initial development of a personal, life-long fitness routine is done through “cross-training”. Strength and conditioning activities

are emphasized in conjunction with continued guided practice in recreational sport and fitness activities. Students need not be the fastest, the strongest, or even the best skilled to do well in physical education, they just need to be appropriately involved and give their best effort.

Elective Courses

Band 7 - The second year of the three-year band program. Students have the opportunity to receive a comprehensive music education through instruction and performance on wind and percussion instruments. The curriculum is presented through ensemble rehearsals and small group lessons. Students have various performance expectations including concerts, music festivals, and parades. Prerequisite for this class is completion of Band 6 or teacher recommendation/approval. This course meets all year on alternate days.

Choir 7 - Choir 7 allows for a continuation for students who like to sing. Continued emphasis on music reading, basic foundations of good choral technique, and listening skills are presented as well as opportunities for accompanying, choreography, and two- and three-part music. This course meets all year on alternate days.

Strings 7 - Students continue to study their instruments and musical concepts through large group performance, solos, and biweekly small group lessons. This class meets every other day.

Art 7 – is an elective course for 7th grade students who enjoy art. The class will meet every other day, one period all year. Students participate in an integrated curriculum that includes a variety of different methods and materials to be used both independently and cooperatively. Students will learn art elements and principles through studying, viewing and discussing art history, artists and artwork. We use art as a method of expression, problem solving and creativity.

Technology Education 7 – This class will meet every other day for a year. This is an activity-oriented program designed to help students in 7th grade explore math, science and technology.

Lifetime Fitness 7 – This class will allow students an extra opportunity to develop their cardiovascular endurance, muscular endurance, muscular strength, body composition, and flexibility. Activities may include fitness games, cardio sports, biking, swimming, fitness assessment, strength training, walking, skating, cross- country skiing, and step aerobics. Cooperation, instead of competition, will be emphasized as students work to enhance their mental, physical, and psychological development

Spanish A – *Note: Admission to this course is by invitation/recommendation only.* This course is designed for students who plan on taking advanced Spanish in high school. This is the first half of a two-year sequence (Spanish B in 8th grade). Spanish A and Spanish B are equivalent to the first year Spanish course at PHS. Students completing Spanish A and B will be eligible with the teacher's recommendation to enroll in the second year Spanish course (Spanish 2) as freshman.

Exploratory Spanish - Explore the cultures of Central and South America and Spain in this course. We will learn about the customs, geography, festivals, art, history, and foods of Latin America. Students will also have the chance to learn a little Spanish as a preview of high school Spanish courses.

Eighth Grade

The required curriculum for all eighth grade students consists of Reading, Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies, and Physical Education. A daily 30-minute Intervention/Enrichment (Pride) period gives students the opportunity to concentrate on academic skill development or participate in a range of enrichment mini-courses. Teachers put an emphasis on quality work and positive reinforcement. Courses include learning opportunities for computer skills, performance skills, and healthy life-style skills.

In eighth grade, required courses are taught by a team of teachers working together to integrate courses when possible. Phone calls, Google Classroom, Family Access/ Message Center, Schoology and electronic progress reports are used to enhance communication with parents. Student performance and progress reports are used to conference with parents and students.

All students are encouraged to become involved in a wide range of electives, co- curricular, and extracurricular activities. Strings, Band, Choir, Art, Health, Technology Education, Agricultural Education 8, Spanish B, and Exploring World Languages are electives for eighth grade students. Plays, Student Council, Junior Optimos, and Science Olympiad are just other examples of activities offered.

In eighth grade, programs are also available for a wide range of special needs students. Students have access to a well-equipped and staffed Instructional Materials Center along with computer labs. Remedial as well as talented and motivated opportunities are provided for students.

A Parent-Teacher Organization, (PTO), hosts family activities each year and everyone is welcome to become involved.

Students are encouraged to explore and try new skills. Eighth grade is a time for the middle school student to grow and mature while developing a love for learning.

Curriculum

There are two components of the curriculum: required classes and elective classes. Required classes meet every day (except P.E.). Elective classes generally meet every other day for either a semester or for the entire year. All eighth graders are required to take a minimum of one elective for the year. The middle school curriculum is designed to teach students basic skills as well as to allow them an opportunity to explore new areas.

GRADE 8 - Required Courses

Reading 8– Eighth-grade reading class is designed to enable students to improve their reading skills while students individually improve reading levels through independent literature choices. Furthermore, technology is used for several writing assignments including: book analysis for each novel read, response to literature essays, cause/effect essay, persuasive essay, powerpoint project, and a research paper. The students have several opportunities to demonstrate and practice oral presentation skills with visual aids and technology via speeches, recitations, research project presentations, and memorized recitations.

Language Arts 8 – Eighth-grade language class requires the complex study of not only grammar usage and mechanics but also its application within the writing process: Prewriting, drafting, responding, editing, revising, evaluating and publishing. Writing workshops focus on writing for different purposes, such as personal response, descriptive narrative, fiction, informative/expository, persuasive (problem-solution), and poetry writing. In addition, this class is thematically integrated with reading to further develop comprehension and vocabulary as well as life performance skills of listening, speaking and technology. Instructional materials include language arts textbooks and related media.

Math 8 - Eighth grade math students will complete many activities designed to develop algebraic reasoning. Students approach algebraic ideas through investigations and problems that allow them to search for patterns and relationships in data and to find ways to express these patterns in words and in symbols. Students discover features of a pattern; construct understanding of concepts, processes, and relationships; develop a language to talk about the problems; and learn to integrate and discriminate among patterns and relationships. The curriculum includes a variety of problems ranging from basic to challenging in skill practice and problem solving to give students the practice they need to develop their math skills.

Algebra - *Note: Admission to this course is by invitation/recommendation only.* Algebra is a comprehensive course in first-year algebra. It is offered for students in eighth grade who meet eligibility requirements and elect to enroll. Algebra emphasizes conceptual understandings, multiple representations and connections, mathematical modeling, mathematical problem solving, and is based on the recommendations of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics Curriculum and Evaluation Standards and its Core Curriculum Addenda.

Science 8 – Eighth grade science focuses on physical science in the units of Chemistry, Project Lead The Way's Gateway to Technology unit *Science and Technology*, Forces and Machines, and Forces and Energy. Eighth grade science also includes a Cells and Genetics biological unit and Astronomy and Fossils in the earth science units. The course emphasizes laboratory hands-on activities. All of the curricular units use the processes of science (observing, inferring, organizing, comparing, relating, applying and communicating).

Social Studies 8 - The eighth grade social studies course is a study of United States history from the time of discovery to the present. Students are also exposed to introductory concepts in economics, sociology, anthropology, political science and study current events on a weekly basis. Students are taught mainly through simulations, role-playing, and other hands-on activities.

Physical Education 8 - Initial development of a personal, life-long fitness routine is done through "cross-training". Strength and conditioning activities are emphasized in conjunction with continued guided practice in recreation sport and fitness activities. Students need not be the fastest, the strongest, or even the best skilled to do well in physical education, they just need to be appropriately involved and give their best effort.

Elective Courses

Band 8 - Students continue their comprehensive music education through instruction and performance on wind and percussion instruments. Students have various performance expectations including concerts,

music festivals, and parades. Prerequisite for this class is completion of Band 7 or teacher recommendation/approval. This course meets all year on alternate days.

Choir 8 - This course offers further development of choral technique, music reading, and listening skills while studying two-, three-, and four- part music. Accompanying and choreography opportunities are available. This course meets all year on alternate days.

Strings 8 - Students continue to study their instruments and musical concepts through large group performance, solos, and biweekly small group lessons. This class meets every other day.

Art 8 – is an elective course for 8th grade students who enjoy art and will meet every other day, one period all year. Students participate in an integrated curriculum that includes a variety of different methods and materials to be used both independently and cooperatively. Students will learn art elements and principles through studying, viewing and discussing art history, artists and artwork. We use art as a method of expression, problem solving and creativity.

Exploring World Languages - This course provides students the opportunity to explore, on a limited basis, the four different world languages. During the course, students (a) acquire an understanding of how to be a successful world language student, (b) learn to communicate in each language on a very minimal level, (c) learn some important cultural information about the people who speak/spoke each language, (d) discuss how their own language developed and how these four world languages have influenced English, and (e) explore some basic elements of sign language. These four languages include but are not limited to; Spanish, French, German, Mandarin, Arabic, and Hindi.

Spanish B- *Note: Students must successfully complete Spanish A to qualify for Spanish B.* This is the second year course in the sequence (Spanish A-Spanish B). It is designed for students who plan on taking Spanish in high school. Spanish A and Spanish B are equivalent to the first year Spanish course at PHS. Students completing Spanish A and Spanish B will be eligible with the teacher's recommendation to enroll in the second year Spanish course (Spanish 2) as freshman.

Health – *Note: This course does NOT take the place of the required Health class in High School.* Health 8 education will provide each student with a curriculum emphasizing wellness as a way of life, focusing upon health attitudes, behaviors, choices and up-to-date current health knowledge. This course is designed to motivate and assist students to maintain and improve their health, enabling them to develop the skills and attitudes necessary for health-related problem-solving and informed decision-making. The curriculum covers topics related to nutrition, mental health, alcohol abuse, smoking, drug abuse, nutrition, and human sexuality issues.

Technology Education 8 – This is an activity-oriented program designed to help students in 8th grade explore math, science and technology.

Agricultural Education 8 – Students will explore the 8 career pathways within the agricultural food fiber and natural resource industries. Students will conduct a semester long agricultural science SAE research project and be introduced to the opportunities offered within the FFA organization. Careers pathways will include plant science, animal science, food science, biotechnology, natural resources, environmental science, ag mechanics, and agribusiness/leadership.