7th Grade Course Descriptions

Social Studies

In this class students will take an in-depth look at the pre-Columbian cultures of the Americas. The culture and civilizations of the Native Americans before the arrival of the Europeans will be discussed. We will also examine the early European settlers and the colonization of the Americas.

English/Language Arts

This course is designed to emphasize reading comprehension, writing skills and methods of inquiry as found in the core of grammar and mechanics. The course will focus on the process of writing, skills and strategies for effective communication in all its forms. This course is aligned to PA ELA Common Core Standards.

Science

The 7th grade science class follows an integrated approach in order to meet Pennsylvania State Science Standards. Units covered include: Introduction to Matter, and Cells, Heredity, and Classification. Students maintaining an A average in this 7th grade science class may qualify for 8th Grade Advanced Science with a recommendation from their 7th grade science teacher.

Computer Concepts – Grade 7

The Beginning Ideas in Computer Science curriculum exposes students to the power of computer science and how it can be used to impact their lives. Students are given the opportunity to iterate and design creative solutions to problems instead of just working with paper and pencil. Students learn how to engage one another as they work collaboratively to apply their ideas with computation. The Beginning Ideas in Computer Science curriculum allows students to synthesize their natural curiosity and interests with the tools of computer science. Students will learn to use Sandbloqs as a programming tool, while focusing on structures and functions of programming.

Digital and Environmental Solutions

Students will explore alternative energy and global impacts effecting all humans on earth. A futuristic solar powered vehicle will be created from a recyclable plastic bottle and tested for performance against other students in the classroom. Photoshop computer software will be utilized by the students to develop and produce a 12-month full color calendar. A variety of digital media (scanner, cameras, I-phones...etc.) will be used to import images into their creation. Students will expand upon higher-order computer commands associated with layering, warping and infusion. Personal dates will add further customization of the calendar project. Students will also be exposed to the manufacturing environment (woodshop) to produce a wall shelf. The use of hand tools and machines will be used with a strong emphasis on safety. Students will take home a tangible wood project to display their accomplishments.

Exploring STEM

Students will be engaged in designing, building and testing structures along with building a Mag-Lev vehicle. While designing, building, and testing the Mag-Lev vehicle environmental impacts will be studied. Students will be exposed to the SolidWorks CAD drafting program where they will complete a number of two dimensional drawings. Corel Draw software will also be introduced to design and produce a laser engraved water bottle and a laser engraved ruler. The game of hockey will be used an exploratory learning approach, exposing students to foundational STEM concepts, scientific thinking and data/graphical analysis through real-life STEM applications. Math, science, and writing will be a part of all learning activities, including journal writing, data collection, data calculations, and scientific terms.
Family & Consumer Science

Students in 7th grade will study My Plate and healthy eating habits. They will create a personal wellness plan to understand the importance of good health. Students will learn kitchen safety and sanitation, recipe reading, measuring and unit pricing for product comparison. Students will apply their knowledge in cooking labs.

Health

Students will develop an overall understanding of the Health Triangle and how each side relates to each other. Key Components: Refusal Skills, Bullying/Character, Drugs and Alcohol, First Aid and Safety

Physical Education

The Physical Education program provides each student with the opportunity to participate in a comprehensive and complete program consisting of skill development, lead up games, team sports, and physical fitness activities. The students receive instructions in rules, skills, and strategies associated with different sports as well as learning experiences involving physical conditioning activities. The students will also have opportunities to become involved in lifelong physical activities through individual sport units. The program promotes a spirit of cooperation, leadership, fair play and friendly competition.

Art

Painting emphasis including blending and shading techniques and a variety of paints. Emphasis on geometric vs. organic design explored through animal themes, multicultural and historical subjects. Symbolism and personal expression.

7th Grade Music

7th grade music seeks to expand the students’ horizons as far as musical taste and exposure gained in 6th grade music. Students will be provided hands-on experience with the technology in order to gain a first-hand understanding of the cutting-edge innovations that exist in the Music Technology realm. They will review musical notation and learn the basics of playing piano. They will be able to demonstrate how electronic music can be produced or recorded. They will research and develop ideas for musical creations, as well as design and compose their own musical pieces. Such music creation will be explored for the variety of purposes in which it can be heard today: live performance, recorded performance, as a soundtrack to videos footage, along with other inventive avenues.

Exploratory Spanish

West Mifflin School District bases its world language program on the National Standards for Foreign Language Learning using a standards-based curriculum incorporating communication, culture, connections, comparisons and communities. In Spanish Grades 7 & 8, students will continue to acquire proficiency in listening, speaking, reading and writing the Spanish language. Students will expand their vocabulary and skill usage by acquiring the fundamentals used in learning a second language.

Digital Study Skills

This course will help students learn to use the iPad to improve their organizational skills and maximize learning.

Chorus 7 (Full Year Course)

Seventh grade chorus takes the singing voice with some experience, as well as the novice voice, and develops choral methods appropriate to a junior high school level. This is an elective course which will meet and rehearse on a regular basis as part of the student’s daily schedule. The chorus will perform a mandatory holiday concert in December and a mandatory spring concert in May. Once the student enrolls in the class, he or she may drop the course only during the first 4 weeks of the school year. Opportunities for participation in outside festivals will be offered. Criteria for selection: Prior experience in a vocal ensemble and/or recommendation of the director.
Band 7 (Full Year Course)

This class is open to any qualified 7th grade student and meets daily for one forty-seven minute period and is taught by a music teacher with background in instrumental music. 7th Grade Band is designed to teach middle school band students a variety of music compositions and arrangements meant for preparing instrumentalists to play the basic skills required of a 3rd year player. Students are graded on daily participation as well as evening concerts. Students are expected to play at a certain level to enter this course (new students should see “Incoming Requirements” or contact the band director before scheduling).

Orchestra 7 (Full Year Course)

The middle school string orchestra class meets daily, and performs at least two public concerts per year. The ensembles perform orchestral music of varying styles & historic time periods: from the early baroque through modern day. In order to enroll, students must be able to play an orchestral string instrument up to their grade level, as determined by the instructor.

Academic Enrichment

If you do not choose the arts (Band, Chorus, Orchestra) they will be enrolled in the Academic Enrichment course. In Academic Enrichment, students will work to enrich their knowledge of Math and English.

Middle School Gifted ACE

Students receive accelerated instruction and opportunities in advanced content with particular consideration to student's individual interests. Instruction is differentiated and curriculum designed to meet the needs of the gifted students. Curriculum design is inclusive of key core subject ideas while offering students enrichment opportunities in individual and teaming activities. To be enrolled in ACE, students must be tested by the school psychologist and meet gifted criteria.

CC Math 7

Course organized into individual mathematical modules and clusters aligned to build connections within each domain of the Common Core State Standards. Class is organized with a focus on essential grade 7 mathematical concepts.

Pre Algebra 7

An Accelerated Math program with a strong emphasis on problem-solving and higher order thinking exercises. Designed to teach 7th grade Common Core Standards and an introduction to algebraic thinking/problem-solving. This is an accelerated Math course.

Algebra I

The purpose of this course is to address both the Common Core Mathematics Standards and prepare students for the Keystone Algebra 1 Exam. This course fits into an overall program of mathematics studies and builds from what students have learned in previous mathematics courses as well as introducing more advanced topics. These advanced topics include understanding our number system, solving, graphing, and writing linear equations and inequalities, linear systems, exponents, quadratics, polynomials, factoring, simplifying square roots and data analysis. Students will take the PA Keystone Exam at the conclusion of this course. The Keystone Exam is a high school graduation requirement. This is a high school level accelerated Math course.
Accelerated Math 6

6th

A*
B**,C**
D,F

Math 6

7th

A*, B*

Algebra I

Pre-Alg. 7

CC Math 7

Pre-Alg. 7

CC Math 7

*=Advanced PSSA score (above the median Advanced Score), Advanced score on the Algebra aptitude test, Advanced iReady score, and teacher recommendation with 90% or higher class test scores.

**=Advanced/Proficient PSSA score, 85% or higher on class test scores

*=Advanced/Proficient (above the median Proficient) PSSA score, 85% or higher on class test scores and Advanced iReady score.

These are the course pathways. Exceptions to the prerequisite can be made with the agreement of the administrator, math department, counselor, student, and parent. The Algebra aptitude test will be administered in May.

CC=Common Core