



WMS 8th Grade Course Descriptions 2022-23

Waconia Middle School's 8th-grade students experience a six-period plus Connect school day. Connect class is a daily advisory period. Three of the periods are dedicated to daily CORE classes in Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies (Science and Social Studies are each one semester). The other three periods of the day are dedicated to three ENCORE classes that may include Choir, Band, Prescribed Learning Period (PLP), Physical Education/Health, French, Spanish, and Exploratory courses. Eighth-grade exploratory courses include Family and Consumer Science, Industrial Technology Manufacturing Entrepreneurship, Art, and STEM Magic of Electrons.

Connect

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 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

ENRICHED LANGUAGE ARTS & LITERATURE 8: Eighth grade enriched language arts is a self-selected, year-long 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 an 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 electing 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 that do not elect the enriched course will be scheduled for this course. In eighth-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. All year students will be working with teachers through scaffolded assignments to develop the skills needed to be independent lifelong learners.

MATH: Algebra 8: Eighth-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.

GEOGRAPHY 8: World Geography is an eighth-grade core class that explores the world using the 5 Themes of Geography. During this semester-length 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 their semester. The study of World Geography will help the modern-day student better understand the interactions of our planet's physical and social connections.

EARTH SCIENCE 8: Earth Science encompasses three disciplines of science: astronomy, meteorology, and geology. This class uses technological tools along with a hands-on approach guided by an educational philosophy that students learn by doing numerous labs, activities, and projects. The class begins by using the scientific method and then discusses astronomy, including deep space, the solar system, the Earth-Moon-Sun system, moon phases, and eclipses. The second subject in Earth Science is meteorology. Students will study the atmosphere, wind, and other weather variables, meteorology maps, air pressure, and fronts. Then we will discuss climate. Students will study the climate zones on Earth. The final topic discussed is geology. Activities include keying out minerals, igneous, sedimentary and metamorphic rocks, and discussing topics such as plate tectonics, earthquakes, and volcanoes.

Music and PLP Encore Block

BAND 8: Eighth Grade Band 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 Eighth 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. Eighth 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 year-long 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!

DAILY or ALTERNATING PRESCRIBED LEARNING PERIOD (PLP) 8:

Students electing band or choir will have one alternating day PLP class opposite their band or choir class. Students that do not elect a band or choir class will have either one daily PLP class or both an A and B-day PLP class. Students that elect both band and choir will not have a PLP class.

General PLP Classes

- General PLP topics and teachers may change each quarter or semester 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 may be graded as Pass/Fail or on a standard A-F scale.

Targeted PLP Classes

- Students that 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 graded as Pass or Fail based on classroom citizenship and active participation.
 - 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 may be graded as Pass/Fail or on a standard A-F scale.
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Physical Education/Health and World Language Encore Block

DAILY PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND HEALTH 8: Three-quarters of daily PE and one-quarter of daily 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 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 activities. Fitness testing is done three times 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.

Topics in **Health** 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.

ALTERNATING PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND HEALTH 8: One-quarter of daily PE and one-quarter of daily Health. This class alternates each quarter with either French or Spanish. Students electing this option must also elect Spanish or French. **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, and physical fitness activities. The students receive instruction in rules, skills, and strategies associated with the different activities. Fitness testing is done once 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.

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FRENCH 8: As students move into French 8, everything learned in French 7 remains critical. Students continue to strengthen their reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. The goal of the class is to have real and immediate communication in French. The instructor will use simple, repetitive stories, told in French, to teach basic French phrases and culture. This class will address the five national language standards: communication, connections, culture, comparisons, and community. Eighth-grade French will meet two quarters during the school year. Classes will be scheduled in one of two combinations-- quarters one and three or quarters two and four. Upon successful completion of this course, students will be prepared to continue to French 2 at Waconia High School. When taken together, French 7 and French 8 are the equivalent to French 1 at Waconia High School.

SPANISH 8: As students move into Spanish 8, everything learned in 7th-grade Spanish class remains critical. Students continue to strengthen their reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. 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. This class will address the five national language standards: communication, connections, culture, comparisons, and community. Eighth-grade Spanish will meet two quarters during the year. Classes will be scheduled in one of two combinations-- quarters one and three or quarters two and four. Upon successful completion of this course, students will be prepared to continue to Spanish 2 at Waconia High School. When taken together, Spanish 7 and Spanish 8 are equivalent to Spanish 1 at Waconia High School.

Exploratory Encore Block

FAMILY and CONSUMER SCIENCE 8: FACS 8 is a continuation of FACS 7. Students will be exploring the FACS topics of Interior Design, Personal Finances, Job Skills, and 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, completing a job application, and making a pizza from cheese, milk, and tomatoes!

STEM MAGIC OF ELECTRONS 8: In this unit, students examine the behavior and parts of atoms as well as the impact of electricity on the world around them. They learn skills in basic circuitry design and use what they know to propose designs such as a burglar alarm for an art museum. This course is part of a nationally recognized engineering STEM curriculum developed by Project Lead The Way (PLTW) www.pltw.org.

INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGY MANUFACTURING ENTREPRENEURSHIP 8: The eighth-grade Industrial Technology program 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.

ART 8: 8th Grade Art takes the foundational skills learned in 7th grade and continues to build on each student's individual skill levels. Students will be introduced to new and different materials which help reinforce their engagement in Art and pique their interest in continuing to explore Art at the high school level. In 8th Grade Art, we continue to set goals for students to strengthen their comfort in developing their own style and expand their creative problem-solving skills by utilizing the Studio Habits of Mind.

Waconia Middle School Course Election Worksheet 2022-23 8th Grade Classes

Student Name (First and Last): _____

Current Connect Teacher or Previous School: _____

*Elected courses are a commitment for the school year. Please read through the course descriptions carefully to assist you in making your course selection decisions.

*COURSES REQUIRING ELECTION

Music and PLP Encore Block

CIRCLE ONE OPTION BELOW

1. Band 8 and PLP
2. Choir 8 and PLP
3. Band 8 and Choir 7
4. PLP only

PE/Health and World Language Encore Block CIRCLE ONE OPTION BELOW

1. Spanish 8 and PE/Health
2. French 8 and PE/Health
3. PE/Health only

Core Language Arts and Literature

CIRCLE ONE OPTION BELOW

1. Language Arts/Literature 8
2. Enriched Language Arts/Literature 8

*REQUIRED COURSES

Core Math

(Placement based on identification criteria)

Algebra 8- Placed
Intermediate Algebra A/B 7- Placed
Geometry A/B- Placed

Core Social Studies

(Semester length class)

Geography 8- Required

Core Science

(Semester length class)

Earth Science 8- Required

Exploratory Encore Block

(One each quarter)

FACS 8- Required
STEM 8- Required
Industrial Technology 8- Required
Art 8- Required

Parent or Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____ Scheduling Questions Contact: Counselors Mrs. Deren (sderen@isd110.org) or Mrs. Henslin (phenslin@isd110.org) or Principal Mr. Clausen (sclausen@isd110.org) or Asst. Principal Mr. Andrews (iandrews@isd110.org)

Return this page only to your CONNECT teacher by Monday, Feb 7, 2022

