

THUNDER RIDGE MIDDLE SCHOOL
ELECTIVES COURSE GUIDE

2024-2025

8th GRADE



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

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. After courses are assigned, schedule repairs are made to support specific academic or medical needs of students, not by request, and only when space permits.

AVID

AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) (Year-long) This is a year-long college/career elective class for 8th 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 for college & career pathways. Students receive instruction in writing, inquiry, collaboration, organization, reading, real world connections, and college & career choices. Students interested in AVID have a 2.5 and above grade point average, good school attendance & 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. At Thunder Ridge, all students participate in Organizational Monday by filling out their Planners in Advisory to preplan/back map their week to be a successful student.

YEARBOOK

Yearbook (Year-long) 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, designing layouts, writing copy, photo captions, and headlines, as well as photography of all school events and activities. Students need strong writing and communicating skills. A strong work ethic, reliability, and the ability to work in groups are required. Students will need to complete a Yearbook application in order to enroll. (Students will only be accepted after quarter 1 with teacher interview/approval)

PERFORMING ARTS

Band 8 (Year-long) 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.

Choir 8 (Year-long) 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.

Orchestra 8 (Year-long) Orchestra 8 is a year-long course for students who want to continue learning to play the violin, viola, cello, or string bass. Students usually have two or more years of experience on their string instrument. Participation in Orchestra 7 is highly recommended. This course focuses . Class expectations include regular home practice, daily class participation, and attendance at two to three evening concerts during the school year.

Guitar I (Semester-long) 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.

Music Adventure (Semester-long) 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.

Vocal Musical Theatre 8 (Semester-long) 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 theater 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.

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 (Year-long) 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.

Spanish B (Year-long) This full year course is the equivalent to the second semester of high school Spanish 1. and it 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 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 in high school.*

PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND HEALTH

Physical Education 8 Fall (Semester-long)/Physical Education 8 Spring (Semester-long) Students may sign up for one or both courses. These courses are designed to enhance 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.

Health 8 (Semester-long) In 8th grade health students will dig deeper into health content and the skills that apply to real-world situations in teenage life. This course emphasizes the following: maintaining self-esteem, demonstrating empathy, stress management, building resiliency, identifying and coping with depression, and suicide prevention. We will further explore how to successfully navigate relationships with friends, parents, and other adults, human reproduction/sexual health, personal online safety/digital citizenship, social aggression/violence prevention, strengthening refusal skills for peer pressures related to drug use, (major emphasis on the fentanyl crisis), teen alcohol abuse, and vaping. Students will leave this class empowered and ready to advocate for themselves throughout their young adulthood years.

TECHNOLOGY

Tech Applied Technology (Semester-long) 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, woodworking, and more. Students will work through various rotations and explore different software and applications in the field of STEM. As a part of this class, tool safety and operation will be demonstrated, taught, and tested to enable students to complete their projects. \$10 fee for project supplies - scholarships available.

Video Game Design (Semester-long) Video game design will provide students with the opportunity to design, program, and create functional video games. The course will introduce students to basic programming concepts that are essential for creating video games. Students will examine the roles of characters, settings, and conflicts in order to create engaging content. This course will begin with basics of programming and game theory. Students will then be challenged to create game projects that match their skill level and interest.

VISUAL ARTS

Art 8 (Semester-long) 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. \$10 Class fee - Scholarships available.

Art Digital Photography 8 (Semester-long) 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. \$10 Class fee - Scholarships available.

Art Mixed Media 8 (Semester-long) 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. \$10 Class fee - Scholarships available.