

# **STEFFEN MIDDLE SCHOOL**

## **Course Descriptions Handbook 2021-2022**



### Mission Statement

Steffen Middle School fosters students' intellectual, emotional, and social growth by promoting mutual respect, high expectations, and personal integrity. As a community, our staff, students, and families cultivate lifelong learning and responsible citizenship in today's global society.

## Mequon-Thiensville School District Middle School Curriculum Overview

In the Mequon-Thiensville School District, every middle school student is engaged in rigorous coursework in the content areas of English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, as well as elective offerings including: Band, Chorus and Orchestra; Art, Computer Science, Family & Consumer (FACS), Project Lead the Way (PLTW); and World Languages (French and Spanish). The faculty at Steffen Middle School is committed to preparing all students for a successful transition to high school in order to maximize post secondary, college and career readiness opportunities through its course offerings.

AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) is a college readiness system committed to transforming Instruction, Systems, Leadership and Culture. All students experience research based best instructional practice through AVID Schoolwide with WICOR (Writing, Inquiry, Collaboration & Reading) emphasized in all courses of study. The AVID elective is offered to bright, capable students in 7th & 8th grade who desire to excel beyond their past academic performance and engage in a successful middle school experience as they prepare for high school and college. The faculty at Steffen Middle School are committed to the integration of research-based instructional strategies that afford all students learning experiences that embrace MTSD's definition of rigor: *learning experiences that require students to use inquiry-based collaborative strategies to stretch for mastery of challenging content established by our District Milestones for College Success.*

The transition to a common teaching and learning structure for all classes includes: Capturing Heart & Minds, with a hook and essential question; facilitating two/three engagement periods each class period; facilitating purposeful transitions between engagement; and last, closing by reflecting on the essential question. In addition, there is a commitment to enrichment opportunities for all students embedded in each lesson.

The middle school philosophy embraces the interdisciplinary approach to teaching which facilitates a deeper, more engaged learning experience for all students. Middle school teachers in all curricular areas continually encourage students to create connections among disciplines and explore real-world applications.

Timelines for 2021-2022 Course Registration for current sixth & seventh grade students includes:

Date/Time	Purpose	Target Audience
January 2021 (During School)	School Counselor - Provides an overview of course selection.	Current 6th & 7th grade students
January 5, 2021	Information and invitations sent to families of students invited to AVID 7 & AVID 8 Elective	Current 6th & 7th grade students
January 7, 2021 (During School)	AVID 7 Elective Student Informational Meeting	Current 6th grade candidates
January 7, 2021 (During School)	AVID 8 Elective Student Informational Meeting	Current 7th grade candidates
January 7th, 2021 (5-5:45 p.m.)	AVID 7 & AVID 8 Elective Family Informational Night	Current 6th & 7th grade Candidates & Parents
January 28, 2021 (During School)	Related Art/World Language Course Options Informational sessions	Current 6th and 7th grade students
February 2, 2021 (5:30-6:00 p.m.)	Related Art/World Language Parent/Student Information Night - Virtual	Current 6th grade Students & Parents
<b>February 5, 2021</b>	<b>Related Art/World Language Course Request Day - Google Form Due</b>	<b>Current 6th &amp; 7th grade students</b>
February 20, 2021	Elective Requests Finalized Any course changes must be requested prior to this date.	Families

<b>Sixth</b>	<b>Seventh</b>	<b>Eighth</b>
English Language Arts	English Language Arts	English Language Arts
Mathematics	Mathematics	Mathematics
Science	Science	Science
Social Studies (Ancient Civilizations)	Social Studies (United States)	Social Studies (World History/Geography)
Physical Education	Physical Education	Physical Education
<b><u>Related Arts/Exploration</u></b> Art Computer Science Financial Literacy Project Lead the Way Wellness World Languages	<b><u>Electives/Related Arts</u></b> Art Computer Science Family and Consumer Science Project Lead the Way	<b><u>Electives/Related Arts</u></b> Art Computer Science Family and Consumer Science Project Lead the Way
	<b><u>World Language</u></b> French Spanish	<b><u>World Language</u></b> French Spanish
<b><u>Fine Arts</u></b> Band Chorus Orchestra	<b><u>Fine Arts</u></b> Band Chorus Orchestra	<b><u>Fine Arts</u></b> Band Chorus Orchestra
	<b><u>AVID 7</u></b>	<b><u>AVID 8</u></b>

### **Drop/Add**

A student requesting a course change at the beginning of a trimester, must do so **within the first two days** of the trimester. Course changes are dependent on enrollment and seat availability. A student requesting a level change, must do so prior to the 15th school day of a trimester following consultation between the student, teacher, specialist and parent.

## **Sixth Grade Course Descriptions**

### **English Language Arts-6**

The English Language Arts curriculum is aligned to the Common Core State Standards and taught using best instructional practices through thematic units around the topic of “change” in sixth grade. These units emphasize a strong connection between reading and writing while providing grammar and vocabulary instruction in context. Students are given independent and collaborative opportunities with peers and teachers for conferring, small strategy groups, inquiry, research, and discussion with technology use integrated throughout.

### **Math 6 Enriched**

The Common Core State Standards and the Standards for Mathematical Practice drive sixth grade math. Students are engaged in units that allow for deeper understanding. Students will experience math through concrete models, visual representations, and abstract ideas, which allow for hands-on opportunities in the classroom and conversations which involve higher-level thinking skills. The Standards for Mathematical Practice are utilized to ensure students are gaining a deep and thorough understanding of concepts through perseverance, precision, communication, and the use of multiple strategies while solving problems. The sixth grade units of study in mathematics include ratios and unit rates, division of fractions, rational numbers, expressions and equations, area/surface area/volume, and statistics. The Enriched math class is actually an accelerated, enriched math class. Successful completion of our 6th and 7th grade Enriched math classes prepares students to take Algebra 1 (or Honors Algebra 1) in 8th grade.

### **Science-6**

The science curriculum challenges all students to become scientifically literate. Through implementing the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) students gain a deeper understanding of science concepts and development of scientific thinking skills. The science curriculum includes modules in the areas of earth, life and physical sciences. The curriculum promotes curiosity about everyday experiences and the ability to describe, explain and predict natural phenomena. Units of study include a hands-on approach using inquiry, problem-solving, and critical/ creative thinking. Students become familiar with modes of scientific inquiry, rules of evidence, logical argument, and skeptical review.

### **Social Studies-6**

Sixth grade social studies introduces world history, culture, and geography. Students explore the methods and techniques geographers, archaeologists, historians, and other scholars use to analyze and learn about the past. Aligned with the Wisconsin Social Studies Standards, the various units of study provide a chronological overview of the major ancient civilizations in world history from early hunter-gatherer societies to Medieval times, the Renaissance, and then branching out to explore major civilizations around the world leading up to modern times. Current events are also a component of the sixth grade social studies curriculum.

### **Physical Education-6**

This course provides each student the opportunity to participate in a comprehensive program consisting of skill development, lead up games, team sports and physical fitness activities. The curriculum is designed to enhance the cognitive, motor, affective and fitness development of each student. Students will receive instruction in rules and strategies associated with a variety of sports, as well as learning experiences that prompt students to question, analyze and communicate concepts. Students will also have the opportunity to participate in individual sports, which encourage lifelong involvement in physical activity. The program promotes the spirit of cooperation, leadership, fair play and friendly competition.

## **Related Arts Exploration**

### **Art-6**

Art class is a time for students to develop and enrich basic art skills such as drawing, composition, design and color theory. A variety of media choices are explored through both two and three-dimensional projects. The work of established artists, along with art from others around the world, is used for study and reference. Creative problem-solving is a major component of the art experience.

### **Computer Science-6**

This elective course will provide students with an overview of computer science during the sixth-grade elective rotation. Students will understand the concept of their digital footprint and how to be a good digital citizen. The course will give students the opportunity to dive deeper into technology in order to better understand how the websites they visit and the programs they work with on a regular basis are developed.

### **Financial Literacy-6**

The sixth grade Financial Literacy course is designed to provide students with practical money management skills and as an introduction to career assessment and financial planning. Students will explore careers, the fundamentals of money management and consumer responsibility, bank services, credit & credit scores, risk management, and investing. Course work begins with career research. Students will identify careers that match their knowledge, skills, and abilities; they will learn what is required for a particular career as well as the level of education needed. Students will develop a budget, learn about gross and net income, and distribute a salary into categories to meet budget needs and wants. Students will learn about bank accounts, including savings, certificate of deposits and checking. They will learn the importance of compound interest. Students will identify sources of credit and learn the basic understanding of credit scores and its purpose. We will discuss insurance and do a short investing activity. Junior Achievement is present in the Financial Literacy curriculum through the Economics for Success coursework. Financial Literacy is one of 6 classes in the sixth grade Related Arts rotation, meeting daily for 6 weeks. This class will provide students with lifelong skills in financial literacy to build on throughout their school years.

### **Project Lead the Way (PLTW)-6**

Students are exposed to a variety of projects in the field of technology and engineering. Students will work independently and in teams to utilize computer aided drafting, geometry, problem solving, and project management skills to complete projects that are reflective of real world problems and issues. Sixth graders meet daily for 6 weeks with each week dedicated to a different part of STEAM. Our youngest engineers experience various engineering fields in short 2-3 day exposure. Seventh graders meet every other day and have opportunities to solve authentic architectural engineering problems such as creating houses on computer-aided design software as well as building their prototypes in the workshop. Other units include electrical engineering and mechanical engineering. Eighth grade students focus on mechanical engineering through automation and robotics, civil engineering through bridge building, and aerospace engineering through airplane and rocket launch.

### **Wellness-6**

The seven dimensions of wellness will be introduced in this course. These include physical, nutritional, social, intellectual, emotional, occupational, and environmental wellness. Students will take part in a wide range of activities and assessments to broaden their knowledge in these areas. During this course, students will learn basic nutrition information, appropriate first aid techniques, the components of fitness, and how substance abuse affects the body. Other topics such as environment, how to form meaningful relationships, and how the brain influences our behaviors and decisions may also be introduced. Students meet daily for 6 weeks.

### **World Languages-6**

This class is a six week exploration course designed to introduce students to the World Languages offered at Homestead High School and discover which language(s) they are interested in studying in the future. The

course will cover basics such as: greetings, geography, numbers, colors, and culture through a variety of active and interactive experiences. Students will end the course by choosing one of the four languages to research further and create either a travel brochure or a menu to share with the class.

### **Band, Orchestra, Chorus**

#### **Fine Arts (Band, Orchestra, Chorus)-6**

Band, Orchestra and Chorus provide the opportunity for students to study instrumental and/or choral music and performance technique. The literature explored in these performance ensembles exposes students to a variety of forms and styles, as well as providing instruction on the elements of music: melody, harmony, rhythm, tone, form, tempo and dynamics. Students will receive two full ensemble rehearsals and one small-group sectional rehearsal each week. Students may participate in the WSMA Solo and Ensemble Festival each Spring and will present a minimum of three concerts each year.

### **Seventh Grade Course Descriptions**

#### **English Language Arts-7**

The English Language Arts curriculum is aligned to the Common Core State Standards and taught using best instructional practices through thematic units around the topic of “choices” in seventh grade. These units emphasize a strong connection between reading and writing while providing grammar and vocabulary instruction in context. Students are given independent and collaborative opportunities with peers and teachers for conferring, small strategy groups, inquiry, research, and discussion with technology use integrated throughout.

#### **Math 7-Enriched**

The Common Core State Standards and the Standards for Mathematical Practice drive seventh grade math instruction. Students are engaged in units that allow for deeper understanding. Students will experience math through concrete models, visual representations, and abstract ideas, which allow for hands-on opportunities in the classroom, and conversations which involve higher-level thinking skills. The Standards for Mathematical Practice are utilized to ensure students are gaining a deep and thorough understanding of concepts through perseverance, precision, communication, and the use of multiple strategies while solving problems. The seventh grade units of study in mathematics include ratios and proportions, rational numbers, expressions and equations, percents, statistics and probability, and geometry. The Enriched Math class is actually an accelerated, enriched math class. Successful completion of our 6th and 7th grade Enriched math classes prepares students to take Algebra 1 (or Honors Algebra 1) in 8th grade.

#### **Science-7**

The science curriculum challenges all students to become scientifically literate. Through implementing the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) students gain a deeper understanding of science concepts and development of scientific thinking skills. The science curriculum includes units in the areas of earth, life and physical sciences. The curriculum promotes curiosity about everyday experiences and the ability to describe, explain and predict natural phenomena. Units of study include a hands-on approach using inquiry, problem-solving, and critical/ creative thinking. Students become familiar with modes of scientific inquiry, rules of evidence, logical argument, and skeptical review.

### **Social Studies-7**

U.S. History is the primary emphasis for seventh grade. Seventh grade utilizes a thematic approach to the teaching of social studies. The seventh grade social studies themes include, "What Does It Mean to Be an American," "Westward Expansion," "Americans and Equality," and "Why [Civil] War?" Political science and citizenship, economics and the behavioral sciences are taught within the context of U.S. History, which includes the Constitution to the present with an emphasis on the years 1787-1877. Geography is taught within the context of the history of the United States. Current events are also a part of the seventh grade social studies curriculum.

### **Physical Education-7**

This course provides each student the opportunity to participate in a comprehensive program consisting of skill development, lead up games, team sports and physical fitness activities. The curriculum is designed to enhance the cognitive, motor, affective and fitness development of each student. Students will receive instruction in rules and strategies associated with a variety of sports, as well as learning experiences that prompt students to question, analyze and communicate concepts. Students will also have the opportunity to participate in individual sports, which encourage lifelong involvement in physical activity. The program promotes the spirit of cooperation, leadership, fair play and friendly competition. Seventh grade students will acquire knowledge related to movement concepts, principles and strategies that apply to the learning and performance of physical activities.

## **Related Arts**

### **Art-7**

In seventh grade art class, students will continue to develop art skills such as drawing, design and creative problem solving. A variety of media choices are explored through both two and three-dimensional projects. Artists will keep a sketchbook of design plans, drawing techniques, notes, sketches and ideas. The work of established artists, along with art from others around the world is used for study and reference, but students will be encouraged to develop their own art style and make work that is meaningful to them. The specific art experiences and projects may differ each year, but the learning goals and outcomes remain the same. Seventh grade Art is an elective that meets every other day for the entire year.

### **Computer Science-7**

This elective course will provide students with an introduction to computer science. Students will focus on three key topics: problem-solving, the internet, and programming. As our world continues to utilize technology, it is important that we teach our students the skills needed to better understand the technology they work with every day. The goal of this course is to provide students with introductory experiences in the use of for-work-based products by focusing on problem solving. Students will learn HTML and CSS coding to create a website, as well as Java-based block coding to create interactive cards and games.

### **Family and Consumer Science (FACS)-7**

The seventh grade Family and Consumer Science curriculum consists of a variety of topics related to nutrition, health and wellness. Students will have an in-depth study of abbreviations/ measuring equivalents, garnishing, varied diets, dietary guidelines, essential nutrients, MyPlate, and nutrition labels. In addition, we will discuss herbs, spices, chocolate, soup, stocks and sauces. Students will have the opportunity to prepare food products related to the topics of study. Seventh graders also participate in a "cupcake challenge". Students will learn some basic hand sewing techniques and make a pillow using the sewing machine. We will also discuss topics related to careers, success, finance, community service, teen issues, eating disorders, family and leadership. Seventh grade FACS is an elective that meets every other day for the entire year.

### **Project Lead the Way (PLTW)-7**

The seventh grade Project Lead the Way curriculum addresses the interest and energy of middle school students and incorporates national standards for science, technology, mathematics and language arts. Student lessons, activities, and projects are designed to show students how technology is used to solve problems and is reflective of their everyday lives. Students are encouraged to work collaboratively in teams with definitive structure and goals to solve technological issues. Independent work includes use of the computer-aided design software while teams create prototypes in the shop after safety training. Seventh grade PLTW is an elective that meets every other day for the entire year.

### **World Language**

Grade 7 and Grade 8 World Language is equivalent to first year language at Homestead. Students who complete Grade 8 World Language, either French or Spanish, are ready to enroll in second year World Language. Their course choice for 9th grade would either be French/Spanish 2 or take first year in another language.

#### **Grade 7**

**All Incoming 7th Grade Students** All interested students are encouraged to sign up for world language for 7th grade. The choices are French and Spanish.

**Heritage Speakers (Those Whose Families Speak Spanish)** Heritage speakers may enroll at any time of the year but are advised that they may wait until 8th grade or even 9th grade when they can be tested for appropriate placement for high school.

**Students New to MTSD After The School Year Has Begun** After the 7th grade school year has begun, students new to our district will be counseled regarding this course choice with the following considerations:

- Students who have been studying the world language in their previous district or who took the language before may enroll in the world language at any time of the year.
- Students who have not studied the world language previously will be counseled about choosing to enroll in world language for 7th grade once the school year has started:
  - Through September, the transition into the class will be relatively smooth. Effort and time to learn skills already taught will be necessary.
  - New students wishing to enroll in world language after September will be counseled regarding the advisability of enrolling at that time.
    - The world language teacher(s) will be consulted for their input on the content already learned, and the family will receive that information.
    - Families will need to understand that diligent effort and time to learn content already taught will be required for success.
    - The student will be provided with materials and resources to catch up. This would include the textbook and online resources.
      - Help will be available to the student regarding the content currently being taught, just as it is for all students.
      - However, the teacher cannot be expected to provide private tutoring on all content taught previously during the school year.

### **7th Grade High School Prep French 1A**

Seventh grade French is the first of a two-year sequence that is equivalent to the high school French 1 curriculum. Lessons are created to lead the students from structured practice to open-ended communication. Vocabulary, grammar, and culture are learned through thematic contexts using all four aspects of communication: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. The course uses a variety of print, audio, and video materials and is based on the D'Accord 1 textbook. It is interactive as students learn to communicate in everyday situations through dialogues, games, interviews, projects, and other individual and group activities. This structure provides motivation for using the language and to help students achieve accuracy in their communication. The topics studied in seventh grade include basic conversation, likes and dislikes, descriptions of self and others, school life, and everyday activities. This is a yearlong course and meets every other day.

### **7th Grade High School Prep Spanish 1A**

Seventh grade Spanish is an every other day program in which students will learn the first third of the high school Spanish 1 curriculum. Students will explore topics including basic conversation, how to communicate their likes and dislikes, describe themselves and others and talk about their class schedules and classroom objects. A variety of grammar points, verb conjugations and cultural aspects are incorporated to ensure student success. Students will focus on speaking, reading and writing of the language in order to have a comprehensive understanding of integral concepts. This course represents the first part of Spanish 1 at the high school and continues with the 8th grade Spanish program. Taking this course opens the door for a student to eventually complete 5 years of the language. This course is a yearlong course and meets every other day.

## **AVID**

### **AVID 7**

Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) is an academic elective course that prepares students for college readiness and post-secondary success. Each week, students receive instruction utilizing a rigorous college preparatory curriculum that incorporates strategies focused on Writing, Inquiry, Collaboration, Organization, and Reading (WICOR) to support their academic achievement & social-emotional growth. This is accomplished through a focus on AVID's standards: Student Agency, Academic Preparedness, and Opportunity Knowledge.

Students in AVID 7 will have the opportunity to examine their points of confusion from academic classes by engaging in tutorials; tutor-facilitated study groups, twice a week. Students will refine short- and long-term goals and, as a result, begin to understand the value in taking charge of their actions. They will start working on intrapersonal and interpersonal skills as well as formal and informal speech. Students will expand their knowledge-base of success skills such as goal-setting, time management, organization, public speaking, focused note-taking, and test preparation. Students will also be exposed to a variety of field trips, guest speakers, and research to increase their awareness of college and career options. AVID 7 is an elective course that meets every day for the entire school year.

## **Band, Orchestra & Chorus**

### **Fine Arts (Band, Orchestra & Chorus)-7**

Band, Choir and Orchestra provide the opportunity for students to study instrumental and/or choral music and performance technique. The literature explored in these performance ensembles exposes students to a variety of forms and styles, as well as providing instruction on the elements of music: melody, harmony, rhythm, tone, form, tempo and dynamics. Students will receive two full ensemble rehearsals and one small-group sectional rehearsal each week. Students may participate in the WSMA Solo and Ensemble Festival each Spring and will present a minimum of three concerts each year.

## **8th Grade Course Descriptions**

### **English Language Arts-8**

The English Language Arts curriculum is aligned to the Common Core State Standards and taught using best instructional practices through thematic units around the topic of “challenge” in eighth grade. These units emphasize a strong connection between reading and writing while providing grammar and vocabulary instruction in context. Students are given independent and collaborative opportunities with peers and teachers for conferring, small strategy groups, inquiry, research, and discussion with technology use integrated throughout.

### **MATHEMATICS:**

#### **Algebra 1**

Algebra 1 continues the study of variables, constants, expressions and equations. Topics covered are: solving equations, simplifying expressions, understanding the order of operations, using properties, arithmetic operations with positive and negative numbers, polynomials, factoring, graphing (linear and quadratic equations), working with radicals, and probability. All of the above mentioned topics will be reinforced using the concepts of setting up and solving real-world problems. Algebra is a way of thinking and a set of concepts and skills that enable students to generalize, model, and analyze mathematical situations. Algebra provides a systematic way to investigate relationships, helping to describe, organize, and understand the world.

#### **Honors Algebra 1**

This is a rigorous mathematics course stressing deductive reasoning. This course is structured to challenge mathematical minds. Major topics of the Honors Algebra 1 curriculum will include linear equations, linear systems, factoring of polynomials, algebraic fractions, and techniques of graphing, radicals and exponents, quadratic equations, an introduction to functions, mathematical induction, and probability. This is the same curriculum as the Honors Algebra 1 course taught at the high school. Some middle school concepts are reviewed with more depth to ensure mastery for middle school students.

#### **Honors Geometry**

The study of Geometry involves thinking critically to deduce answers given specific facts and theorems. Major topics of the Honors Geometry curriculum include points/lines/planes, reasoning and proof, congruent triangles, quadrilaterals, similar figures, right triangles and trigonometry, transformations, circles, and surface area/volume. This is the same curriculum as the Honors Geometry course taught at the high school. Some middle school concepts are reviewed with more depth to ensure mastery for middle school students.

#### **Science-8**

The science curriculum challenges all students to become scientifically literate. Through implementing the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), students gain a deeper understanding of science concepts and development of scientific thinking skills. The science curriculum includes units in the areas of earth science and chemistry. The curriculum promotes curiosity about everyday experiences and the ability to describe, explain and predict natural phenomena. Units of study include a hands-on approach using inquiry, problem-solving, and critical/creative thinking. Students become familiar with modes of scientific inquiry, rules of evidence, logical argument, and skeptical review.

### **Social Studies-8**

The major theme for social studies is world geography. Aligned with the Wisconsin Social Studies Standards, the content of the course addresses physical geography and cultural, economic, social and political developments in all major regions of the world. Students also integrate knowledge of specific historical eras into their study of regions of the world. Current events are woven into the study of each region to develop an understanding of current issues affecting these areas. Map skills, geographic literacy and techniques of inquiry are incorporated throughout the year. Research skills utilizing technology and nonfiction text is also an integral part of the curriculum.

### **Physical Education-8**

This course provides each student the opportunity to participate in a comprehensive program consisting of skill development, lead up games, team sports and physical fitness activities. The curriculum is designed to enhance the cognitive, motor, affective and fitness development of each student. Students will receive instruction in rules and strategies associated with a variety of sports, as well as learning experiences that prompt students to question, analyze and communicate concepts. Students will also have the opportunity to participate in individual sports, which encourage lifelong involvement in physical activity. The program promotes the spirit of cooperation, leadership, fair play and friendly competition. Eighth grade students will acquire knowledge related to physical fitness concepts, principles and strategies to improve health and performance.

## **Related Arts**

### **Art-8**

Art class is a time for students to develop and enrich art skills such as drawing, composition, design, color theory and creative problem solving. A variety of media choices are explored through both two and three-dimensional projects such as printmaking, art metals, ceramics, painting, and sculpture. All students keep a journal of design plans, color study, drawing techniques, demonstration/process notes, sketches and ideas. The work of established artists, along with art from others around the world is used for study and reference, but students will be encouraged to develop their own art style and make work that is meaningful to them. The curriculum articulates the knowledge, skills and understandings developed in our K-8 art program and students who take this class are well prepared for high school art classes. The specific art experiences and projects may differ each year, but the learning goals and outcomes remain the same. This course meets every day for a semester, or students can elect to take art both semesters.

### **Computer Science-8**

This elective course will provide students a better understanding of computer science through three main concepts: design process, data and society, and physical computing. While many students are familiar with technology from an entertainment perspective, this course will dive deeper into how these technologies are developed in order to help students become more technology-literate. Students will design apps targeted at a specific audience, create an app to make a recommendation based on data collection, and use programmable circuit boards to create an innovation of their own design. Students will continue in the second semester to develop their coding through a variety of basic computational thinking and programming concepts through a project-based learning curriculum.

### **Family and Consumer Science (FACS)-8**

The eighth grade Family and Consumer Science class students expand on their knowledge of nutrition and expand their skills in the kitchen. Throughout the nutrition unit, we discuss dietary concerns, safety in the kitchen and proper food handling techniques. We research, discuss and prepare foods from other lands. Students get a chance to learn about entrepreneurship and workplace skills. Other topics of study include ethics, community service and consumer economics. This course meets every day for a semester, or students can elect to take FACS both semesters.

### **Project Lead The Way (PLTW)-8**

The eighth grade PLTW program expands on what students have learned in the 6th and 7th grades. Students begin the school year learning how to build basic mechanical systems. Then students learn how to program using Robot-C programming language. Students program and construct robots to perform various tasks reflective of real world scenarios. The study of robotics helps students understand what robots are used for and the effect they have on our lives. Students will also experience how a robot receives information through various components such as infrared sensors. The eighth grade students end the year studying the history of aerospace through hands-on activities and research and briefly civil engineering through bridge building. This course meets every day for a semester, or students can elect to take PLTW both semesters.

## **World Languages**

Grade 7 and Grade 8 world language is equivalent to first year language at Homestead. Students who complete Grade 8 world language, either French or Spanish, are ready to enroll in second year world language. Their course choice for 9th grade would either be French/Spanish 2 or take first year in another language.

### **Grade 8**

**Continuing MTSD Students** Students who completed the 7th grade world language course in our district are welcome to enroll in the 8th grade course and are encouraged to do so.

**Heritage Speakers (Those Whose Families Speak Spanish)** Heritage speakers may enroll in the 8th grade course, but they may wish to wait until 9th grade when they can be tested for appropriate placement for high school. Heritage speakers will usually test as ready for 2nd year or even 3rd year language study for freshman year.

**Students New to MTSD for 8th Grade** Since the Grade 8 world language course is a continuation of the grade 7 course, students must have background knowledge and skill to successfully take the class.

- Students new to our district who have studied the world language in their previous school are welcome to enroll.
  - As part of our efforts to support student success, placement testing will be conducted so that the student and their parent(s)/guardian(s) know about their level of preparation and readiness for the 8th grade course. The testing will also let the teachers know about the student's strengths and relative weaker areas. These students are not required to "pass" the test in order to enroll; the testing is for informational purposes only.

- Students with no prior world language study are advised to enroll in one of the Related Arts rather than 8th grade world language. They are encouraged to pursue language study in 9th grade, allowing for four years of language study.

### **8th Grade High School Prep French 1B**

Eighth grade French is a continuation of seventh grade curriculum, and covers the second half of French 1. Together these two courses are the equivalent of the French 1 program at the high school level. The themes studied include family and home life, food and meals, places in a city, sports and free-time activities, and weather. The course is taught in a similar manner to seventh-grade French with an additional focus on the study of French-speaking countries. Students will explore the many cultures of the French-speaking world in Africa, Europe and the Americas. Students who successfully complete the French seventh and eighth grade language programs are eligible to enroll in French 2 as freshmen. This enables a student to reach AP French 5 by the time he or she completes the course of study at Homestead, resulting in the advantage of potentially earning college credit. Students would also be able to apply for “retroactive” college credit at some universities based on their eventual high school coursework, if they complete 7th and 8th grade French successfully. This is a yearlong course and meets every day.

### **8th Grade High School Prep Spanish 1B**

Eighth grade Spanish is a continuation of the seventh grade curriculum, and covers the second two-thirds of Spanish 1. Together these two courses are the equivalent of the Spanish 1 program at the high school level. The main themes studied include popular pastimes and leisure activities, talking about places to go and what to do, describing family relationships, and using common expressions in Spanish. All of these themes have cultural connections from a variety of Spanish-speaking countries. Students who successfully complete the Spanish seventh and eighth grade language programs are ready to enroll in Spanish 2 as freshmen. This enables a student to reach AP Spanish 5 by the time he or she completes the course of study at Homestead, resulting in the advantage of potentially earning college credit. Students would also be able to apply for “retroactive” college credit at some universities based on their eventual high school coursework, if they complete 7th and 8th grade Spanish successfully. This course is a yearlong course and meets every day.

## **AVID**

### **AVID 8**

Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) is an academic elective course that prepares students for college readiness and post-secondary success. Each week, students receive instruction utilizing a rigorous college preparatory curriculum that incorporates strategies focused on Writing, Inquiry, Collaboration, Organization, and Reading (WICOR) to support their academic achievement & social-emotional growth. This is accomplished through a focus on AVID’s standards: Student Agency, Academic Preparedness, and Opportunity Knowledge.

Students in AVID 8 will regularly utilize the skills and strategies learned in the AVID 7 elective including goal-setting, time management, organization, public speaking, focused note-taking, and test preparation. However, AVID 7 is not a prerequisite. Students will have an opportunity to refine goals focusing on their transition to high school as part of a successful post-secondary path. Transitioning from active learners to leaders is the primary goal for AVID 8 students. Students in AVID 8 will also engage in writing projects that explore various styles of writing, incorporating all steps of the writing process. Similar to AVID 7, students will be exposed to a variety of field trips, guest speakers, and research to increase their awareness of college and career options. AVID 8 is an elective course that meets every day for the entire school year.

## **Band, Orchestra & Choir**

### **Fine Arts (Band, Orchestra, Choir)-8**

Band, Choir and Orchestra provide the opportunity for students to study instrumental and/or choral music and performance technique. The literature explored in these performance ensembles exposes students to a variety of forms and styles, as well as providing instruction on the elements of music: melody, harmony, rhythm, tone, form, tempo and dynamics. Students will receive two full ensemble rehearsals and one small-group sectional rehearsal each week. Students may participate in the WSMA Solo and Ensemble Festival each Spring and will present a minimum of three concerts each year.