

THUNDER RIDGE MIDDLE SCHOOL

ELECTIVES COURSE GUIDE

2023-2024

8th GRADE



Dream Big * Inspire Everyone * Create a Roadmap * Believe in Yourself * Achieve * Work Hard



8th GRADE

Every effort is made to place students in the courses requested but cannot be guaranteed due to scheduling conflicts or enrollment limits. Student's schedules may not contain all of their top choices or be in the order of preference. Schedule repairs are made to support the academic or medical needs of students and only when space permits. Repairs will only occur during the first week of the quarter.

YEAR ELECTIVES

AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) AVID is a yearly college preparatory elective class for sixth, seventh and eighth grade students who desire higher academic achievement. AVID provides motivated students with skills needed to be successful in the rigorous middle and high school curriculum in preparation necessary for a college future. Students meet daily and receive instruction in areas such as writing, note taking, reading, organization, questioning, study skills, test taking, and college and career choices. Students interested in AVID have a 2.5- 3.5 grade point average, good school attendance and behavior, average or higher test scores in reading and math, and a willingness to commit to rigorous class work. Interested students must fill out an application and participate in an AVID interview for selection. **(Year)**

Yearbook By enrolling in this course, students become staff members of the Thunder Ridge Middle School Yearbook. Students will be responsible for every aspect of production of the Yearbook, including interviewing, reporting, editing, planning, and designing layouts, writing copy, photo captions, and headlines, as well as photography of all school events and activities. **(Year)**

PERFORMING ARTS

Band 8 In this course, students will be focusing on how to become goal-driven independent musicians with musicality in mind. Students will have an abundance of practicing strategies and resources at hand to push themselves to next level musicianship. Most of the students in this class will have had at least two years of prior musical experience. If students have no prior experience, they will be encouraged, but not required to take private lessons to close their experience gap as quickly as possible. Students will have at least two concerts per year; one performance in December, and a final performance in May. **(Year)**

Choir 8 Choir 8 is an advanced choral class that builds on the skills learned in Choir 7. All Choir 8 songs are arranged in three or four parts, so all students will improve their ability to sing harmony and strengthen their upper and lower vocal range. *There are at least 4 required concerts* in which the choir will perform a variety of song styles (classical, pop, oldies, folk songs, world music), sometimes with choreography. Each quarter, students have the opportunity to audition for solos and small ensemble parts. Choir involvement in 7th grade is preferred but not required. **(Year)**

Orchestra 8 This yearlong course is open to students who have experience playing the violin, viola, cello or string bass. Advanced string techniques necessary for continuation in high school are taught. A variety of music is played. *Concerts are scheduled throughout the year including participation in the CCSD Stringathon. Attendance is required.* A limited number of instruments are available to rent from the school. Permission is required to begin a string instrument in 8th grade. **(Year)**

WORLD LANGUAGES

The World Language program at TRMS offers students an opportunity to advance in world languages at the high school level. Our French and Spanish programs allow students the possibility to enter “Year 2” in their first year of high school. Students who successfully complete yearlong French or Spanish classes in both 7th and 8th grade at Thunder Ridge may be eligible.

French B This course is designed as a continuation to French A. The course runs like French A with students continuing to progress through the novice level of language. Students will engage in many cultural activities involving cooking, film, and music. In addition, students in French B have the opportunity to run the annual French Food Fair in which students prepare and present a culinary extravaganza. Successful completion of this course may allow you to advance to French 2 in high school. **(Year)**

Spanish B Spanish B is for students who have completed Spanish A. This course is designed to continue the development of speaking, reading, writing and listening skills from Level A. Students explore the Spanish culture through art, music, film, theater, and cooking. *Students taking this course must have the approval of the Spanish A teacher. Middle school world language places students on track for more advanced opportunities in language courses.* **(Year)**

SEMESTER ELECTIVES

PERFORMING ARTS

Guitar I This class is a beginning level guitar class. No experience is necessary. Development of effective guitar technique is stressed including chords, finger picking and improvisation. A variety of styles of music are taught. Nylon string guitars are provided. **(Semester)**

Music Adventure This course will examine different styles of music such as classical, jazz, rock, and pop. Students will learn how to perceive and describe music by sound, sight, and feel. Using basic music theory skills, students will have the chance to compose music using a notation program so they can hear their compositions performed. No musical experience is necessary for this course. Music adventure will be a diverse and immersive experience that will enrich the way students hear the musical world around them. **(Semester)**

Vocal Musical Theatre 8 In this course, students will experience a wide range of exciting activities that will serve as a foundation for further study at the high school level, or a life-long appreciation of theatre and performing. From working with others to create scenes and plays, to practicing improvisation skills, this course has something for the performer at every level. This class will help students learn poise and self-confidence in their performing abilities. **(Semester)**

PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND HEALTH

Physical Education 8 This course enhances the motor, intellectual, and social development of students through physical movement. Students will learn cooperation, team play, and sportsmanship through participation in climbing (wall), weight training, basketball, volleyball, spike ball and other activities. Fitness components and wellness concepts are integrated into the activities. Students will also participate in a variety of workouts designed to improve their fitness level. **(Semester)**

Health 8 In 8th grade health students will dig deeper into the content and skills that apply to real-world situations in teenage life. This course emphasizes the following: maintaining self-esteem, demonstrating empathy, stress management, resiliency skills, identifying and coping with depression, and suicide prevention. We will also explore relationships, human reproduction/sexuality education, personal online safety/digital citizenship, social aggression/violence prevention, drug, alcohol, and vaping education, strengthening refusal skills. **(Semester)**

TECHNOLOGY

Tech Applied Technology This course introduces students to a wide variety of technology applications to prepare them for high school. Topics include – VEX **ROBOTICS**, HTML and CSS computer programming to code a website, 2-dimensional animation, CAD drawing, 3-d printing, Python computer programming, and more. Students will work through various rotations and explore different software and applications. **(Semester)**

VISUAL ARTS

Art 8 In this class, students will continue to develop their creative ideas in various two-dimensional and three-dimensional projects. Projects may include clay, paintings, scratchboard art, mixed media paper mache, and collage.

Art Digital Photography 8 This class teaches technical aspects of a quality photograph, photographic composition, basic photo editing, and communication through photography. Students in this class will learn to capture and evaluate a photograph, as well as learning and applying what makes a great photographer. We will work in Adobe Photoshop to enhance and combine images and learn manual exposure which is the professional standard. The skills and concepts learned in this class can be applied to all photography now and in the future. Additionally, develop skills and knowledge to create effective video and media productions used as a form of communication and creative expression. This course encourages students to engage in creative and critical processes while learning relevant tools to create media artwork such as short films, animations, and stop motion. This course will cover composition, lighting, editing software, storytelling, and the creative process for students to create relevant and professionally crafted content. **(Semester)**

Art Mixed Media 8 Develop drawing skills using traditional art materials, such as graphite, watercolor, colored pencils, markers, and digital illustration using the Adobe Creative Suite. You'll be introduced and reintroduced to the fundamentals of illustration that will elevate your skills and techniques. Also, an introductory exploration of the use of animation, and digital art as media for making contemporary art. Emphasis is on all levels of production, concept development, character development and the history and theory of media, sound, and animation. A hands-on exploration of principles, and practices involved in the creation of 2D and 3D animation. Traditional methods are combined with digital animation and imaging software. The focus is on individual creative growth and different media knowledge. **(Semester)**