



2024-25

# WACONIA MIDDLE SCHOOL REGISTRATION GUIDE

Explore Your Passions. Create Your Success.

# LEARNING BY **ALL** IS OUR CORE PURPOSE AT WACONIA MIDDLE SCHOOL.



Waconia Middle School is committed to a high quality, inclusive educational environment where learning is our core priority.

As the building principal, I have great personal pride to have the opportunity to lead our amazing students, collaborate with our talented staff, and build strong relationships with our caring community. Waconia Middle School is a great place to learn and grow.

Students in Grades 6–8 will experience many opportunities for creative and unique learning experiences, learn in a safe and caring environment, collaborate with talented and dedicated staff, experience high levels of rigor and achievement, and build many lifelong memories and positive relationships.

Waconia Middle School's student enrollment continues to grow annually and currently varies between 915–950 students. We often experience the most growth in 6th grade with many new students joining the school district at the start of middle school. With three ISD 110 elementary schools combining in 6th grade, it is an opportune time to become a Wildcat!

Please come by the school office or contact me directly with any questions or concerns. Thank you again for the continued opportunity to work with your children.

Sincerely,

*Shane Clausen*  
*Waconia Middle School Principal*

## Waconia Public Schools Strategic Plan

### MISSION STATEMENT

#### Our Core Purpose:

ISD 110 empowers students to explore their passions and create their success by providing opportunities for academic, social, and emotional growth.

### VISION STATEMENT

#### What We Commit to Create

ISD110 students will:

- **Achieve academic success** through choice, rigor, and relevance
- **Be inspired** to explore who they are and who they will become
- **Feel they belong** in school and in the community

**WeAreONE10!**

### CORE VALUES

#### Kindness

Through teamwork and positivity, we exceed expectations, making intentional choices to brighten someone's day.

#### Respect

We prioritize safety, treating everyone and everything with dignity, equity, compassion, and thoughtfulness, following the golden rule.

#### Responsibility

We prioritize motivation, hard work, self-direction, success, and the wise use of time, aiming for an enjoyable learning experience.

#### Integrity

We prioritize honesty, understand the nuances of fairness, and make ethical choices that represent our families and community.





### Address

1400 Community Drive  
Waconia, MN 55387



### School Hours

8:30 AM - 3:15 PM

### Office Hours

7:30 AM - 3:30 PM



### Main Office

(952) 442-0650

### Attendance Line

(952) 442-0660



### Website

<https://isd110.org/our-schools/waconia-middle-school>



### Facebook

[facebook.com/WaconiaSchools](https://facebook.com/WaconiaSchools)



### Instagram

[instagram.com/WaconiaSchools](https://instagram.com/WaconiaSchools)  
[instagram.com/WaconiaWildcats1](https://instagram.com/WaconiaWildcats1)

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Facility Highlights.....	6
Student Profiles.....	7
General Information .....	8
6th Grade Course Descriptions .....	9
7th Grade Course Descriptions.....	11
8th Grade Course Descriptions .....	15





# FACILITY HIGHLIGHTS

Waconia Middle School has a number of learning and common area spaces that are comparable to many high schools. These spaces create flexible and unique learning environments and allow students to explore many of their passions inside and outside of the classroom. Families new to the District can request a tour of the building by contacting the school at 952-442-0650.



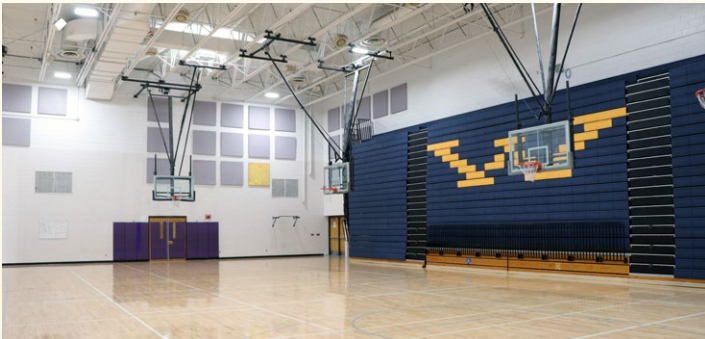
## Auditorium

Our 430-seat, elevated stage auditorium allows us to fully accommodate band, choir, and theater performances throughout the year. Due to its size, we can also provide full grade-level learning activities and events throughout the year.



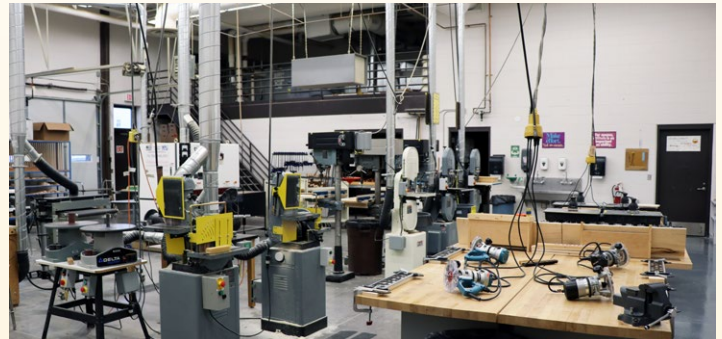
## Science Lab

Many of our science classrooms include a classroom-sized instructional area and lab spaces co-located within the same room. This allows our staff and students the flexibility to move in and out of lab areas with ease.



## Gymnasium

We are fortunate to have a three-station gymnasium with the ability to separate the gym into three individual sections. Being a former high school gym, we have seating to host events that seat up to 2000 spectators. This is a great space for all-school assemblies and events.



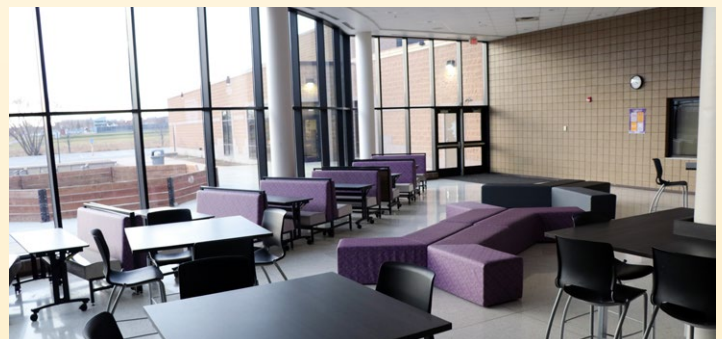
## Industrial Tech

Our industrial technology space and woodworking equipment would rival many high schools across the state. Remodeled in 2017, the space is designed to meet the needs of middle school students. Students commonly identify their opportunities to work in the shop as one of their top exploratory experiences at Waconia Middle School



## Lunchroom

The size of our lunchroom allows us to have one lunch period for each grade level. Flexible seating and a brightly lit space creates a safe and student-friendly space connected to an outside area that can be used for outdoor lunch activities for a portion of each grade level's lunch period.



## Common Spaces

Our lunch commons space (pictured here) is updated with flexible seating and flooded with natural light with floor-to-ceiling windows. Each grade level also has two dedicated common spaces where students from the same grade level have their lockers and teachers on their teams.

# MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT PROFILES

Waconia students have unique stories of how they are exploring their passions academically, athletically, and through the fine arts in order to become the leaders of tomorrow. Together, they help make up the Wildcat community.



## Caleb H., Class of 2028

Caleb is a competitive swimmer, plays percussion in the school band, and has participated in school theatre productions. He also plays the piano, and participates in choir, jazz band, and the marching band. Academically, he is enrolled in Advanced Math and Enriched Language Arts.

*"My favorite class that I've taken at the Middle School is 7th Grade U.S. History with Mr. Johnson. He was just the most phenomenal teacher because he has so much energy and he makes the class fun. We learned so much in that class and I just fell in love with history."*



## Margo L., Class of 2028

Margo competes in dance and cross country, plays the flute in the school band, and is on the school's student council. She has been involved in theatre and choir, is a WEB Leader, a Unified Partner, and is enrolled in Advanced Math and Enriched Language Arts.

*"I have a bunch of different interests, and I've also been able to try new things to see if I like them. Being involved in different activities has helped shape me and it also allowed me to make a lot of new friends."*



## Maitrey G., Class of 2028

Maitrey is a competitive swimmer and diver, plays the saxophone in the school band, is a WEB Leader, and has participated in choir and jazz band. Academically, he is enrolled in the school's Enriched Language Arts class.

*"I feel like Middle School is a time to grow and expand your interests and I've been able to do that here. I moved here from Lincoln, Nebraska in sixth grade and at first was worried about going to a new school, but being involved in different things has allowed me to meet a bunch of people."*





# GENERAL INFORMATION

## Daily Class Schedules

6th Grade		7th Grade		8th Grade	
Connect	8:30–8:55	Connect	8:30–8:55	Connect	8:30–8:55
1st Hour	8:59–9:53	1st Hour	8:59–9:53	1st Hour	8:59–9:53
2nd Hour	9:57–10:51	2nd Hour	9:57–10:51	2nd Hour	9:57–10:51
Lunch	10:52–11:22	3rd Hour	10:55–11:49	3rd Hour	10:55–11:49
3rd Hour	11:26–12:21	Lunch	11:51–12:21	4th Hour	11:53–12:47
4th Hour	12:25–1:19	4th Hour	12:25–1:19	Lunch	12:49–1:19
5th Hour	1:23–2:17	5th Hour	1:23–2:17	5th Hour	1:23–2:17
6th Hour	2:21–3:15	6th Hour	2:21–3:15	6th Hour	2:21–3:15

## 2024-25 Trimester Schedule

Waconia Middle School utilizes a trimester scheduling system that divides the academic year into three terms that typically encompass 13 weeks each.

**1st Trimester:**  
August 26 to November 22

**2nd Trimester:**  
December 2 to March 6

**3rd Trimester:**  
March 11 to May 30

## 2024-25 Parent-Teacher Conference Dates

**1st Trimester:**  
October 9 & 14, 2024

**2nd Trimester:**  
January 17, 2025

**3rd Trimester:**  
April 17, 2025

## Meet Our School Counselors



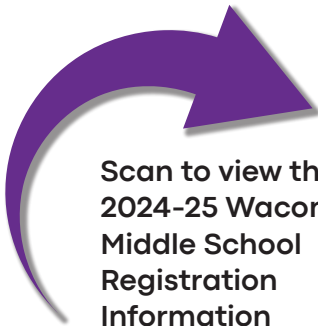
**Samantha Deren**  
(952) 856-4587  
sderen@isd110.org



**Patricia Galindo**  
(952) 856-4518  
pgalindo@isd110.org

## Course Registration Resources and Instructions

All resources, materials and instructions to help guide families through course registration for the 2024-25 school year can be found on the Waconia Middle School website at [bit.ly/WMSCourseRegistration](https://bit.ly/WMSCourseRegistration). On this website you can find an electronic version of the full course catalog, course election worksheets, and step-by-step instructions for how to register for courses in Infinite Campus.



Scan to view the  
2024-25 Waconia  
Middle School  
Registration  
Information



# WMS 6<sup>TH</sup> GRADE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS 2024-25

6th-grade students start the day with a Connect advisory course followed by six 54-minute periods. Four periods are dedicated to daily CORE classes in Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies. Two periods of the day are dedicated to encore classes that are exploratory and/or career and technology courses. ENCORE classes can include Choir, Band, General Music, and/or Prescribed Learning Period (PLP). Required ENCORE courses include Physical Education, Art 6 Media Arts and STEM/Project Lead the Way 6.

## Connect Advisory

**CONNECT 6:** Connect is a 25-minute, daily advisory period for students to “Connect” with their dedicated advisor, themselves, peers, and the community. Instructional content will include social/emotional learning, digital citizenship, community service, and executive functioning skills practice. Advisors will also help to monitor academic progress and goal setting.

## Core Academic Classes

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS 6:** This course will challenge students to engage in literary texts, analyze what they read, and make connections to their lives and the world around them. It will cover the standards of reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Students will study the characteristics of different literary genres through both reading and writing. The curriculum includes young adult and classic works, and students are required to independently read from a wide array of genres. Particular emphasis will be placed on active reading skills and strategies as well as analyzing the structures and terminology of fiction and nonfiction texts. In addition, vocabulary instruction will develop student awareness of prefixes, roots, and suffixes. The focus of writing for the year will be on narrative, persuasive, and informational writing.

**MATH 6:** All 6th-grade math courses place a strong focus on computation and application of ratios, fractions, decimals, and percents, as well as experiences with algebra, geometry, and probability.

Students entering 6th grade do not have an elective option for math courses at Waconia Middle School. The Math 6 course will be centered around a flexible grouping model of instruction ensuring all students are being taught 6th grade standards at their instructional level. 6th grade students may be recommended for placement in Pre-Algebra 6. Placement is based on high composite and growth scores on standardized assessments. Scores are reviewed annually to ensure the pace of learning is meeting the needs of all students. Notification of a Pre-Algebra 6 placement option is sent to students and families by mail in June.

**SCIENCE 6:** All students in 6th grade will learn about Earth Science. Students will review the scientific method and apply it to different Earth science contexts throughout the year. Students will learn about meteorology, geology, and the solar system. Students will get a chance to learn through a variety of methods, including hands-on lab activities, small projects, and in-class discussions. This course is aligned with the 6th grade Minnesota State Science Standards.

**SOCIAL STUDIES 6:** All students in sixth grade will be scheduled for a full year of 6th grade social studies. Topics include mapping and Minnesota history from the first known settlers to today. We will examine world events and how Minnesota was affected. The curriculum, course content, and learning activities are aligned with MN State Standards.

## Music and PLP Encore Courses

**GENERAL MUSIC 6:** General Music class meets on alternating days throughout the school year. This year-long course gives students a general overview of many different areas of music. Units may include pitch and rhythm basics, keyboards, ukulele, bucket drumming, and composer studies. Students are graded on accurate practicing and performing, individual and group projects and presentations, and in-class assignments, quizzes, and tests.

**BAND 6:** Band is a yearlong course meeting on alternating days throughout the school year. Band offers students the opportunity for continued musical growth and sequential skill development in both large and small ensemble playing experiences. Students will perform and play exciting music of various styles and genres. Individual growth and achievement are encouraged through participation in band class as well as small group lessons that meet on a rotating cycle. Students will perform 3-4 concerts throughout the school year. Students participating in the 6th grade band also have the opportunity to be involved in jazz band, percussion ensemble, pep band, honor bands, solo ensemble festivals, and other musical opportunities. The 6th grade band is a continuation of the 5th grade band however - students wanting to join in the 6th grade band as a new player are welcome and should contact a band director to get started!

**CHOIR 6:** Choir classes meet on alternating days throughout the school year. This yearlong commitment will provide great growth in the students' singing strength and music reading skills. Choir is a great place to sing in a group in an energetic setting! Choirs will perform in three local school performances. There are other opportunities like showing

# WMS 6<sup>TH</sup> GRADE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS 2024-25

us your favorite song in class on “Performance Days,” “Ultimate Karaoke,” or “Name that Tune” with your friends. You could also audition for concert solos, MN State Level Honor Choirs, and prepare for our Waconia Show Choirs! Choir is a great place to grow musically, express yourself, and take advantage of our nationally known music programs in Waconia!

## Prescribed Learning Period (PLP) 6

Students who do not elect both band and choir will have one alternating day PLP class opposite their band, choir, or general music class. Students who elect both band and choir will not have a PLP class.

### General PLP Classes:

- General PLP topics and teachers may change each trimester and are designed to provide students with learning activities that provide academic enrichment. Topics of the General PLP classes vary by teacher and are planned extension activities in a variety of curricular areas. General PLP is not a study hall to complete homework from other courses and students will not be assigned homework in PLP. General PLP classes are ungraded with classroom citizenship and active participation being the daily expectations.

### Targeted PLP Classes:

- Students who require Special Education or English Language Learner services according to their Individualized Education Plan may be scheduled for a specialized PLP class with a licensed special education or English language learner teacher. Individualized PLP classes are graded as Pass or Fail based on classroom citizenship and active participation.
- Students identified by standardized test scores and/or teacher recommendation as

needing additional reading or math support will be scheduled into Skills PLP classes to receive additional basic skills support in math and/or reading. Skills PLP classes are ungraded with classroom citizenship and active participation being the expectation.

- Students identified as gifted and talented (GT), according to ISD 110 identification standards, will be placed in a High Level Learners PLP to receive high-level learner services with GT-trained staff. High-Level Learners PLP classes are ungraded with classroom citizenship and active participation being the expectation.

## Physical Education

**PHYSICAL EDUCATION 6:** Every other day Physical Education is required throughout the year in 6th grade. Physical Education provides students with an opportunity for physical activity during the school day. Students will have the opportunity to participate in a program consisting of skill development, lead-up games, team sports, lifetime games, swimming, ice arena, and general physical fitness activities. The students receive instruction in rules, skills, and strategies associated with the different sports. Fitness testing is done four times per year to guide physical conditioning activities. The program promotes Core Values as well as sportsmanship, leadership, fair play, and friendly competition.

## Encore Courses

**INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGY/STEM 6:** 6th grade Industrial Technology is a quarter-length class that will meet every other day for half of the year. Students will be introduced to STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) concepts and how these relate to the real world. This course takes on an interdisciplinary approach to STEM



topics and allows students to explore each of the STEM disciplines through a nationally accredited curriculum, Project Lead The Way (PLTW). Students will attain knowledge of the engineering field, the engineering design process, measurement, sketching, technical drawing, prototype-building, and 3-D modeling. Throughout the length of this course, students will develop and use 21st-century skills including problem-solving, critical thinking, technological literacy, innovation, and collaboration. TinkerCad is the 3-D modeling system that is used during this course, allowing students to apply design and engineering concepts to create a variety of 3-D models on the computer and 3-D printer. This course supports the engineering curriculum at the middle and high school levels.

**ART 6 MEDIA ARTS:** Sixth-grade Media Arts is a required course that will meet on alternating days for one semester. In this course, students will review and solidify their understanding of the elements of art and the principles of design by creating and curating multimedia works of art. Students will explore the concepts of expressive intent, symbolism, and abstraction, as well as how media artworks relate to and impact culture, history, and personal identity. Upon completion of this course, students will be able to create effective digital posters, drawings, presentations, websites, and audio-visual recordings for a variety of academic purposes. This course is aligned with the 6th Grade Minnesota Art Standards. This is a new course offering for 2023-24.



# WMS 7<sup>TH</sup> GRADE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS 2024-25

7th-grade students start the day with a Connect advisory course followed by six 54-minute periods. Four periods are dedicated to daily CORE classes in Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies. Two periods of the day are dedicated to encore classes that are exploratory and/or career and technology courses. A music class is required and can include Choir, Band, General Music, or both Choir and Band. Required ENCORE courses in 7th grade include Physical Education/Health 7, Family and Consumer Science 7, and Industrial Technology Woodworking Explorations 7. Elective ENCORE options include Art-Visual Arts 7, Project Lead the Way/STEM Automation and Robotics 7, Theater Arts 7, and Team Sports PE 7. The administration will attempt to meet all preferred electives but cannot guarantee placements as they will be dependent on class availability.

## Connect Advisory

**CONNECT 7:** Connect is a 25-minute, daily advisory period for students to “Connect” with their dedicated advisor, themselves, peers, and the community. Instructional content and activities will include social/emotional learning, digital citizenship, community service, and executive functioning practice. Advisors will also help to monitor academic progress and goal setting.

## Core Academic Classes

**MATH 7:** Topics covered in 7th grade include integers, rational numbers, solving equations, ratios and proportions, and their applications. Students will use coordinate graphing to explore algebra and geometry concepts. Probability and data analysis are also part of the curriculum.

Students entering seventh grade do not have an elective option for math courses at Waconia Middle School. Students are identified and placed in Intermediate Algebra A/B, Pre-Algebra 7, or Math 7 based on composite and growth scores on standardized assessments. Scores are reviewed annually to ensure the pace of learning is meeting the needs of all students. Each year some students are added and removed from accelerated math sections. Notification of accelerated placement is sent to students and families by mail in June.

## ENRICHED LANGUAGE ARTS & LITERATURE 7:

This is a self-selected course that covers the same curriculum and standards of Language Arts & Literature 7 (listed below). The curriculum will offer a higher level of rigor and a deeper exploration of texts. Students who register for this course are expected to read at a higher Lexile level, score in the upper percentiles of standardized tests (consistently meet or exceed requirements), and write at a more sophisticated level than their grade-level peers. Class discussions and assignments will be more independent, student-driven, and invite students to think on a more challenging level. This is a year-long commitment, so please consider your choice carefully.

Registrations will be reviewed by 6th-grade staff to ensure proper placement. The curriculum, course content, and learning activities are aligned with MN State Standards.

## LANGUAGE ARTS & LITERATURE 7:

This course will challenge students to engage in literary texts, analyze what they read, and make connections to their lives and the world around them. It will cover the standards of reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing. Students will study the characteristics of each literary genre (fiction, poetry, and nonfiction) through both reading and writing. The curriculum includes young adult and classic works, and students are required to independently read from a wide array of genres. Particular emphasis will be placed on active reading skills as well as analyzing the structures and terminology of fiction and nonfiction texts. In addition, vocabulary instruction will develop student awareness of prefixes, roots, and suffixes and will determine meaning through inference and context clues. The writing focus for the year will be narrative, informative, and argumentative. The curriculum, course content, and learning activities are aligned with MN State Standards.



# WMS 7<sup>TH</sup> GRADE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS 2024-25

**US HISTORY 7:** All 7th-grade students will have one year of U.S. History. Topics of study include - the Colonies, the Revolutionary War, the U.S. Constitution, Westward Expansion, Slavery, the Civil War, the Industrial Revolution, World War I, the Great Depression, World War II, the Cold War, the Civil Rights Movement, and the Digital Age. Students will learn to think critically as they participate in lively discussions, thought-provoking debates, in-depth primary/secondary source analyses, and engaging research-based projects. By investigating the political, social, and economic elements of history from a variety of different perspectives, students will begin to draw connections between the past and present. The curriculum, course content, and learning activities are aligned with MN State Social Studies Standards.

**LIFE SCIENCE 7:** All 7th-grade students will learn about Life Science this year. Through a three-dimensional lens and phenomenon-based instruction, students will learn about how living things function and interact through many different units of study. Students will get a chance to learn through a variety of methods, including hands-on lab activities, small projects, and in-class discussions. This course is aligned with the 7th-grade Minnesota State Science Standards.

**Music** *(All WMS students are required to have a music class.)*

**BAND 7:** Band is a yearlong course meeting on alternating days throughout the school year. Band offers students the opportunity for continued musical growth and sequential skill development in both large and small ensemble playing experiences. Students will perform and play exciting music of various styles and genres. Individual growth and achievement are encouraged through participation in band class as well as small group lessons



that meet on a rotating cycle. Students will perform 3-4 concerts throughout the school year including performance field trips. Students participating in the 7th-grade band also have the opportunity to be involved in jazz band, percussion ensemble, pep band, honor bands, solo and ensemble festivals, and other musical opportunities. 7th-grade band is a continuation of 6th-grade band - students wanting to join in 7th-grade band as a new player are welcome and should contact a band director to get started!

**CHOIR 7:** Choir meets on alternating days throughout the school year. This yearlong commitment will provide opportunities for growth in the students' singing strength and music reading skills. Choir is a wonderful place to sing in a group in an energetic setting! If students would like to prepare themselves for solo work or large group singing in the future, or they just enjoy music, then this class is for them. Choir students will sing in three local school performances including one performance with the high school choirs during the school year. In class, we provide other opportunities

for students to perform such as performing their favorite songs in class on "performance days" and critiquing singers on shows like "The Voice" or "America's Got Talent," Ultimate Karaoke, etc. You could also audition for our Waconia show choirs, concert solos, and/or MN State Level Honor Choirs. Choir is a place to grow musically, express yourself, and take advantage of our nationally known music programs in Waconia!

**GENERAL MUSIC 7:** General Music class meets on alternating days for 1 trimester. This course gives students a general overview of many different areas of music. Units may include pitch and rhythm basics, keyboards, ukulele, bucket drumming, and composer studies. Students are graded on accurate practicing, performing individual and group projects, presentations, in-class assignments, quizzes, and tests.

## Physical Education

### ALTERNATING PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND HEALTH 7:

A combined PE and Health course is a requirement for students and will most often be opposite a student's music election. Students taking the



# WMS 7<sup>TH</sup> GRADE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS 2024-25

general music course can elect to take an additional trimester of PE. PE and Health courses are in the process of adjustment for the 2023-24 school year.

**Physical Education** provides students with an opportunity for physical activity during the school day. Students will have the opportunity to participate in a program consisting of skill development, lead-up games, team sports, lifetime games, ice arena, and physical fitness activities. The students receive instruction in rules, skills, and strategies associated with the different sports. Fitness testing is done twice a year to guide physical conditioning activities. The program promotes the spirit of cooperation, leadership, fair play, friendly competition, and the development of problem-solving skills.

**Health 7** includes the topics of health and wellness, tobacco, alcohol and drugs, first aid, reproductive systems, and relationships. The health and wellness unit is an introduction to physical, mental/emotional, and social health and goal setting. In the tobacco, alcohol, and drug unit, we focus on the effects of drugs mentally, physically, and socially by researching a variety of stimulants, depressants, narcotics, and hallucinogens. In the first aid unit, we demonstrate and practice CPR, AED, Heimlich maneuver, injury prevention, and treatment. In the reproductive and relationship unit, we cover the male and female reproductive systems, STD/STI's, HIV/AIDS, communication, flirting, harassment, and how relationships affect your mental/emotional, physical, and social health.

## Unique Learners Courses

**SPECIAL EDUCATION/ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS:** Students who require Special Education or English Language Learner services according to their Individualized

Education Plan will be scheduled for a specialized class with a licensed special education or English language learner teacher most often in the place of PE and/or Music courses.

### **MATH AND READING SKILLS:**

Students identified by standardized test scores and/or teacher recommendation as needing additional reading or math support will be scheduled into remedial skills classes to receive additional basic skills support in math and/or reading. These trimester-length courses are added most often in place of PE and/or Music courses.

### **GIFTED AND TALENTED/HIGH-LEVEL LEARNERS:**

Students identified as high-level learners and/or gifted and talented (GT), according to ISD 110 identification standards, will have the option to be placed in a trimester-length High-Level Learners course. This course would be in place of an elective course.

## Required Encore Courses

### **FAMILY and CONSUMER SCIENCE 7:**

Students will be exploring three different topics in Family and Consumer Sciences. The units are Clothing Care and Hand Sewing, Child Care and Babysitting, and Cooking Basics and Nutrition. Through these three units, students will learn skills to help them in their futures, explore different career options, and learn about classes available at the high school level. The major projects for this course are sewing an earbud case, making a babysitting handbook, and cooking different recipes!

### **INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGY WOODWORKING EXPLORATIONS 7:**

The 7th grade Industrial Technology program is a beginning level of the exploration of woodworking technology and processes. The students' main focus will be on safety practices in the Woodworking lab. Students will be learning and

applying information and skills learned in this class with previously learned skills from Math, Language Arts, and Science classes. Every student will have the opportunity to plan and build a few small woodworking projects. Throughout this process, students will be developing and using 21st-century skills of communication, critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and problem-solving.

## Elective Encore Courses

**THEATER ARTS 7:** Students will be introduced to the elements of theater and the collaborative team of artists that make a dramatic production a success. They will explore the technical aspects of theater design and production. Students will learn about theater history and the variety of theater genres. Goals for students are set on understanding elements of theater, performance techniques, and technical production skills. This is a new offering for 2023-24.



# WMS 7<sup>TH</sup> GRADE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS 2024-25

## PROJECT LEAD THE WAY/STEM AUTOMATION AND ROBOTICS 7:

Students will learn about mechanical systems, energy transfer, and machine automation using computer programming concepts. Using the VEX Robotics® platform, students apply what they know to design a variety of complex mechanisms for a Survival Challenge using the engineering design process and create computer programs to automate robotic cars and robotic arms. By the end of the quarter, students will be able to build and automate mechanisms using a block programming language for a wide range of real-world tasks. This course is part of a nationally recognized engineering STEM curriculum developed by Project Lead The Way (PLTW). [www.pltw.org](http://www.pltw.org).

## ART- VISUAL ARTS 7: 7th grade

Visual Arts is an elective course that will meet daily for a trimester. In this course, students will be exposed to different styles of art such as painting, drawing, ceramics, and printmaking. They will be challenged to discover and explore using their creativity in new ways. Goals for students are set on developing and building on their creative problem-solving skills, finding comfort in their style when working with various mediums and materials, and creating unique works of art. The process will be a combination of foundational knowledge and skills and the ability to work in four processes: Creating, Responding, Performing/ Presenting, and Connecting. This course is aligned with the 7th-grade Minnesota Art Standards.

## TEAM SPORTS PHYSICAL

**EDUCATION 7:** This PE elective provides students with a trimester of Physical Education in addition to the required PE/Health course described above. Students choosing General Music will most often be scheduled into this additional PE course. Students will have the opportunity to participate in a program consisting of skill development, lead-up games, team sports, lifetime games, ice arena, and physical fitness activities. The students receive instruction in rules, skills, and strategies associated with the different sports. The program promotes the spirit of cooperation, leadership, fair play, friendly competition, and the development of problem-solving skills. This is a new course for 2023-24.





# WMS 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS 2024-25

8th-grade students start the day with a Connect advisory course followed by six 54-minute periods. Four periods are dedicated to daily CORE classes in Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies. Two periods of the day are dedicated to ENCORE classes that are exploratory and/or career and technology courses. A music class is required and can include Choir, Band, General Music, or both Choir and Band. Required ENCORE courses in 8th grade include Physical Education/Health and Art 8-Media and Visual Arts Combination. Elective ENCORE options include Spanish 8 (2 trimesters), Family Consumer Science 8, Project Lead the Way/STEM Magic of Electrons 8, Theater Arts 8, and Team Sports PE 8. The administration will attempt to meet all preferred electives but cannot guarantee placements as they will be dependent on class availability.

## Connect Advisory

**CONNECT 8:** Connect is a 25-minute, daily advisory period for students to “Connect” with their dedicated advisor, themselves, peers, and the community. Instructional content and activities will include social/emotional learning, digital citizenship, community service, and executive functioning practice. Advisors will also help to monitor academic progress and goal setting.

## Core Academic Classes

**PHYSICAL SCIENCE 8:** All students in 8th grade will learn about Physical Science this year. Through a three-dimensional lens and phenomenon-based instruction, students will learn about physical interactions through many different units of study. Students will get a chance to learn through hands-on lab activities, small projects, and in-class discussions. This course is aligned with the 8th-grade Minnesota State Science Standards.

**ENRICHED LANGUAGE ARTS & LITERATURE 8:** 8th grade enriched language arts is a self-selected, yearlong option for students looking for an enriched learning experience. The curriculum in the enriched course will use similar thematic units as grade-level language arts but with enhanced complexity, depth, and pace. Instruction will spend less time on background knowledge or teacher-led practice, and more time

cultivating habits of independent thinking, creativity, collaboration, and leadership. Students interested in taking this course should display strong abilities in past language arts classes and above-grade-level reading, vocabulary, verbal, and writing skills. Registrations will be reviewed by 7th-grade staff to ensure proper placement.

### LANGUAGE ARTS & LITERATURE 8:

All students who do not elect the enriched course will be scheduled for this course. In 8th-grade language arts, students will spend the year focusing on independent and teacher-directed reading, writing, and critical thinking. Units begin by introducing big questions for students to consider as they read novels or selections from the course anthology. Students will be working with teachers throughout the year on scaffolded assignments to develop the skills needed to be independent lifelong learners.

**WORLD GEOGRAPHY 8:** World Geography is an 8th-grade core class that explores the world using the 5 Themes of Geography. During this yearlong class, the student will “travel” throughout the world looking at both the Political (Human-Made) and the Physical (Natural Features) landscape of our planet. Government systems, country borders, history, culture, religion, and current events are a few examples of topics that will be used by the students throughout the year. The study of World Geography

will help the modern-day student better understand the interactions of our planet’s physical and social connections. This course is aligned with the 8th-grade Minnesota State Social Studies Standards.

### MATH:

- **Algebra 8:** 8th-grade students who are placed into Algebra 8 will spend most of the year working with the linear aspects of algebra. Topics include solving and manipulating equations and inequalities, graphing, and analyzing linear functions. Also, students will learn about the Pythagorean Theorem and the properties of exponents.
- **Intermediate Algebra A/B:** (*Prerequisite - Pre-Algebra 7*) This course is a study beyond linear topics in Algebra. Topics in this course will include systems of inequalities, exponent laws, polynomial arithmetic, and factoring. Quadratic, exponential, radical, and rational functions will also be studied. In this rigorous course, students can expect a high workload and a rapid pace. Students are expected to keep up with the work in order to succeed.
- **Geometry A/B:** (*Prerequisite - Intermediate Algebra A/B*) This course includes the study of parallel and perpendicular lines, triangles, quadrilaterals, polygons, circles, trigonometry, and transformations. Students will also practice formal logic by writing proofs. In this rigorous course, students can expect a high workload and a rapid pace. Students are expected to keep up with the work in order to succeed.

**Music** (*All WMS students are required to have a music class.*)

**BAND 8:** Eighth Grade Band is the most advanced instrumental course offered at Waconia Middle School. This yearlong experience builds comprehensive musicianship

# WMS 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS 2024-25

through music performance built on varied musical literature and skill development. Students in 8th Grade Band will perform at least four concerts per school year. Individual growth and achievement are encouraged through participation in band class as well as small group lessons that meet on a rotating cycle throughout the year. Students participating in 8th grade band will also have the opportunity to participate in jazz band, percussion ensemble, pep band, solo ensemble festivals, honor bands, and the Waconia High School Marching Band. 8th Grade Band is a continuation of 7th-grade band - students wanting to join in 8th-grade band as a new player are welcome and should contact a band director to get started!

**CHOIR 8:** Choir classes meet on alternating days for the entire school year. This yearlong commitment will provide great growth in the students' singing strength and music reading skills. If students want to learn to use their voice well, sing with their friends, or just like music, then this is a class for them. Choirs will perform in three local school performances including in school festivals with the high school choirs. There are other opportunities to perform like showing us your favorite song in class on "Performance Days," and "Ultimate Karaoke" as well as learning how to critique singers on shows like "The Voice" or "American Idol." You could also audition for our Waconia show choirs, concert solos, and/or MN State Level Honor Choirs. Choir is a great place to grow musically, express yourself, and take advantage of our nationally known music programs in Waconia!

**GENERAL MUSIC 8:** General Music class meets on alternating days for 1 trimester. This course gives students a general overview of many different areas of music. Units may include pitch and rhythm basics, keyboards, ukulele, bucket drumming, and composer studies. Students are

graded on accurate practicing, performing individual and group projects, presentations, in-class assignments, quizzes, and tests.

## Physical Education/Health

### ALTERNATING PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND HEALTH 8:

A combined PE and Health course is a requirement for students and will most often be opposite a student's music election. Students taking the general music course can elect to take an additional trimester of PE. PE and Health courses are in the process of adjustment for the 2023-24 school year.

**Physical Education** provides students with an opportunity for physical activity during the school day. Students will have the opportunity to participate in a program consisting of skill development, lead-up games, team sports, lifetime games, ice arena, and physical fitness activities. The students receive instruction in rules, skills, and strategies associated with the different sports. Fitness testing is done twice a year to guide physical conditioning activities. The program promotes the spirit of cooperation, leadership, fair play, friendly competition, and the development of problem-solving skills.

**Health 8** topics include character building, mental/emotional health, and relationships. During the character unit, students will focus on the WMS Core Values and relate them to their own lives. The mental/emotional health unit will teach students how to cope with stress and have them participate in various stress management techniques. We will also discuss eating disorders, depression, and suicide and focus on strategies to help combat these disorders and mental health issues. Current events covered include e-cigarettes and opioid addiction as well as topics that come up in the news.

## Unique Learners Courses

### SPECIAL EDUCATION/ENGLISH

**LANGUAGE LEARNERS:** Students who require Special Education or English Language Learner services according to their Individualized Education Plan will be scheduled for a specialized class with a licensed special education or English language learner teacher most often in the place of PE and/or Music courses.

### MATH AND READING SKILLS:

Students identified by standardized test scores and/or teacher recommendation as needing additional reading or math support will be scheduled into remedial skills classes to receive additional basic skills support in math and/or reading. These trimester-length courses are added most often in place of PE and/or Music courses.

### GIFTED AND TALENTED/HIGH-LEVEL LEARNERS:

Students identified as high-level learners and/or gifted and talented (GT), according to ISD 110 identification standards, will have the option to be placed in a trimester-length High-Level Learners course. This course would be in place of an elective course.

## Encore Course- Required

### ART 8 Media/Visual Arts

**Combination:** 8th grade Art is a required course that will meet daily for a trimester. In this course, students will be introduced to new materials in combination with familiar visual mediums to experience how the visual and media arts work together and are used in functional ways. Students will be using both visual mediums (paint, pencil, clay) and digital media tools to reinforce their engagement in Art and pique their interest in continuing to explore Art at the high school level. In the course, we continue to set goals for students to strengthen their comfort in developing



# WMS 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS 2024-25

their own style, progress their understanding of artist foundations, and expand their creative problem-solving skills through four processes: Creating, Responding, Performing/ Presenting, and Connecting. This course is aligned with the 8th-grade Minnesota Art Standards.

## Encore Courses—Electives

### **FAMILY and CONSUMER SCIENCE 8:**

Elective FACS 8 is a continuation of FACS 7. Students will be exploring the FACS topics of Interior Design, Clothing Textiles, Personal Finances, Job Skills, and Farm to farm-to-table cooking. Students will gain a variety of skills that will help them in their futures, explore different career options, and give them insight into classes that are offered at the high school. Major projects for this course include designing a 3D model of a home, sewing pajama pants, completing a job application, and cooking food!

**STEM FLIGHT AND SPACE 8:** The exciting world of aerospace comes alive through the Flight and Space course. Students become engineers as they design, prototype, and test models to learn about the science of

flight and what it takes to travel and live in space. They solve real-world aviation and space challenges and plan a mission to Mars. This course is part of a nationally recognized engineering STEM curriculum developed by Project Lead The Way (PLTW) [www.pltw.org](http://www.pltw.org).

**SPANISH 8:** Elective Spanish 8 introduces students to the Spanish language and culture. The goal of the class is to have real and immediate communication in Spanish. The instructor will use simple, repetitive stories, told in Spanish, to teach basic Spanish phrases and culture. Students develop reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. This class will address the five national language standards: communication, connections, culture, comparisons, and community. Spanish 8 will occur during 2 trimesters. Upon successful completion of this course, students will be prepared to continue to Spanish 2A at Waconia High School.

### **INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGY MANUFACTURING**

**ENTREPRENEURSHIP 8:** The elective Industrial Technology course is an exploration of woodworking technology, concepts,

and processes through student projects. Every student will have the opportunity to plan, design, and build a small woodworking project. Throughout this process, students will be using 21st-century skills of communication, critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and problem-solving. Students will also be involved in a Manufacturing/ Entrepreneurship unit. In this unit, students will learn about the challenges of starting and running a small business. As a class, they will set up their own company and mass-produce a product for sale. This course will prepare students for the Industrial Technology and Engineering courses offered in high school.

**THEATER ARTS 8:** In this elective course, students will be introduced to the elements of theater and the collaborative team of artists that make a dramatic production a success. They will explore the technical aspects of theater design and production. Students will learn about theater history and the variety of theater genres. Goals for students are set on understanding elements of theater, performance techniques, and technical production skills. This is a new offering for 2023-24.

### **TEAM SPORTS PHYSICAL**

**EDUCATION 8:** This PE elective provides students with a trimester of Physical Education in addition to the required PE/Health course described above. Students choosing General Music will most often be scheduled into this additional PE course. Students will have the opportunity to participate in a program consisting of skill development, lead-up games, team sports, lifetime games, ice arena, and physical fitness activities. The students receive instruction in rules, skills, and strategies associated with the different sports. The program promotes the spirit of cooperation, leadership, fair play, friendly competition, and the development of problem-solving skills. This is a new course for 2023-24.





Ind. School District No. 110  
512 Industrial Blvd.  
Waconia, MN 55387

# Why Waconia?



**Average Kindergarten Class Size of 22**



**Elite Fine Arts Programs**



**97% Graduation Rate**



**26 Varsity Athletic Teams**



**65% of Educators with Advanced Degrees**



**Top 20 Ranked Public School District in MN**