

St. Johns Middle School

Course Guide

2024-2025



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St. Johns, MI 48879

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“Working as a Team to Build the Future”

St. Johns Middle School Motto, Adopted February 25, 2000.

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NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY

The St. Johns Board of Education policy as it relates to educational programs is to eliminate discrimination and denial of services on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex and disability. Anyone who wishes to file a complaint as it relates to this policy may obtain a copy of the procedures to file such a grievance from the Board of Education office or see the procedures as provided later in this document:

"It is the policy of the St. Johns School District that no person shall, on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, or disability be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity and in employment."

Any questions concerning **Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972**, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex, should be directed to:

Inquiries related to **Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973**, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability, should be directed to:

Mr. Michael Winkel
Title IX Coordinator
Curriculum Director
Administration Office
St. Johns Public Schools
501 W Sickles St.
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Mr. Mark McKeown
Title IX Coordinator
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Regarding Facilities:
Mr. Rob Gleeson
Director of Operations
Administration Office
St. Johns Public Schools
501 W Sickles St.
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Regarding Educational Services:
Mary Garrigus
Section 504 Coordinator
Administration Office
St. Johns Public Schools
501 W Sickles St.
St. Johns, MI 48879
(989) 227-4050



DISTRICT MISSION

St. John's Public Schools will provide an educational experience that prepares all students to become individuals who think critically, live purposely, lead responsibly, communicate persuasively, and serve others generously.

DISTRICT VISION

To become schools that embrace change through pursuit, evaluation and celebration of new knowledge and skills. To provide every student with the choice to undertake advanced learning without remediation.

BOARD OF EDUCATION

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SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE

(989) 227-4050

Anthony Berthiaume.....Superintendent of Schools
Michael Winkel.....Curriculum Director
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SJMS ADMINISTRATION AND ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

(989) 227-4300

Andrea Hallead.....Principal
James Matice.....Asst. Principal, Athletic Director
Colleen Sykes.....Student Success Coach
Paula Tabor.....Secretary to the Principal
Darcy Montle.....Secretary to the Assistant Principal
Trisha Kloha.....Attendance & Records Secretary

SJMS SCHOOL COUNSELING TEAM

Katie Goff.....Counselor, Last Names A-L
Luke Smith.....Counselor, Last Names M-Z

SJMS Redwing Families,

On behalf of the faculty and staff at St. Johns Middle School (SJMS), the proud home of the Redwings, it is our pleasure to welcome you to the 2024-2025 school year. We are excited about all we will accomplish together. Our school motto is, “Working as a TEAM to build the future.” We firmly believe that the academic, social, and emotional success of our students depends on the *TEAM* effort of families, teachers, support staff, coaches and the students themselves. At SJMS, there are opportunities for *all* students to get involved in their education through classroom and co-curricular activities...to express their Redwing pride through creative endeavors, athletic achievements, and service learning. We are confident that this school year will be one of academic successes, personal growth, and meaningful experiences.

The middle school years are special. We truly believe they can be engaging and enjoyable for *every* student. This level in your child’s education is so much *more* than a step between elementary and high school. At SJMS, students build on their prior learning in engaging and increasingly sophisticated ways. They explore their interests in areas such as the industrial and applied arts, life skills, the visual and performing arts, world languages, service, student leadership, and athletics. Students find their niche among friends while learning to make good decisions in their lives. They are allowed more freedom and choices and also take on more responsibilities.

SJMS provides this Course Description Guide to assist you in understanding the contents of each of our courses at your child’s grade level. If you have any questions about the information herein, please feel free to contact the school or visit our website (www.sjredwings.org/middleschool) for more information. Effective communication between school and home, cooperation, and shared expectations are crucial components in student success. We welcome you to visit our school, volunteer, or otherwise take an active role in your child’s education.

The SJMS staff looks forward to working together with you, the parents and guardians, to support our students’ budding independence, academic efforts, and personal discovery throughout the coming year. Feel free to contact us to provide input, ask questions, or get involved. This is going to be a great year.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Andrea Hallead, Principal

Mr. James Matice, Assistant Principal



Although we list numerous elective course offerings each year, there is always a possibility that a course offered in this course guide may not be available in the actual schedule. For example, if there is not enough student interest in a specific course, it may be canceled. Therefore, we ask students to choose three alternate classes. Every effort is made to schedule students into their top choices, but if a course is full or canceled, alternate elective choices will be used to fill student schedules.

In addition, from time to time, the school may need to implement changes to course offerings and the overall schedule after students choose their course preferences and before the next academic year. In these cases, student schedules will be built based on updated requirements. Again, in keeping with the new offerings and available courses, every effort is made to schedule students into top choices.

Students who demonstrate need for intervention based on course grades; performance on local, state, and/or nationally normed assessments; and teacher input may be scheduled into intervention courses in place of an elective course. These courses are also subject to exit criteria, meaning student performance will indicate when students are eligible to choose elective classes after initial placement in intervention. These placements are the final decision of the building principal.

USING THIS GUIDE

When using this guide, please note the number included at the end of each course name (E.g. English Language Arts 6). These numbers indicate the grade levels of students who may enroll in the course. Most of our courses are leveled by the grade of students enrolled in them, but some are mixed grade (E.g. Modular Technology 7/8) and are therefore listed in both grades' sections. Courses that end in "I" are freshman or introductory level courses offered for high school credit at the middle school level. They are high in rigor and expectation for work output.

Read each course description carefully before choosing courses to add to your enrollment form. Some courses are a year-long commitment. Some are a single trimester. Some require teacher approval or principal assignment. Others are purely elective. If you have any questions about any of the content of this guide, please contact a school counselor or administrator.

6TH GRADE

PREFACE TO ENROLLMENT

Welcome to St. Johns Middle School. We hope your sixth grade year with us will be exciting and successful. In order to help you plan your courses, a description of all sixth grade required and elective courses are listed on the next several pages of this booklet. At the sixth grade level, most of the courses are chosen for the students. All sixth graders are required to take the following year-long courses: English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and Physical Education/Health.

From there, the elective choices differ and will be explained to you by your school counselor. Our elective programs offer a variety of educational opportunities for you. *Also see “Disclaimer” on page 5.*

REQUIRED YEAR-LONG COURSES

English Language Arts 6 (6110)

This course is based on the 6th grade Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts. Students think critically while developing skills and strategies in the areas of reading, writing, language usage, speaking, listening, and viewing. Students read two novels throughout the course, respond to literature, compare literature to its film adaptation, craft informative/explanatory writing pieces, and complete a short research unit.

Mathematics 6 (6221)

The sixth-grade mathematics program reinforces math concepts presented in the elementary grades. The concepts are based on the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). The standards and the Mathematical Practices “focus on developing the critical thinking, problem-solving, and analytical skills students will need to be successful.” (<http://www.corestandards.org/what-parents-should-know/>) Goals for students include becoming more confident in their mathematical reasoning, effectively communicating and discussing ideas, understanding math in a real-world context, and looking for patterns/connections throughout understanding math. Students will:

- Understand ratio concepts and use ratio reasoning to solve problems.
- Apply and extend previous understandings of multiplication and division to divide fractions by fractions.
- Apply and extend previous understandings of numbers to the system of rational numbers.
- Apply and extend previous understandings of arithmetic to algebraic expressions.
- Reason about and solve one-variable equations and inequalities.
- Represent and analyze quantitative relationships between dependent and independent variables.

- Solve real-world and mathematical problems involving area, surface area, and volume.

Science 6 (6332)

Science 6 students will learn and apply scientific concepts using the Mi-STAR curriculum (<http://mi-star.mtu.edu/>). Mi-STAR is a middle school curriculum that supports both the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) and the Michigan State Standards while empowering students to become solution builders as they use science and engineering practices to address real-world issues and challenges that spans each unit:

- Water Cycle
- Investigating and modeling body systems
- Chemical processes in organism digestion
- What plants need to grow
- Interactions within ecosystems.
- Cycling of matter and energy through food webs.

Social Studies 6 (6443)

Social Studies 6 focuses on global issues while introducing students to the physical and human geography of the world. Beginning with a spatial perspective, students explore different ways in which the earth has been represented, how geographers use specific tools and technologies in geographic inquiry, and some of the limitations of these tools.

Students explore patterns of natural and human characteristics and use case studies to examine how the physical environment has provided both benefits and obstacles to human society. In doing so, students explore how humans have used, adapted, or modified their environment and the consequences thereof. Students then examine a variety of global issues that emanate from human activities such as migration and settlement, culture and cultural diffusion, population and demographic changes, resource use, and increasing networks of trade and economic interdependence. Students investigate how local, national, and international governmental and non-governmental organizations respond to contemporary issues.

Different regions of the world are used to illuminate examples of how these global issues or problems affect people in places around the world. The curriculum and accompanying materials encourage students to take a global view of their world.

Physical Education (Boys 6770) (Girls 6771) and Health 6 (6772)

Students attend Physical Education 6 for 24 weeks. During PE6, students learn about badminton, basketball, floor hockey, jump rope, lacrosse, physical fitness, soccer, softball, team handball, pickleball, speedball, tennis and volleyball. The goals of this course include not only learning team and individual games and sportsmanship, but also developing skills that will serve the students in any team or group based environment. Students are required to wear appropriate clothing, including a t-shirt with their last name on the front. School physical education shirts will be available for purchase during

student orientation and the first week of school. Students also need shorts of appropriate length (no spandex) and tennis shoes that are securely tied. Showers are optional and towels must be provided by the student.

Students attend the Health 6 course for 12 weeks. The course uses materials from the Michigan Model Comprehensive Health Program. Students develop knowledge and skills to make choices resulting in healthy lifestyles. With prevention as a primary focus, units of study include social and emotional health, nutrition and physical activity, safety, alcoholism, tobacco and other drugs, and personal health and wellness. More information at www.michiganmodel.org

ELECTIVE YEAR-LONG COURSES

Band 6 – Woodwinds 6 (6550), Brass (6551), OR Percussion (6555)

Band 6 is our introduction to band. Students are divided into woodwind instruments (flute, oboe, clarinet, saxophone), brass instruments (trumpet, horn, trombone, euphonium), and percussion instruments (bells). 6th grade band students will learn the basics of tone production, technique, articulation, and music theory. Students will also learn basic composition techniques. Practice outside of class is essential for students to maximize their learning. Students are expected to have their instrument, book, pencil, and any other supplies needed for every class. Band 6 includes two formal performances (concerts): one in December, one in late May. Attendance is required at both performances. Band 6 is a year-long class.

Choir 6 (6556)

Choir 6 offers the opportunity for vocal skill development through ensemble singing. Emphasis is placed on breathing, breath support, vocal production, choral tone, developing the “musical ear,” music reading, sight reading and performance etiquette. A variety of choral literature is performed, ranging from Baroque and Classical music to present day pop and musical theater selections. *Students who wish to enroll for two trimesters must receive special permission from the Vocal Music Director.*

Choir 6 is a performance-based class. Students must participate in all performances that take place outside of the school day, including the Fall Concert (mid-October), Holiday Concert (mid-December), Pre-Festival Concert (late February), MSVMA District Choral Festival (early March, held in Mt. Pleasant) and Spring Concert (mid-May).

Orchestra 6 (6552)

Orchestra 6 is our beginning strings class. This course is divided into two groups: high strings (violins) and low strings (violas, cellos, & basses) taught by director(s) who specialize in orchestral instruments.

Students will learn and develop correct instrumental performance technique, ear training, note reading, composition, creating/improvising, position technique, as well as correct fingering and bowing techniques. This class gives at least two performances per year and uses a classroom book to cover the orchestra curriculum during our daily rehearsal. Regular, at-home practice is essential for every student's success in orchestra. Orchestra 6 is a year-long class.

ELECTIVE ROTATIONAL COURSES - “THE WHEEL”

All 6th grade students not enrolling in year-long Band, Choir or Orchestra will take *three* rotational courses. We refer to these courses, together, as “The Wheel.” Each year, we offer Art 6 and General Leadership Skills for Middle School Students 6. We also may offer one or more of the following, depending on student population size, which is marked with **: Outdoor Adventure 6**, General Music 6** and/or Modular Technology 6**, described below.

Art 6 (6660)

Art 6 exploration is a general art adventure. In this class, students will be exposed to a variety of media including drawing, painting, sculpture, and pottery. The wide range of experiences in this course are designed to allow students to experience some of the different forms that art expression can take. Students will realize how planning, technique, timing, and craftsmanship contribute to a successful end product.

General Music 6 (6553)

General Music 6 is an exploratory class that builds upon the elementary general music experience. The course gives students the opportunity to experience studying music daily. Emphasis is placed on fundamentals of music literacy, song structure and composition, and analysis of music used in every day media. Students spend time learning about music notation, musical terminology, and applications of music in their every-day lives. Stress is placed on developing a cooperative attitude and appreciation of music in their lives. Students who excel in General Music 6 are encouraged to enroll in Middle School Choir in 7th and 8th grades.

Leadership for Middle School Students 6 (6780)**

Leadership for Middle School Students 6 is a class in which students develop leadership, professional, and building skills. They learn to foster a healthy self-concept, healthy relationships, and learn to understand the concept of personal responsibility including social media's impact on image. Students will develop an understanding of emotional intelligence and the skills it measures, which includes self-awareness, self-control, self-motivation, and social skills. Students also develop skills in public speaking and communication. They will have an understanding of the concept of principle-based decision-making and learn to make responsible financial decisions. In addition, students will develop

an understanding of the effects of peer pressure, skills to counteract those effects, bullying prevention, and defending skills, and will develop problem-solving skills.

Throughout the class, students will employ various technologies to support and empower them to take their skills to the next level. Students will acquire an understanding of the principles of parenting, enabling them to become better family members and citizens. As members of a community, students also develop leadership skills practiced in the form of community service. They will also develop an understanding of the need for vision in goal setting, both personally and professionally.

Modular Technology 6 (6662)**

Modular Technology 6 is a project based class that introduces students to various industrial technology fields. Students will create projects in woodworking, metalworking, engineering, robotics, rocketry, and flight. Students learn how to be good employees, solve problems, and think creatively.

Outdoor Adventure 6 (6661)**

Outdoor Adventure 6 focuses on activities that offer lifetime participation opportunities in the great outdoors. Student activities take place outdoors unless prohibited by inclement weather. In that event, students will research class topics in the classroom or pursue course related indoor activities. The course explores the following areas:

- | | | |
|-------------------|------------------------|--------------------|
| - Archery | - Golf | - Shelter Building |
| - Camping/Cooking | - Lacrosse | - Sliding |
| - Frisbee Golf | - Nature Hiking | - Team-Building |
| - First Aid | - Orienteering/Compass | - Ultimate Frisbee |

7TH GRADE

PREFACE TO ENROLLMENT

The seventh grade can be especially exciting, successful, rewarding, and productive. In order to help you develop your schedule, we have prepared this section with descriptions of required and elective courses offered to 7th graders.

Each seventh grade student is required to take the following year-long classes: English Language Arts 7, Mathematics 7, Science 7, and Early World History 7. In addition, a trimester of a technology course, and two trimesters of Physical Education 7 are required for all seventh graders. The remainder of your classes will be made up of elective courses. When you choose your elective classes, you should think about the things you like to do, might like to try, or things that interest you. Please don't choose elective courses just because your friends have chosen the same ones. Elective courses give you the chance to explore new experiences and new interests.

With your parents, please review the following section, and make choices for your courses. Sometimes it is not possible to give you your first choice because some courses may be full or canceled. Therefore, you will need to prioritize your elective choices.

Student requests are used to determine the courses offered. Therefore, you may not be able to change courses after school begins next fall due to class size and scheduling. It is important for you to decide now which courses you really want to take. School counselors and the teachers are available to answer your questions and provide assistance in making your course choices.

Also see "Disclaimer" on page 4.

REQUIRED YEAR-LONG COURSES

English Language Arts 7 (7110)

This course focuses on 7th grade Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts. Students will focus on developing skills and strategies in the areas of reading, writing, language usage, speaking, listening, and viewing. These skills will be taught through specific narrative genre-based units such as drama, Greek mythology, mystery, and immigration studies, as well as informational reading through the exploration of historical texts, biographies, autobiographies, and memoirs. Students will focus on finding multiple pieces of evidence as they write responses to literature, informative/explanatory texts, and support arguments with claims, while also crafting narrative writing.

Mathematics 7 (7222)

Mathematics 7 reinforces math concepts presented in earlier grades, introduces new mathematical concepts, and extends students' critical thinking skills. The course is organized around the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and the mathematical practices referenced in the CCSS. The primary focus areas of this course are algebraic concepts and proportional relationships. Student will:

- Review measurement skills and apply to geometry including surface area and volume.
- Analyze data and determine probability.
- Apply and extend previous understanding of operations with fractions to add, subtract, multiply, and divide rational numbers.
- Analyze proportional relationships and use them to solve real-world and mathematical problems.
- Use number properties and operations to generate equivalent expressions.
- Solve real-life and mathematical problems using numerical and algebraic expressions and equations.

Science 7 (7332)

Science 7 students will learn and apply scientific concepts using the Mi-STAR curriculum (<http://mi-star.mtu.edu/>). Mi-STAR is a middle school curriculum that supports both the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) and the Michigan State Standards while empowering students to become solution builders as they use science and engineering practices to address real-world issues and challenges that span each unit:

- Creating an energy plan
- Volcanoes
- Moving thermal energy
- Inheritance of traits

Early World History 7 (7443)

In Early World History 7, students begin with a focus on historical thinking. By unpacking historical thinking, students learn how historians are distinct in how they ask questions and frame problems to organize and drive inquiry. Students learn that historians must have evidence to support the claims they make in their accounts. They investigate how these social scientists select, analyze, and organize evidence, and then use that evidence to create accounts that answer questions or problems. By introducing students to the “invisible” tools that historians use to create historical accounts--significance, social institutions, temporal frames (time), and spatial scales (space)--the course deepens students' historical habits of mind and builds students' social and content literacy.

Students investigate human history from the beginning until around 1500. They explore major and significant changes in each era using a chronological organization. Students learn about the earliest humans and explore early migration and settlement patterns. In studying the origins of farming and its

impact upon emerging human cultures, students analyze evidence from the fields of archaeology and anthropology and employ a wide range of data sources including artifacts, photographs, and geographic information. Students examine how the emergence of pastoral and agrarian societies set the stage for the development of powerful empires, trade networks, and the diffusion of people, resources, and ideas.

Physical Education 7 (7770 Boys) (7775 Girls)

7th graders are required to take two trimester classes of physical education. Activities include football, soccer, volleyball, basketball, badminton, tumbling, weight training, team handball, tennis, and physical fitness. PE7 is designed to promote a positive atmosphere and appreciation of physical activity. The goals of the course include not only learning team and individual games and sportsmanship, but also developing skills that will serve students in any team-based or group-based environment.

Students are required to wear appropriate clothing, including a t-shirt with their last name on the front. School physical education shirts will be available for purchase during student orientation and the first week of school. Students also need shorts of appropriate length (no spandex) and tennis shoes that are securely tied. Showers are optional and towels must be provided by the student.

REQUIRED TRIMESTER COURSES

7th graders are required to choose **one** technology course. *Students may choose from the following technology courses to fulfill the requirement.*

Technology Literacy 7 (7880)

Technology Literacy, or “Tech Lit” is a 12-week course which covers the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) Standards in a problem/project-based environment. The ISTE Standards include empowering student learning, becoming a responsible digital citizen, constructing knowledge, innovating, designing, thinking through computation, communicating creatively, and collaborating globally. Students learn about their digital footprint, etiquette, ethics, and the importance of being a responsible digital citizen.

This introductory course engages students in an interactive, online course while still working daily with a teacher. They learn to work in a totally paperless environment; all assignments are available online through Google Classroom. Students can work from home, school, library...anytime, anywhere the student has an Internet connection.

In addition, in this course, students will revisit their Educational Development Plan (EDP) that they started in the 6th grade. For students who just joined us at SJMS this year, this will also be an opportunity to complete the self-exploration tasks that their peers completed last school year.

Coding 7 (7664)

Coding 7 is a scaffolded, project-based, digital learning experience over twelve weeks that introduces students to the basics of coding and problem solving. Students create stories, videos, and games using Scratch programming language. This simplified programming format allows students to think creatively and logically as they assemble blocks of code to make their projects come to life.

Digital Media 7 (7667)

Digital Media 7 is a scaffolded, project-based, digital learning experience over twelve weeks, that introduces students to the creative uses of technology. Students create multiple projects using various online art tools. They learn to take quality photos manually on a camera, use digital tools to edit and enhance their photos, and create a stop motion video.

ELECTIVE YEAR-LONG COURSES

Band 7 (7550)

Band 7 expands what was learned in sixth grade, the biggest difference being that Band 7 band is an independent musical ensemble.

Advanced skills taught this year include the following:

- major and minor tonalities
- new key signatures
- diverse musical styles
- music history
- music of different cultures

Students will also continue learning music theory, including chord progressions and how to apply them to composing and improvising. Students will be expected to have their instrument, book, pencil, and any other supplies needed for every class. Practice outside of class is essential for students to maximize their learning and growth. The course includes two formal performances (concerts): one in December, and one in mid/late May. Attendance is required for both.

Additionally, there will be an opportunity for students to perform in the SJMS Jazz Band and Solo and Ensemble. More information will be provided at the start of the school year.

Choir 7 (7553)

Choir 7 offers the opportunity for vocal skill development through ensemble singing. Emphasis is placed on breathing, breath support, vocal production, choral tone, developing the “musical ear,” music reading, sight reading and performance etiquette. A variety of choral literature is performed, ranging from Baroque and Classical music to present day pop and musical theater selections. *Students who wish to enroll for two trimesters must receive special permission from the Vocal Music Director.*

Choir 7 is a performance-based class. Students must participate in all performances that take place outside of the school day, including the Fall Concert (mid-October), Holiday Concert (mid-December), Pre-Festival Concert (late February), MSVMA District Choral Festival (early March, held at Saginaw Valley State University) and Spring Concert (mid-May).

Orchestra 7 (7552)

Orchestra 7 is designed for students with at least one year of playing experience on a string instrument. Orchestra 7 builds on the skills and knowledge learned in Orchestra 6 while challenging students to achieve more. Students develop better intonation, more advanced bow skills, more advanced music theory skills, and a broader knowledge of their instrument.

Students will also continue to develop their composition, improvisation, and other creative skills. Students in Orchestra 7 perform at three concerts or more each year, and they participate in the middle school's solo and ensemble program for the first time. . Students will use a classroom book as their rehearsal music, along with orchestra music that will be performed throughout the school year. Regular, at-home practice is essential for every student's success in orchestra. Orchestra 7 is a year-long class.

ELECTIVE TRIMESTER COURSES

2-Dimensional Design 7 (7807)

This class is for students who enjoy drawing and printmaking or want to learn. In this course students will focus on several different drawing and printmaking techniques. We will tackle universal concepts such as proportions, observational drawing, positive/negative, basic color theory, perspective, process and craftsmanship. Students will be able to observe and experience how these skills can contribute to a successful end product. Students will practice strategies and exercises that will enable them to develop and improve observational and visual communication skills.

3-Dimensional Design 7 (7806)

Stretch your imagination in 3-D Design. Students will use conventional and improvisational materials to create sculptural works of art. Materials such as wire, cardboard, papier mâché, clay and plaster will

be used as a medium for expression. Students will leave with a basic understanding of some universal concepts of construction as well as those specific to each project. Students will realize how planning, technique, timing and craftsmanship contribute to a successful end product.

Exploratory Language 7/8 (7684)

This is a trimester elective course that allows students to explore six weeks of French and six weeks of Spanish. During this course, students will participate in an interactive class where they are introduced to French and Spanish language and culture. Students will explore the role of communication, cultures, connections, comparisons, and communities when learning about a new language and culture. Students will also develop an understanding of how they already have language and communication skills that they can utilize while learning a new language and how learning a second language opens them up to other cultures around the world. Students will be expected to participate regularly, and most importantly, have fun!

Introduction to Theatre 7/8 (7802)

This class will develop a background in the history of theatre, theatre terms, and the process of producing theatre from a written script. Students will explore the many aspects of theatre production from set design, costuming and properties to the skills required of the actor. Much of the course consists of activities that develop speaking, movement, and acting skills through dramatic games, warm-ups, and activities. Daily class participation is essential for success in this class. “All the world’s a stage.” - William Shakespeare

Leadership for Middle School Students 7/8 (7890)

Leadership for Middle School Students is a class in which students develop leadership, professional, and team building skills. They learn to foster a healthy self-concept, healthy relationships, and learn to understand the concept of personal responsibility including social media’s impact on image. Students will develop an understanding of emotional intelligence and the skills it measures, which includes self-awareness, self-control, self-motivation, and social skills. Students also develop skills in public speaking and communication. They will have an understanding of the concept of principle-based decision-making and learn to make responsible financial decisions. In addition, students will develop an understanding of the effects of peer pressure, skills to counteract those effects, bullying prevention, and defending skills, and will develop problem-solving skills.

Throughout the class, students will employ various technologies to support and empower them to take their skills to the next level. Students will acquire an understanding of the principles of parenting, enabling them to become better family members and citizens. As members of a community, students also develop leadership skills practiced in the form of community service. They will also develop an understanding of the need for vision in goal setting, both personally and professionally.

Life Skills 7/8 (7661)

This course focuses on a variety of skills that young adolescents need in order to become independent adults. Sewing and cooking topics that are covered include nutrition, kitchen safety, kitchen tools and their uses, different cooking techniques, sewing safety, and basic hand sewing and machine sewing. This is an activity-based class that will allow students to practice the skills they learn.

LINKS 7/8 (9632)

LINKS is a peer-to-peer support program. This program provides many opportunities for general education students to mentor students with disabilities including cognitive impairments and Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). General education peer mentors, called LINKS, learn skills to relate to and support classmates with different needs and abilities, and develop increased understanding and celebration of individual differences.

Target peers gain independence with the support of classmates who become good friends. They also learn the “hidden curriculum” of middle school (which behaviors are appropriate and socially acceptable) from a classmate rather than an adult. The LINKS also make good friends, learn responsibility to others, demonstrate compassion, gain perspective and understanding, and learn acceptance of peers with differences. LINKS meet once per week during Careers+ where they will learn peer support skills with a specially trained teacher.

Students interested in becoming LINKS must indicate on their course selection form OR apply to become a LINK. Teacher recommendation is required. Mentor LINKS students are then matched with a target student with an impairment in a designated class and focus on socialization, independence, and class participation goals.

Math of Sports 7/8 (7804)

Math of Sports, which is open to both seventh and eighth graders, features an investigation of the various mathematical aspects of sports. Topics will include, but are not limited to, probability, game statistics (such as batting average, shooting percentage, etc.), athletic budgets, and geometry of playing surfaces. Possible projects include designing your own stadium and planning a road trip on a given budget. Students who take this course as a seventh grader may not repeat the class as an eighth grader.

Modular Technology & STEM 7/8 (8679)

Modular Technology is for students who desire a unique learning experience that focuses on academic, technical and work behavior skills. This course is an introduction to various career and technical education programs: woodworking, metalworking, computer-aided drafting, engineering, manufacturing, space and rocketry, robotics, and electronics. Machines and equipment will be explained thoroughly with an emphasis on safety. Students rotate through three to four learning

modules every 10 days completing beginning level projects within this trimester-long class. As an element of each module, in addition, to completing a project, students learn about history, industry, and related career opportunities.

Outdoor Adventure 7 (7660)

Outdoor Adventure 7 focuses on activities that offer lifetime participation opportunities in the great outdoors. Student activities take place outdoors unless prohibited by inclement weather. In that event, students will research class topics in the classroom or pursue course related indoor activities. Students who took this course in 6th grade may repeat the class. The following areas will be explored during each trimester:

- | | | |
|-------------------|------------------------|--------------------|
| - Archery | - Lacrosse | - Sliding |
| - Camping/Cooking | - Nature Hiking | - Table Tennis |
| - Frisbee Golf | - Orienteering/Compass | - Team-Building |
| - First Aid | - Shelter Building | - Ultimate Frisbee |

Unified Physical Education LINKS (9643)

Unified PE is an extension of the LINKS program. (See above.) LINKS placed in this class serve as one-to-one support for a peer. LINKS will help the teacher both teach and guide students in learning body movement, fitness skills, modified sports, and lead-up games. This course is a great option for a student who is patient, kind, and understanding with a willingness to help others. ***Students interested in joining Unified PE as a LINK must indicate on their course selection form AND apply to become a LINK. Teacher recommendation is required.***

8TH GRADE

PREFACE TO ENROLLMENT

Eighth grade is just around the corner, and it is time to plan which classes you will take next year. The following section was prepared to help you select the classes in which you will enroll. There are four year-long classes that are required of all students: English Language Arts 8, Math 8, Science 8, and U.S. History 8. The rest of your schedule will be filled with your elective courses. When you pick your elective courses, you should think about the things you like to do, might like to try, or things that interest you. ***Please do not choose elective courses just because your friends have picked the same ones.*** Elective courses give you the opportunity to explore new interests and have new experiences.

Please review this booklet with your parents and choose your electives. You are not likely to change classes after school begins next fall due to class size and scheduling. It is important for you to decide ***now*** which courses ***you*** really want to take. School counselors and the teachers are available to answer your questions and provide assistance in making your course selections.

Also see “Disclaimer” on page 4.

REQUIRED YEAR-LONG COURSES

LANGUAGES

English Language Arts 8 (8110)

This course is based on the Grade 8 Common Core Standards for English Language Arts. Students will focus on deepening their skills and strategies in the areas of reading, writing, language usage, speaking, listening, and viewing. Students will work with both fiction and informational genres in reading and writing. Students will read short stories and novels in the narrative genres of realistic fiction, historical fiction, and science fiction. In the area of informational genres, students will read articles and historical informational texts. Students will focus on finding multiple pieces of evidence as they write responses to literature, informative/explanatory texts, and support arguments with claims, while also crafting narrative writing and poetry.

MATHEMATICS

Mathematics 8 (8221)

Mathematics 8 reinforces math concepts presented in earlier grades, introduces new mathematical concepts, and extends students' critical thinking skills. The course is organized around the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and the mathematical practices referenced in the CCSS. The primary

focus of this course is algebraic concepts. Students will:

- Review and use number properties and operations in new applications.
- Work with radical and integer exponents.
- Understand the connections between proportional relationships, lines, and linear equations.
- Analyze and solve linear equations and pairs of simultaneous linear equations.
- Define, evaluate, and compare functions.
- Use functions to model relationships between quantities.
- Apply statistical thinking including analyzing bivariate data and probability.

Algebra I (8222)

This is a high school algebra course which moves at an accelerated pace. Students enrolling in this course must meet the specified criteria. *The following criteria will be used to determine a student's placement in Algebra I:*

- B average or higher on seventh grade math exams, tests and quizzes
- Proficient or Advanced on the 7th grade M-STEP state assessment in Mathematics
- Strong work ethic
- Teacher recommendation

Course topics include solving, graphing and writing linear equations and inequalities; solving systems of equations, properties of exponents; exponential growth and decay; operations with polynomials; factoring; solving and graphing quadratic functions; data and statistics; and ratios, proportions and percent.

High School Mathematics Placement:

Student performance in their 8th grade math course will determine high school placement as indicated in the chart below. Students should consult with their current math teacher for any recommendations that vary from these recommendations.

8th Grade Course	Grade Earned	Suggested 9th Gr. Course
Algebra I	C or higher	Geometry
	D or lower	Algebra I
Mathematics 8		Algebra I

St. Johns High School Mathematics Course Offerings				
Courses Offered	9	10	11	12
Pre-Algebra	♦			
Algebra I	♦	♦		
Geometry	♦	♦	♦	
Algebra II		♦	♦	♦
Pre-Calculus			♦	♦
AP Calculus				♦
Probability & Statistics			♦	♦
College Algebra				♦
Worldly Math			♦	♦

SCIENCE

Science 8 (8332)

Science 8 students will learn and apply scientific concepts using the Mi-STAR curriculum (<http://mi-star.mtu.edu/>). Mi-STAR is a middle school curriculum that supports both the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) and the Michigan State Standards while empowering students to become solution builders as they use science and engineering practices to address real-world issues and challenges that spans each unit:

- Adaptation and Natural Selection
- Regional climate and weather
- How sound and light feed our senses
- Forces and Motion

SOCIAL STUDIES

U.S. History 8 (8443)

This course introduces students to the history of the United States from the Articles of Confederation through Reconstruction. Using primary and secondary sources, students explore time and place in nineteenth century America. Beginning with the political and intellectual transformations that preceded the Articles of Confederation, students review the ideas and principles that form the basis of our constitutional republic. Students further their understanding of American government from an in-depth study of the United States Constitution and the evolution of the government created during its first century. Students explore the challenges faced by the new nation and the role of political and social leaders in meeting these challenges.

Students also analyze the nature and effect of territorial, demographic, and economic growth in the 19th century. They analyze and evaluate early attempts to abolish or contain slavery and to realize the ideals of the Declaration of Independence for all. In studying the Civil War and Reconstruction, students evaluate multiple causes, key events, and complex consequences of the war and its aftermath. As students examine contemporary public issues during the course, they explore connections to issues of the past. Throughout the course, students learn to use historical evidence to support historical arguments.

ELECTIVE YEAR-LONG COURSES

All 8th graders take a year-long elective. Some students may choose to take TWO year-long electives. Students assigned to an Academic Support or other intervention course may not have the option for a second year-long elective.

YEAR-LONG MUSIC PROGRAMS

Band 8 (8550)

The 8th grade band uses a performance-based curriculum. The fall trimester will focus on marching basics and fundamentals. Students will learn to march in parade formation. Music learned for marching season will be performed at three athletic events during the school year. Following the marching season, students will work on concert music for a holiday concert.

In the concert setting students will continue to develop the following:

- Tone
- Intonation
- Rhythm
- Technique
- Interpretation of Music

Students will participate in MSBOA Band and Orchestra Festival focusing on a march, a required piece from a provided list, and an overture that demonstrates a contrasting style. Students will be offered one travel opportunity in the last trimester. The band will perform at Cedar Point. A uniform is required for marching/formal performances. A red band shirt will be offered at the start of the year for purchase. To participate in 8th grade band, students will need to have successfully completed 7th grade band or seek instructor approval.

Choir 8 (8553)

Middle school choir offers the opportunity to continue vocal skill development through ensemble singing. Emphasis is placed on breathing, breath support, vocal production, choral tone, developing the “musical ear,” music reading, sight reading and performance etiquette. A variety of choral literature is performed, ranging from Baroque and Classical music to present day pop and musical theater selections. Literature will be of a more difficult level as compared to that taught and performed in Choir 7. Grades are based on in-class participation, behavior, performance (including formal appearance), attendance, and occasional written assignments and quizzes. ***Students who wish to enroll for two trimesters must receive special permission from the Vocal Music Director.***

Choir 8 is a performance-based class. Students who select this class must participate in all performances that take place outside of the school day, including the Fall Concert (mid-October), Holiday Concert (mid-December), Pre-Festival Concert (late February), MSVMA District Choral Festival (early March, held at Saginaw Valley State University) and Spring Concert (mid-May).

Orchestra 8 (8552)

Orchestra 8 is designed to further string-playing skills of students who have successfully completed Orchestra 7. Students new to St. Johns should consult the teacher if they wish to join Orchestra 8.

Students will gain further understanding of musical technique (including shifting, vibrato, and more

complex key signatures). Students will study music theory and learn the historical context of the music they perform. Students will perform at a minimum of three performances (including Band and Orchestra Festival) throughout the year, and students will have the opportunity to perform in Solo & Ensemble. Students will be offered one travel opportunity in the last trimester. Regular, at-home practice is essential for every student's success in orchestra. Orchestra 8 is a year-long class.

WORLD LANGUAGE COURSES

French I (8669)

8th graders may select a Level I World Language course: either French I or Spanish I. This course uses the three modes of communication—interpretive, interpersonal, and presentational—and the Five C's--Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities--to support language learning. Students will listen, speak, read, and write using novice-level vocabulary, conversational phrases, and grammar rules through a variety of interactive learning activities based on the Michigan World Language Standards and Benchmarks. Students will begin to make connections between the target language and its cultures with their own language and culture. Technology and audiovisual materials will also be used to enhance student learning. Students will receive one World Language high school graduation credit upon successful completion of this course.

Spanish I (8668)

8th graders may select a Level I World Language course: either French I or Spanish I. This course uses the three modes of communication—interpretive, interpersonal, and presentational—and the Five C's--Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities--to support language learning. Students will listen, speak, read, and write using novice-level vocabulary, conversational phrases, and grammar rules through a variety of interactive learning activities based on the Michigan World Language Standards and Benchmarks. Students will begin to make connections between the target language and its cultures with their own language and culture. Technology and audiovisual materials will also be used to enhance student learning. Students will receive one World Language high school graduation credit upon successful completion of this course.

OTHER YEAR-LONG ELECTIVE COURSES

Yearbook 8 (8557)

Yearbook 8 is a course in which students are responsible for creating and distributing the *St. Johns Middle School Yearbook*. Students must have strong writing, spelling, computer design, and organizational skills. Experience with photography and photo editing techniques is also recommended. At times, students may need to attend after-school activities. After all deadlines are met, students will

continue to photograph peers and school events to create the 8th grade slideshow shown at the end-of-the-year 8th grade Honors Night. Grades are primarily project-based with emphasis on meeting strict deadlines, daily participation, communication, and photography-based assignments teaching technique and skill.

This course requires a high level of computer and technological skill, a good work ethic, and ability to self-monitor in regards to behaviors, especially in digital environments. This course also provides a high degree of individual freedom, therefore, students must be trustworthy and self-motivated.

Year-long Physical Education 8 (Boys and Girls) (8770 - boys) (8775 - girls)

This class is designed to give students an opportunity to learn and play many sports throughout the school year. Some of the activities may include football, soccer, volleyball, basketball, badminton, tumbling, pickleball, speedball, wrestling, tennis, and others. The goals of this course include not only learning team and individual games and sportsmanship, but also developing skills that will serve the students in any team-based or group-based environment.

Students are required to wear appropriate clothing, including a t-shirt with their last name on the front. School physical education shirts will be available for purchase during student orientation and the first week of school. Students also need shorts of appropriate length (no spandex) and tennis shoes that are securely tied. Showers are optional and towels must be provided by the student.

ELECTIVE TRIMESTER COURSES

2-Dimensional Design 8 (7808)

This class is for students who enjoy drawing and printmaking or want to learn. In this course students will focus on several different drawing and printmaking techniques. We will tackle universal concepts such as proportions, observational drawing, positive/negative, basic color theory, perspective, process and craftsmanship. Students will be able to observe and experience how these skills can contribute to a successful end product. Students will practice strategies and exercises that will enable them to develop and improve observational and visual communication skills.

Co-Ed Advanced Physical Education 8 (8778 ABC)

This trimester co-ed course is designed for students seeking to heighten physical fitness and/or improve athletic ability. It provides an intense, structured conditioning and weight-training environment. Advanced PE at the middle level is designed around the “Bigger Faster Stronger” weight training program at the high school. It is designed for the beginning weightlifter and focuses on form and function so as to keep young athletes’ bodies safe and injury-free. All students are required to participate in all segments of the course. Enrollment in this course requires each student to have earned good citizenship and a grade of A in each previous Physical Education course.

Students wishing to enroll will need to obtain permission on their enrollment form from their previous Phys. Ed. teacher.

Coding 8 (8665)

Coding 8 is a scaffolded, project based, digital learning experience over twelve weeks, that introduces students to the basics of 3D coding and problem solving. Students create stories, videos, and games using Alice programming. This 3D programming format allows students to think creatively and logically as they put together blocks of code to make their projects come to life. In addition, they learn basic HTML programming language through Khan Academy's Beginning Coding Course.

Digital Media 8 (8667)

Digital Media 8 is a scaffolded, project-based learning experience over twelve weeks, that introduces students to 3 dimensional technology. Students create multiple 3D projects using Tinkercad and SketchUp. Projects may be related to engineering, architecture, inventions, art and video production. Students will print a minimum 1 design using the 3D printer.

Exploratory Language 7/8 (7684)

This is a trimester elective course that allows students to explore six weeks of French and six weeks of Spanish. During this course, students will participate in an interactive class where they are introduced to French and Spanish language and culture. Students will explore the role of communication, cultures, connections, comparisons, and communities when learning about a new language and culture. Students will also develop an understanding of how they already have language and communication skills that they can utilize while learning a new language and how learning a second language opens them up to other cultures around the world. Students will be expected to participate regularly, and most importantly, have fun!

Introduction to Theatre 7/8 (7802)

This class will develop a background in the history of theatre, theatre terms, and the process of producing theatre from a written script. Students will explore the many aspects of theatre production from set design, costuming and properties to the skills required of the actor. Much of the course consists of activities that develop speaking, movement, and acting skills through dramatic games, warm-ups, and activities. Daily class participation is essential for success in this class. "All the world's a stage." - William Shakespeare

Leadership for Middle School Students 7/8 (7890)

Leadership for Middle School Students is a class in which students develop leadership, professional, and building skills. They learn to foster a healthy self-concept, healthy relationships, and learn to understand the concept of personal responsibility including social media's impact on image. Students will develop an understanding of emotional intelligence and the skills it measures, which includes self-awareness, self-control, self-motivation, and social skills. Students also develop skills in public speaking and communication. They will have an understanding of the concept of principle-based

decision-making and learn to make responsible financial decisions. In addition, students will develop an understanding of the effects of peer pressure, skills to counteract those effects, bullying prevention, and defending skills, and will develop problem-solving skills.

Throughout the class, students will employ various technologies to support and empower them to take their skills to the next level. Students will acquire an understanding of the principles of parenting, enabling them to become better family members and citizens. As members of a community, students also develop leadership skills practiced in the form of community service. They will also develop an understanding of the need for vision in goal setting, both personally and professionally.

Life Skills 7/8 (7661)

This course focuses on a variety of skills that young adolescents need in order to become independent adults. Sewing and cooking topics that are covered include nutrition, kitchen safety, kitchen tools and their uses, different cooking techniques, sewing safety, and basic hand sewing and machine sewing. This is an activity-based class that will allow students to practice the skills they learn. Students that took Life Skills 7 may take Life Skills 7/8

LINKS 7/8 (9632)

LINKS is a peer-to-peer support program. This program provides many opportunities for general education students to mentor students with disabilities including cognitive impairments and Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). General education peer mentors, called LINKS, learn skills to relate to and support classmates with different needs and abilities, and develop increased understanding and celebration of individual differences.

Target peers gain independence with the support of classmates who become good friends. They also learn the “hidden curriculum” of middle school (which behaviors are appropriate and socially acceptable) from a classmate rather than an adult. The LINKS also make good friends, learn responsibility to others, demonstrate compassion, gain perspective and understanding, and learn acceptance of peers with differences. LINKS meet once per week for LINKS lunch where they will learn peer support skills with a specially trained teacher.

Students interested in becoming LINKS must indicate on their course selection form OR apply to become a LINK. Teacher recommendation is encouraged. Mentor LINKS students are then matched with a target student with an impairment in a designated class and focus on socialization, independence, and class participation goals.

Math of Sports 7/8 (7804)

Math of Sports, which is open to both seventh and eighth graders, features an investigation of the various mathematical aspects of sports. Topics will include, but are not limited to, probability, game

statistics (such as batting average, shooting percentage, etc.), athletic budgets, and geometry of playing surfaces. Possible projects include designing your own stadium and planning a road trip on a given budget. Students who take this course as a seventh grader may not repeat the class as an eighth grader.

Modular Technology 7/8 (8679)

Modular Technology is for students who desire a unique learning experience that focuses on academic, technical and work behavior skills. This course is an introduction to various career and technical education programs: woodworking, metalworking, computer-aided drafting, engineering, manufacturing, space and rocketry, robotics, and electronics. Machines and equipment will be explained thoroughly with an emphasis on safety. Students rotate through three to four learning modules every 10 days completing beginning level projects within this trimester-long class. As an element of each module, in addition to completing a project, students learn about history, industry, and related career opportunities.

Pottery 8 (8662)

Eighth grade pottery gets down and dirty. This messy class explores the function, craft, and beauty of pottery. Students will learn vocabulary and basic skills associated with pottery and ceramics through their experiences with the potter's wheel and a variety of hand building techniques. Students will develop an understanding of the clay cycle including the firing and glazing process. Students will realize how planning, technique, timing, and craftsmanship contribute to a successful end product.

Trimester Physical Education 8 (Boys and Girls) (8770 ABC - boys) (8775 ABC - girls)

This class can be taken one, two, or three trimesters. The goals of this course include not only learning team and individual games and sportsmanship, but also developing skills that will serve the students in any team-based or group-based environment. Phys. Ed. is designed to give students an opportunity to learn and play many sports throughout the school year. Some of the activities may include football, soccer, volleyball, basketball, badminton, pickleball, speedball, tumbling, wrestling, tennis and others.

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Unified Physical Education LINKS (9643)

Unified Physical Education is an extension of the LINKS program. (See above.) LINKS placed in this class serve as one-to-one support for a peer. LINKS will help the teacher both teach and guide students in learning body movement, fitness skills, modified sports, and lead-up games. This course is a great option for a student who is patient, kind, and understanding with a willingness to help others. *Students*

interested in joining Unified Physical Education as a LINK, must indicate on their course selection form AND apply to become a LINK. Teacher recommendation is required.