



2026-27

WACONIA MIDDLE SCHOOL REGISTRATION GUIDE

Explore Your Passions. Create Your Success.

THE WILDCAT WAY AT WMS



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

OUR MISSION

ISD 110 maximizes opportunities for all students to explore their passions and create their success by committing to a community that includes academic rigor, social growth, and emotional wellbeing.

OUR VISION

- Inspiring students to explore a variety of pathways including academic offerings and extracurricular activities that will allow them to recognize who they are and who they will become.
- Fostering a community with a collective sense of belonging and wellbeing.
- Establishing efficient systems and structures as part of a world-class school district that will create opportunities for staff to engage in innovative teaching and students to experience academic success.

WeAreONE10!

OUR CORE VALUES

Respect

We honor and listen to all voices to ensure everyone feels valued.

Collaboration

We achieve our common goals through trust, teamwork, and partnership.

Inclusiveness

We welcome all and seek multiple perspectives to create one connected community.

Empathy

We listen and act with genuine care.

Resilience

We empower one another and persevere with courage, determination, and optimism.



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



Instagram

instagram.com/WaconiaSchools
instagram.com/WaconiaWildcats1

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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.



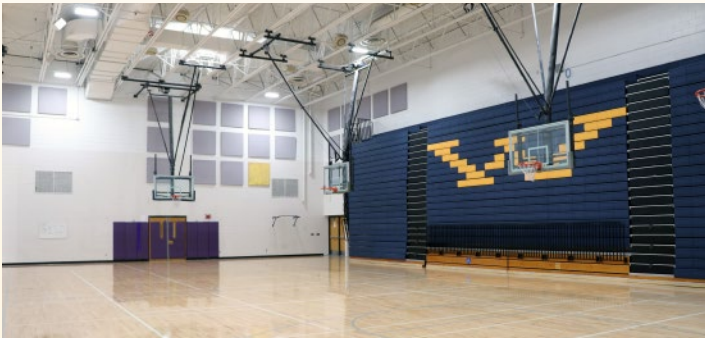
Auditorium

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.



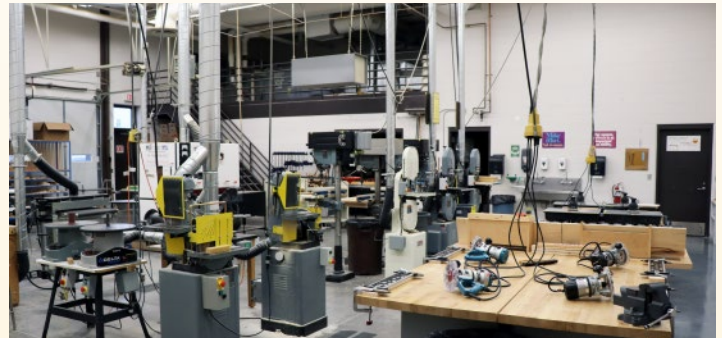
Science Lab

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.



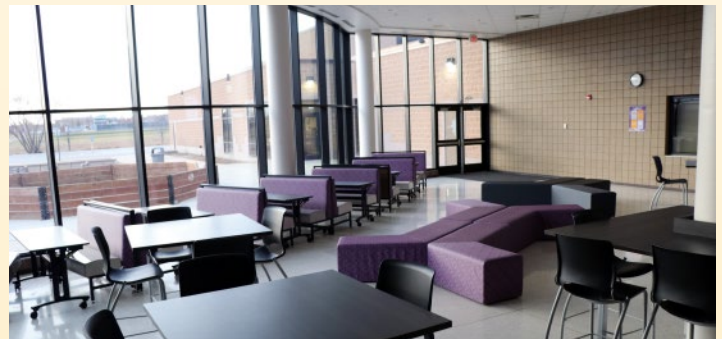
Industrial Tech

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.



Eddie A., Class of 2031

Eddie plays clarinet in the school band, sings in both the middle school choir and the show choir Shockwave, and participates in drama club. He also participates in theater and the community theater. He serves on the student council and plays volleyball.

“Mrs. Rose has had a big impact on me. She is my 7th grade math teacher, and she always makes everything more fun—sometimes she even sings the lessons! She helps me understand the math when I don’t get it, and she is always super easy to ask questions to. She is also incredibly kind, and because of her I’ve started to like math a lot more.”



Molly K., Class of 2031

Molly participates in choir, band, track & field and is a member of the Waconia Lakettes dance team. She challenges herself by electing Enriched Language Arts.

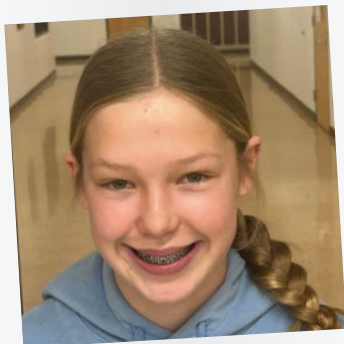
“One teacher that has made an impact on me is Mrs. Weinzierl—she has taught me so much from being my gym teacher and health teacher. She has taught me how to take care of my body and how important it is to stay active. She has always been a teacher that I look up to since she is an active, fun, and high energy person. I always feel comfortable going up to her and talking to her. She makes me feel welcomed and loved.”



Joe P., Class of 2031

Joe participates in Math League and advanced coursework. He’s active in choir, show choir, drama club, and school productions, and works on tech crew for summer community theater. Joe also plays percussion in band, jazz, and percussion ensemble.

“Ms. Losure has made a big impact on me because she is inclusive and involved with different groups in the school, such as leading the theatre tech crew. She is encouraging and helps at the level that each student needs. She also puts trust in students to take responsibility while still making sure they do their part.”



Mack M., Class of 2031

Mack was a member of the 2025 varsity cross country team that qualified for the state meet. She also participates in the Waconia Travel Basketball Program, the Olympic Development Program for soccer, track & field, and the speed and strength program.

“My favorite teacher here at WMS is Mr. Gilbert, even though I have yet to have one of his classes, his door is always open. He has helped me when I doubted myself and when I have been overwhelmed by athletics and academics. Mr. Gilbert is always positive and energetic, his energy helps encourage and motivate me and as I would imagine others as well. I seek Mr. Gilbert out, and he always seems to know what I need.”



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

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 31 to
November 20

2nd Trimester:
November 30 to
March 4

3rd Trimester:
March 15 to
June 4

Parent-Teacher Conference Dates

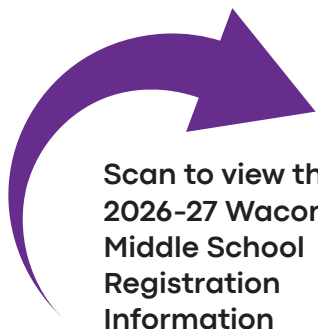
1st Trimester:
October 12 & 21, 2026

2nd Trimester:
January 3, 2027

3rd Trimester:
April 13, 2027

Course Registration Resources and Instructions

All resources, materials, and instructions to help guide families through course registration for the school year can be found on the Waconia Middle School website at bit.ly/WMSCourseRegistration. On this website you can find an electronic version of the full course catalog along with course election worksheets that your student will need to turn in to the main office.



Scan to view the
2026-27 Waconia
Middle School
Registration
Information



Meet Our School Counselors



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



Carly Sylvester
(952) 856-4518
csylvester@isd110.org



WMS 6TH GRADE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

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 exploratory and/or career and technology courses. ENCORE classes may include Choir, Band, Music Discovery, SPED Support, Reading Support, and High-Level Learner/GT classes. Required ENCORE courses include Physical Education, Middle School Foundations, Art 6, and Design and Modeling- PLTW.

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 Courses

MUSIC DISCOVERY: This foundational course introduces students to the fundamental elements of music through a hands-on, exploratory lens. Students will investigate how sound is organized and perceived across different cultures and environments. The curriculum focuses on building a common musical vocabulary and developing critical listening skills. By exploring the “how” and “why” behind music creation, students begin to develop their own musical identity through creative experiments and collaborative projects. Students choosing to be in either Band or Choir can also register for this course.

BAND 6: Band is a year-long 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 classes and small-group lessons that rotate on a schedule. 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!

Dual Enrollment Opportunity: Waconia students are encouraged to enroll in both Band and Choir. This is a popular choice that provides a well-rounded, team-oriented music experience.

WMS 6TH GRADE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

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 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!

Dual Enrollment Opportunity:

Waconia students are encouraged to enroll in both Band and Choir. This is a popular choice that provides a well-rounded, team-oriented music experience.

Specialized Support Classes

- Students who require Special Education or English Language Learner services, as outlined in their Individualized Education Plan, may be assigned to specialized classes taught by a licensed Special Education or English Language Learner teacher. Specialized support classes are graded on a Pass/Fail basis based on classroom citizenship and active participation.
- Students identified by standardized test scores and/or teacher recommendation as needing additional reading support will be scheduled for support classes to receive additional instruction in basic reading skills. Support classes are typically ungraded, with positive classroom citizenship and active participation expected.

- 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 from GT-trained staff. High-Level Learners PLP classes are ungraded, with classroom citizenship and active participation as expectations.

Physical Education

PHYSICAL EDUCATION 6: Physical Education is required every other day or daily 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 that includes skill development, lead-up games, team sports, lifetime games, swimming, ice arena activities, and general physical fitness activities. The students receive instruction in rules, skills, and strategies for various sports. Fitness testing is done four times per year to guide physical conditioning activities. The program promotes Core Values, including sportsmanship, leadership, fair play, and friendly competition.

Encore Courses

DESIGN AND MODELING- PLTW: 6th-grade Design and Modeling is a required course that will meet on alternating days for one trimester. Students will be introduced to science, technology, engineering, and math concepts and explore how they relate to the real world. This course takes an interdisciplinary approach to STEM and allows students to explore each discipline through the nationally accredited Project Lead The Way (PLTW) curriculum. Students will gain knowledge of engineering, the engineering design process, measurement, sketching, technical drawing, prototype building, and 3D modeling. Throughout this course, students will develop and

apply 21st-century skills, including problem-solving, critical thinking, technological literacy, innovation, and collaboration. Tinkercad is the 3D modeling system used in this course, enabling students to apply design and engineering concepts to create a variety of 3D models on a computer and a 3D printer. This course supports the engineering curriculum at the middle and high school levels.

ART 6: 6th-grade Art is a required course that will meet on alternating days for one trimester. 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. Students will explore the concepts of expressive intent, symbolism, and abstraction, and 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.

THE WILDCAT WAY: MIDDLE SCHOOL FOUNDATIONS: Meeting every other day during the first trimester, this required course ensures a smooth transition to middle school by equipping students with essential academic and digital habits. Students will build technical proficiency in keyboarding, Google Suite, and Schoology, while mastering professional email etiquette and positive digital citizenship. Beyond technology, this course emphasizes the development of executive functioning. Activities focus on organizational skills, time management, and managing academics across all subjects. By fostering responsibility for independent learning, the curriculum empowers students to take ownership of their journey and develop the self-advocacy skills necessary for long-term success.

WMS 7TH GRADE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

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 exploratory and/or career and technology courses. A music class is required and can include Choir, Band, or Music Connections, or both Choir and Band. Required ENCORE courses in 7th grade include Physical Education, Health, Art 7, Family and Consumer Science, and Industrial Technology Woodworking Explorations.

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.

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



WMS 7TH GRADE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

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 Courses

BAND 7: Band meets DAILY or 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 classes and small-group lessons that rotate on a schedule. 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 DAILY or on ALTERNATING days throughout the school year. This yearlong commitment will provide opportunities for growth in students' singing strength and music-reading skills. Choir is a wonderful place to sing in a group in an energetic setting! If students want to prepare for solo work or large-group singing in the future, or simply enjoy music, 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 additional opportunities for students to perform, such as performing their favorite songs on "performance days" and critiquing singers on shows like "The Voice," "America's Got Talent," and Ultimate Karaoke. 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!

MUSIC CONNECTIONS: Building on the foundations of 6th grade, this year-long, every-other-day course examines music's role as a powerful tool for storytelling and cultural expression. Students will analyze how music reflects and influences society, exploring various styles and historical contexts. The course emphasizes the "Responding" and "Connecting" standards by asking students to interpret the meaning in music and recognize its impact on human experience. Students will engage in creative projects that challenge them to communicate specific ideas or emotions through sound.

Physical Education and Health

Physical Education provides students with an opportunity for physical activity during the school day. Students will have the opportunity to participate in a program that includes skill development, lead-up games, team sports, lifetime games, ice arena

WMS 7TH GRADE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

activities, and physical fitness activities. The students receive instruction in rules, skills, and strategies for various sports. Fitness testing is done twice a year to guide physical conditioning activities. The program promotes cooperation, leadership, fair play, friendly competition, and the development of problem-solving skills.

Health 7 covers health and wellness, tobacco, alcohol, and drugs, first aid, reproductive systems, and relationships. The health and wellness unit introduces physical, mental/emotional, and social health, as well as 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/STIs, HIV/AIDS, communication, flirting, harassment, and how relationships affect your mental/emotional, physical, and social health.

Specialized Support Classes

- Students who require Special Education or Multi-Language Learner services, as outlined in their Individualized Education Plan, may be assigned to specialized classes taught by a licensed Special Education or Multi-Language Learner teacher. Specialized support classes are graded on a Pass/Fail basis based on classroom citizenship and active participation.

- Students identified by standardized test scores and/or teacher recommendation as needing additional reading support may be scheduled for support classes to receive additional instruction in basic reading skills. Support classes are ungraded; classroom citizenship and active participation are expected.
- Students identified as gifted and talented (GT), according to ISD 110 identification standards, may be placed in a High Level Learners PLP to receive high-level learner services from GT-trained staff. High-Level Learners PLP classes are ungraded, with classroom citizenship and active participation as expectations. This course would replace an Encore class based on student preference.



WMS 7TH GRADE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Required Encore Courses

WOODWORKING EXPLORATIONS:

This trimester-long course introduces woodworking technology and processes. The students' main focus will be on safety practices in the Woodworking lab. Students will learn and apply information and skills from this class, building on those from Math, Language Arts, and Science. Every student will have the opportunity to plan and build a few small woodworking projects. Throughout this process, students will develop and apply 21st-century skills in communication, critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and problem-solving.

FAMILY and CONSUMER SCIENCE 7:

In this trimester-length course, students will explore three 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 develop skills for their future, explore career options, and learn about classes available at the high school level. The major projects for this course are sewing an earbud case, preparing a babysitting handbook, and cooking various recipes.

VISUAL ART 7: 7th-grade Visual Arts is an elective course that will meet daily for a trimester. In this course,

students will be introduced to various art forms, including painting, drawing, ceramics, and printmaking. They will be challenged to discover and explore using their creativity in new ways. Students' goals are to develop and build on their creative problem-solving skills, find comfort in their style when working with various media and materials, and create unique works of art. The process will combine foundational knowledge and skills with the ability to work through four processes: Creating, Responding, Performing/Presenting, and Connecting. This course is aligned with the 7th-grade Minnesota Art Standards.



WMS 8TH GRADE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

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 may include Choir, Band, Music Innovation. Required ENCORE courses in 8th grade include Physical Education, Health 8, and a Project Lead the Way Course. Elective ENCORE options include Family and Consumer Sciences 8, Visual Arts 8, Media Arts 8, and Industrial Technology Manufacturing Entrepreneurship. The administration will attempt to accommodate all preferred electives but cannot guarantee placements, as they depend 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.

BAND 8: Band meets DAILY or on ALTERNATING days throughout the school year, and is the most advanced instrumental course offered at Waconia Middle School. This yearlong experience builds comprehensive musicianship through music performance, built on varied musical literature and skill development. Students in 8th-Grade Band will perform at least four

WMS 8TH GRADE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

concerts per school year. Individual growth and achievement are encouraged through participation in band classes and small-group lessons that rotate throughout the year. Students in the 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 who want to join as new players are welcome and should contact a band director to get started!

CHOIR 8: Choir meets DAILY or on ALTERNATING days throughout the school year. This yearlong commitment will lead to significant growth in students' singing strength and music-reading skills. If students want to learn to use their voices well, sing with their friends, or simply enjoy music, this class is 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!

MUSIC INNOVATION: In this capstone general music course, students synthesize their prior knowledge to explore modern applications of music and sound. The curriculum focuses on the evolution of music in the modern era and the intersection of artistry and innovation. Students are encouraged to develop their personal voice through independent and group

inquiry, evaluating the quality and intent of musical works. The course culminates in projects that require students to apply musical concepts to real-world scenarios, preparing them for lifelong engagement with the arts.

Physical Education/Health

Physical Education provides students with an opportunity for physical activity during the school day. Students will have the opportunity to participate in a program that includes skill development, lead-up games, team sports, lifetime games, ice arena activities, and physical fitness activities. The students receive instruction in rules, skills, and strategies for various sports. Fitness testing is done twice a year to guide physical conditioning activities. The program promotes 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 WILDCAT WAY and relate it to their own lives. The mental/emotional health unit will teach students to cope with stress and will 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.

Specialized Support Classes

- Students who require Special Education or Multi-Language Learner services, as outlined in their Individualized Education

Plan, may be scheduled for a specialized class with a licensed Special Education or Multi-Language Learner teacher, most often in place of PE and/or Music courses.

- Students identified by standardized test scores and/or teacher recommendation as needing additional reading support may be scheduled for remedial skills classes to receive additional support in basic reading phonics, decoding, and/or comprehension. These trimester-length courses are added most often in place of PE and/or Music courses.
- Students identified as high-level learners and/or gifted and talented (GT), according to ISD 110 identification standards, may be placed in a trimester-length High-Level Learners course. This course would replace an Encore class based on student preference.

Encore Course—Required (2 options)

FLIGHT AND SPACE- PLTW: 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 the science of flight and the challenges of traveling and living in space. They solve real-world aviation and space challenges and plan a mission to Mars. This course is part of a nationally recognized science, engineering, and technology curriculum developed by Project Lead The Way (PLTW) www.pltw.org.

AUTOMATION AND ROBOTICS- PLTW: Students will learn about mechanical systems, energy transfer, and machine automation using computer programming concepts. Using the VEX Robotics® platform, students apply their knowledge to design a variety of

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complex mechanisms for a Survival Challenge, apply the engineering design process, and create computer programs to automate robotic cars and 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. (Students who took this course in 7th grade will not have it again.)

Encore Courses—Electives

FAMILY and CONSUMER SCIENCE 8:

FACS 8 is a continuation of FACS 7. Students will explore the FACS topics of Interior Design, Clothing and Textiles, Personal Finance, Job Skills, and Farm-to-Table Cooking. Students will develop a range of skills that will help them in their futures, explore different career options, and gain insight into the classes 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! Students taking FACS in 8th grade are not required to have taken FACS in 7th-grade.

INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGY MANUFACTURING

ENTREPRENEURSHIP 8: The Industrial Technology elective 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 use 21st-century skills: communication, critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and problem-solving. Students will also participate 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.

MEDIA ARTS 8: Media Arts is a course that meets every day for a trimester. Throughout the course, students will deepen their understanding of the elements of art and the principles of design by creating and curating multimedia works. Students will explore key concepts such as expressive intent, symbolism, and abstraction, as well as the impact of media artworks on culture, history, and personal identity. By the end of the course, students will be able to create digital posters, drawings, presentations, websites, and audio-visual recordings for various academic purposes. The course emphasizes developing personal style, foundational artistic techniques, and creative problem-solving skills.

Students will engage in four key processes: Creating, Responding, Performing/ Presenting, and Connecting, in alignment with the Minnesota State Art Standards for 8th grade.

VISUAL ARTS 8: Visual Arts is a course that will meet daily for a trimester. In this course, students will be introduced to new methods, combined with familiar visual media. Students will explore a range of art forms, including painting, drawing, ceramics, and printmaking, to inspire a deeper passion for art and encourage them to continue their creative journey at the high school level. In the course, we continue to set goals for students to strengthen their confidence in developing their own style, deepen their understanding of foundational art concepts, 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.





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

Why Waconia?



Average Kindergarten Class Size of 20



Elite Fine Arts Programs



Small Town Feel, Big Opportunities



30 MSHSL Sponsored Activities



Trusted and Caring Teachers



An Advanced Placement Honor Roll School