



**THUNDER RIDGE MIDDLE
SCHOOL**
Course Catalog

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T.R.M.S. Philosophy

At Thunder Ridge Middle School we are committed and dedicated to our students, staff and community. Our mission is to provide your child with enriching, rigorous, and high-level academic experiences on a daily basis. We believe it is our responsibility to create an environment that is grounded in the Thunder Values: *Dream Big, Inspire Everyone, Create a Roadmap, Believe in Yourself, Achieve, and Work Hard.*

We will work diligently to inspire your child to think, to learn, to achieve, and to care. We will make sure all children have the opportunity to learn in an environment that promotes academic excellence, academic scholars, and global citizens. Meeting the academic, social, and emotional needs of all students is what you can expect from your Thunder Ridge Middle School staff. We are committed to making a difference with every child, every day, in every class.

Thunder Values

Dream Big: Identify your dreams and start thinking about what it will take to make that dream come true.

Inspire Everyone: Be supportive and be a role model. You never know what opportunities may come your way because of how you act or what you say. Take advantage of being the best you can be every single day.

Create a Roadmap: Know where you want to go and identify what it will take to get you there. Also, know that there are multiple pathways to get to your dream or your goal. If one door closes, open another.

Believe in Yourself: You can set your bar as high as you want it to be. Believe and you will achieve.

Achieve and Work Hard: To achieve, it will take hard work and dedication. Be prepared to put in the time necessary so you can continue to better yourself.

At A Glance

Thunder Ridge Middle School is divided into three halls. Each hall of the school houses a separate grade level. Each grade level has its own administrator and counselor to meet the needs of the students.

Counselors

Counselors at Thunder Ridge Middle School help students make responsible decisions, gain an understanding of their individual strengths and adjust to the rapidly changing needs of early adolescence. They also help students address personal and academic needs, prepare for a transition to high school and explore post-secondary options. Counselors stay with the same group of students throughout the three years of middle school to provide consistency.

Mental Health

The mental health team is comprised of a school social worker and a school psychologist. They provide multi-tiered social-emotional, behavioral, and learning supports through prevention, assessment, intervention, consultation and crisis response. They work with diverse student populations to maximize student achievement and growth.

PBIS (Positive Behavioral Intervention Support)

The PBIS initiative is designed to establish and maintain effective school environments that maximize academic achievement and behavioral competence of all learners in Colorado. This competence is gained as a result of school personnel and families working together to provide a continuum of support for all learners. PBIS includes the following practices:

- A common purpose and positive approach to discipline
- A clear set of positive expectations and behaviors
- Procedures for teaching and encouraging expected behavior
- Procedures for discouraging inappropriate behaviors
- Data used to guide decision making and planning
- Emphasis on prevention of inappropriate behaviors

PBIS also acknowledges that social and behavioral competence is learned at home, school, and in the community, and teaching positive behavior is more effective than punishing negative behavior.

Student Activities and Athletics

Activities and athletics, while not part of the academic school day, add to the development of students and are a vital part of Thunder Ridge Middle School. Various clubs and activities will be offered throughout the school year. Please visit the school website for the most current information.

Thunder Values Lessons

Lessons based on the TRMS Thunder Values are the foundation of our affective education component. Thunder Ridge Middle School is committed to healthy development of social, emotional, and physical safety of each middle school student. This is addressed through activities that are scheduled during the first week of the school year and then occur regularly with a school wide focus on common topics. These activities provide an opportunity for students to participate in activities centered on team building, communication skills, conflict resolution, decision making, goal setting, empathy, and refusal skills. School climate is further enhanced by activities valuing tolerance, listening, connecting and caring. Our goal is to build relationships and create a positive and healthy environment for all students to learn and grow.

Student Achievement Services

In the regular classroom, curriculum, instruction, and assessment are differentiated to provide for the unique needs of the learner. Accommodations, modifications, and parallel materials are provided to ensure that every student who has an identified need has access to information and instruction presented in class, and means for demonstrating learning. Targeted and intensive classes are offered that address specific skills. Identification of students with learning needs are based upon the Cherry Creek School District Response to Intervention (RTI) model. If you have questions regarding these services for your child, please contact his or her counselor.

Gifted/Advanced Learners Programming

The Gifted/Advanced Learners programming supports students who are formally identified as gifted, who demonstrate advanced cognitive abilities and performances, or who would benefit from academically rigorous coursework. Students are recognized and challenged in their areas of academic and creative strengths, talents and abilities. Advanced level opportunities available for these students include:

Pre-AP Institute

Accelerated math classes

Advanced electives

Advanced music performance opportunities

Clubs, activities and sports

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.

6th Grade

6th Grade Core Course Offerings

Sixth grade students are on a team. Their core classes are math, science, social studies, and language arts. The team structure helps students with the transition from elementary school.

6th Grade Language Arts

Students will read and comprehend literary and informational text, including poetry, short stories, novels, and articles. Students will read to determine topic, main idea, author's purpose, and theme. Writing content will focus on summary, informational, argumentative, narrative, and an organized short-constructed response. Students will learn appropriate research techniques, how to determine the reliability of sources, and an introduction to the process of source citation.

6th Grade Pre-AP Language Arts

This Pre-AP class has the same areas of focus and course of studies as 6th grade language arts (see above). Students work at an accelerated pace, the content is condensed, and independence and self-initiative are expected. Advanced novels will be required reading. Mastery of writing conventions is practiced and expected. Outside-the-box ideas are encouraged in student writing, as well as the use of sophisticated word choices and strengthening of voice. Students will practice and master the art of writing five paragraph essays. In addition to interest, students requesting this course should have a strong body of evidence in language arts, including teacher input, attendance, habits of mind and PARCC/CMAS scores in the upper quadrant of the "Meets" or "Exceeds" category in reading and writing.

Math 6

As students transition to middle school mathematics, they will build on their understanding of numbers from elementary school and begin to learn the abstract components of mathematics. Math content will focus on four critical areas: (1) connecting ratio and rate to whole number multiplication and division and using concepts of ratio and rate to solve problems; (2) completing an understanding of division of fractions and extending the notion of number to the system of rational number, which includes negative numbers; (3) writing, interpreting, and using expressions and equations; and (4) developing an understanding of statistical thinking. This work will lay the foundation for the focus on proportional reasoning in seventh grade.

Math 6/7

Math 6/7 and Math 7/8 are a two-year compacted course sequence that provides three years of mathematics content in two years, preparing students for Algebra 1 in grade 8. Math 6/7 students study all topics from Math 6 and extend three main concepts to blend with Math 7. The concept of ratio and rate is extended to proportional relationships, the concept of rational numbers and integers is extended to operations with integers and rational numbers, and the study of statistical thinking is extended to statistical inference based on samples. The compacted nature of the course will require students to be comfortable and proficient in learning math at an accelerated pace. **Placement in Math 6/7 is determined using a body of evidence to support students' readiness for success in this course.**

6th Grade Science

Sixth grade science focuses on the overarching theme of systems. Topics include cells, human body (interaction of systems and homeostasis), ecology, natural resources, water, and the dynamic earth. Students engage in critical thinking by making claims and using evidence and scientific reasoning to support these claims. This is expressed both orally and in written format. STEM (the integration of science, technology, engineering, and math) projects are incorporated throughout the year.

6th Grade Pre-AP Science

Pre-AP Science 6 has the same areas of focus and course of studies as 6th grade science (see above). This course involves more rigorous discussions, independent reading and writing, and more challenging assessments. In this course, students will have the opportunity to delve deeper into the 6th grade science curriculum. In addition to interest, students requesting this course should have a strong body of evidence in science, including teacher input, attendance, habits of mind and PARCC/CMAS scores in the upper quadrant of “Meets” or “Exceeds” category in reading and writing.

6th Grade Social Studies

Sixth grade social studies focuses on the Western Hemisphere. Students will become familiar with economic systems, forms of government, history and geography. With a primary goal of advancing all students’ non-fiction reading and writing proficiency, teachers provide a balance of digital, print, primary sources, and hands-on critical thinking activities. The course incorporates an overview of current world events to understand the importance of being a global citizen. **Please note, there is no Pre-AP course offering in 6th grade social studies.

6th Grade Electives Course Offerings

Electives courses at Thunder Ridge Middle School are designed to complement the education of the middle school student. There are a wide variety of opportunities and at each grade level the students are given more freedom to choose which classes they would like to take to enrich their learning.

2D Art 6

This class is a great opportunity to explore a variety of painting, drawing and collage techniques. Students will learn many basic art skills and concepts and put those ideas to work in several different projects. If you like art, drawing or painting, this is an excellent introduction to art and will develop skills for future classes and experiences. (quarter)

3D Art 6

This is an introductory class familiarizing incoming sixth grade students to the 3D art room. They will be challenged to create works of art in three-dimensional space. Students will work with a variety of media including clay, paper mache, and wire. The focus will be learning to express themselves using a variety of media. (quarter)

Band 6

This course does not require any prior musical experience for students to be successful. Students will begin to develop facility on their instruments and the proper fundamentals required to be musically expressive and accurate. Band includes instruments from the woodwind, brass, and percussion families. Students with prior experience may audition for extracurricular ensembles, such as jazz band and wind ensemble. There will be at least two concerts per year in December and May. (year)

Computer Literacy 6 (REQUIRED)

Computer Literacy is a course designed to improve basic computer skills. Students will learn necessary keyboarding skills. The goal is to achieve mastery of typing skills to improve proficiency when using the computer. In addition, students will learn basic computer concepts and Internet safety. Students have the opportunity to test out of this course. (quarter)

Choir 6

This class explores all the different ways to use your voice. Students will learn how to sing in different styles as a group and learn the basics of reading music. As a culminating project at the end of the course, the choir performs a concert in the evening for family and friends. (semester)

French Introduction

French is an international language for communication spoken in France, Canada, 26 countries in Africa, and several island nations. Within the context of this course, students will explore the French language by learning basic skills needed to communicate. Students will learn introductory phrases, vocabulary, concepts and aspects of French culture. Some of the cultural exploration will include cooking French food and watching French film. These basics of French language and cultural awareness provide a foundation for future language acquisition. (quarter)

Indoor Physical Education 6

This course enhances the motor, intellectual, and social development of students through physical movement. Students will learn cooperation, team play, and sportsmanship through various activities including climbing, weight training, basketball, volleyball, polo, and team handball. Fitness components and wellness concepts are integrated into the activities. (quarter)

Orchestra 6

This yearlong course is open to students with previous experience and those who are new to playing violin, viola, cello, or string bass. We stress the development of string skills and musical expressions through a variety of music. Concerts are scheduled throughout the year including the CCSD Stringathon. (year)

Robotics 6

This course introduces students to the *LEGO MindStorms Education Systems* and the world of robotics. Students will design, build, and program a robot to move and turn with precision. Their robots will perform tasks to collect data for analysis. Be ready to explore how technology works, work in a team environment, and problem solve with robotics. (quarter)

Skills for Adolescence

This 6th grade health course teaches life skills applicable to practical real-world situations. Students will learn by participating in activities and skills that promote self-confidence, self-advocacy, and interpersonal techniques. Three units will be taught: study skills, life skills, and personal, home, and Internet safety. (quarter)

Spanish Introduction

Spanish is an international language for communication. It is one of the official languages of the United Nations and is the official language in 20 countries. Students will explore the Spanish language by learning basic skills needed to communicate. Students will learn introductory phrases, vocabulary, concepts and aspects of Hispanic culture. These basics of the Spanish language and cultural awareness provide a foundation for future language acquisition. (quarter)

Team Sports 6

This course enhances the motor, intellectual, and social development of students through physical movement. Students will learn cooperation, team play, and sportsmanship through various activities including soccer, flag football, track and field, lacrosse, softball, and an Olympics unit. Fitness components and wellness concepts are integrated into the activities as well. (quarter)

Theater Arts 6

Theater is fun! In this course, students will discover how exciting creativity can be. They will learn basic aspects of theater arts. Using the creative process, students will produce original pantomimes and acting scenes, gaining experience and confidence in performing. This experience will lead to enhanced presentation skills transferable to all academic areas. (quarter)

7th Grade

7th Grade Core Course Offerings

Math 7

Seventh grade students will build on their work with rational numbers and algebraic thinking from sixth grade as they move into deeper and more complex math concepts. Content will focus on four critical areas, including (1) developing understanding of and application of proportional relationships; (2) developing understanding of operations with rational numbers and working with expressions and linear equations; (3) solving problems involving geometric ideas of scale, area, surface area and volume with two- and three-dimensional shapes; and (4) drawing inferences about populations based on samples. These concepts will lay the foundation for the algebraic work with linear functions studied in eighth grade.

Math 7/8

Students who have successfully completed Math 6/7 continue in this two-year compacted course sequence preparing them for Algebra 1 in grade 8. Students will complete their study of Math 7 topics not covered in Math 6/7, including working with expressions and linear equations and the geometric study of two- and three-dimensional shapes. These concepts extend to the Math 8 topics of linear equations and the Pythagorean Theorem, respectively. The full content of Math 8 will be covered in this course. The compacted nature of the course will require students to be comfortable and proficient learning math at an accelerated pace.

7th Grade Language Arts

Students will read texts to determine central ideas or themes, compare/contrast, analyze author's point of view, and evaluate arguments made by others. They will express their thinking through argumentative, expository, and narrative writing. Written responses to literature will focus on using details from the text to support ideas. Students will use conventions of English to express their ideas concisely both in writing and in class discussion.

7th Grade Pre-AP Language Arts

This Pre-AP class is the same course of study as 7th Grade Language Arts with more rigorous discussion and an accelerated pace in reading and writing assignments. Students will manipulate writing conventions and standard format to achieve a high level of creativity. Students should be committed to independent reading both in school and at home. In addition to interest, students requesting this course should have a strong body of evidence in language arts, including teacher input, attendance, habits of mind, and PARCC/CMAS scores in the upper quadrant of "Meets" or "Exceeds" category in reading and writing.

7th Grade Science

Seventh grade science focuses on change over time in relation to the earth and life history. Specific topics of study include Earth History, Evolution, Properties of Matter (Basic Chemistry), and Climate. Throughout the school year, students will complete STEM oriented project based learning activities. Students are required to engage in critical thinking and arguing using scientific evidence both in discussion and in written form.

7th Grade Pre-AP Science

Pre-AP Science 7 has the same areas of focus and course of studies as 7th grade science (see above). Students in this course will have the opportunity to delve deeper into the 7th grade science curriculum. This course involves more rigorous discussion, more complex reading and writing, and more challenging assessments. Students in this course are expected to independently push themselves to take intellectual risks and to synthesize and effectively communicate complex ideas. Students should be committed to independent reading both in school and at home. In addition to interest, students requesting this course should have a strong body of evidence in science, including teacher input, attendance, habits of mind, and PARCC/CMAS scores in the upper quadrant of “Meets” or “Exceeds” category in reading, writing, and math.

7th Grade Social Studies

This is a geographically based course focused on eastern world history (Mesopotamia, ancient Egypt, Japan, Africa, India, Greece, Rome and China). The focus of academic content is connecting the lasting impact of ancient civilizations to the world today. The course incorporates an overview of current world events to compare and contrast past and present civilizations. Students examine these areas of study through the lenses of history, civics, economics, and geography.

7th Grade Pre-AP Social Studies

Pre-AP Social Studies 7 has the same area of focus and course of studies (see above). However, this course is designed to provide students with a greater depth of required content at an accelerated pace to enrich their knowledge of the ancient, medieval, and modern world. Students are expected to independently demonstrate effective communication, critical thinking, questioning, and evaluating their own learning in class. Strategies for rigorous practices include but are not limited to Socratic Seminars, writing DBQs (document-based question), and expanding on academic and historic vocabulary. In addition to interest, students requesting this course should have a strong body of evidence in social studies, including teacher input, attendance, habits of mind and PARCC/CMAS scores in the upper quadrant of “Meets” or “Exceeds” category in reading and writing.

7th Grade Electives Course Offerings

Electives courses at Thunder Ridge Middle School complement the education of the middle school student. There are wide varieties of opportunities. Students have the freedom to choose which classes they would like to take to enrich their learning.

Art 7 2D

Explore all types of 2-D media as well as significant art movements that have shaped art today. This class will help develop artistic skills and understand elements and principles of art. Students in this class understand how ideas, media materials, and elements work together to make great art. (quarter)

Art 7 3D

This class is an opportunity for students to develop their creative ideas on a larger three-dimensional scale. Students will develop a paper mache creature built in multiple stages using a variety of materials. Students work on character development and creating a truly original work of art. Students will also create functional ceramics. Throughout the projects, students will focus on weekly goal setting, problem solving, and understanding the different uses of media. (quarter)

Art Digital Art

Graphic design is everywhere! Learn to recognize and create cool design products. We will explore graphic imagery through elements of art and principles of design. In this digital art class, students will learn to use Adobe Creative products including Adobe Illustrator in creating digital art and design. We will incorporate a variety of graphic design concepts and activities while getting creative on the computer. (quarter)

Band 7

This class is open to any 7th grade student who plays a brass, woodwind, or percussion instrument. The focus will be to elaborate on instrument fundamentals and further develop musical expression. Students will study and perform a wide variety of musical styles. Most of the students in this class will have had at least one year 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 in December and May. (year)

Basics of Public Speaking

Are you afraid to speak in front of others? Do you love speaking to audiences or debating? This class will prepare you for high school and beyond. We will use interesting activities to build confidence and speaking skills. We will prepare and deliver several types of speeches culminating in an awards event for all. (quarter)

Choir 7

Choir 7 is open to all students who enjoy singing and want to become stronger and more confident. The 7th grade choir will have at least four required performances, one per quarter, as culminating events to show their growth. Each quarter, students have the opportunity to audition for solos and small ensemble parts. They will also develop their singing and music reading skills through special choral warm-ups and light-reading exercises. (year)

French A

This class introduces the French language by covering the basics of speaking, reading, writing and listening.

Students explore French culture through the exploration of art, music, film, theater, and cooking. Students will have the opportunity to explore many cultural activities throughout the year. Middle school world language classes place students on track for more advanced opportunities in high school language courses. (year)

Indoor Physical Education 7

This course enhances the motor, intellectual, and social development of students through physical movement. Students will learn cooperation, team play, and sportsmanship through various activities including climbing, weight training, basketball, volleyball, polo and team handball. Activities integrate fitness components and wellness concepts. (quarter)

Orchestra 7

This course is open to students playing violin, viola, cello or string bass. Beginners are welcome. Instruction will focus on intermediate playing skills such as shifting and vibrato through a variety of music. Concerts are scheduled throughout the year and include participation in the CCSD Stringathon. Attendance is required at these performances. A limited number of instruments are available to rent from the school. Orchestra is open to pianists with at least three years of experience. Pianists must currently be taking private lessons. (year)

Robotics 7

This course introduces students to the LEGO MindStorms Education Systems and the world of robotics. Students will design and build a robot and program it to move and turn with precision. Robots will use a variety of sensors to “see” the world around them and respond accordingly to their environment. Be ready to explore how technology works, work in a team environment, and problem solve with robotics. (quarter)

Spanish A

This class introduces the Spanish language. Students will learn the basics of speaking, reading, writing, and listening. Students explore Spanish culture through art, music, film, theater, and cooking. Middle School World Language classes place students on track for more advanced opportunities in high school language courses. (year)

Team Sports 7 (Highly Recommended)

This course enhances the motor, intellectual, and social development of students through physical movement. Students will learn cooperation, team play, and sportsmanship through various activities including soccer, flag football, track and field, lacrosse, softball, and an Olympics unit. Activities integrate fitness components and wellness concepts. (quarter)

Tech Engineering Our World

In this course, students will explore a multidisciplinary approach to solving real-world problems. Students will use the engineering design process to come up with creative solutions. This course will integrate science, technology, engineering, art, and math (STEAM). (quarter)

Tech Design and Engineering

This course focus is on computer programming skills. Students will be introduced to the programming mindset with drag-and-drop programs. Then students will advance to computer programming languages such as Python, HTML, or Java. (quarter)

Tech Design and Engineering 2

The focus of this course is computer-programming skills. Students will use advanced computer programming languages. Those students who have completed the first Tech Design and Engineering course will be able to create advanced projects, adding to their skill set in computer programming languages such as Python or Java. Students who have not taken part one can complete that in this course. It is open to students at all levels. (quarter)

Tech Entrepreneurs for the 21st Century

In this class, students will explore various ways to use technology to present information. Students will participate in a real-world sports marketing simulation, allowing them to learn and use the features of the Microsoft Office Suite. Elements of introductory graphic design allow students to develop logos for their team. (quarter)

Teen Topics

This 7th grade health course teaches students the content and skills that apply to real-world situations. This course emphasizes the following topics: stress management, nutrition, first aid, drug education, personal safety, and human growth and development. (quarter)

Theater Arts 7

This course emphasizes the fundamental skills students need to become improvisational actors and use those skills in scripted scenes. Through practicing basic theater skills such as movement, voice and imagination, students will learn to become more confident in their performing abilities. Students will work together to create scenes from well-known literature and original skits. Students of all abilities are encouraged to take this course. (quarter)

8th Grade

8th Grade Core Course Offerings

Math 8

Students begin a serious study of algebra with the learning of linear functions. The focus shifts from the study of numbers to the abstract application of understanding arithmetic. The content will focus on three critical areas including: (1) formulating and reasoning about expressions and equations, including modeling bivariate data with a linear equation, solving linear equations, and working with systems of linear equations; (2) developing and understanding of the concept of a function, and using functions to describe quantitative relationships; and (3) analyzing two- and three-dimensional space and figures using distance, angle, similarity, and congruence, and understanding an applying the Pythagorean Theorem. This work will lay the foundation for the success in a high school Algebra 1 course.

Algebra 1

Algebra 1 formalizes and extends the mathematics that students learned in Math 6, 7, and 8. The major components of study include: (1) using equations and inequalities to model real-life quantities and manipulating them to highlight quantities of interest while focusing on the underlying structures of equations and inequalities; (2) understanding of the concept of a function, the use of function notations, and the structures of exponential functions and how they compare and contrast with linear functions; (3) working with quadratic functions through a structural perspective and in comparison to linear and exponential functions. These concepts lay the foundations for analytic geometry subsequent geometry courses, and for study with different function types in algebra 2 and other advanced math courses. This course is equivalent to the Algebra 1 course taught at CCSD high schools. Students who have successfully completed Math 7/8 are eligible for this class. Due to the content of this class, TI-84 Plus or TI-Nspire graphing calculators are used regularly and it is helpful if students have their own.

8th Grade Language Arts

Students will examine, through thematic units, a range of literary and artistic expression by analyzing fictional and nonfictional texts for the purpose of writing narrative, informational, and argumentative texts. Students will also identify elements of literature, read to compare/contrast works, improve their oral communication skills, and analyze informational materials for relevance and accuracy. Students will grow to recognize the interdependence of oral language, literature, and written language in a context of social and cultural expression.

8th Grade Pre-AP Language Arts

This Pre-AP class is the same course of study as the 8th Grade Language Arts class with an accelerated pace in reading and writing assignments. Students will interact with texts of greater complexity as well as learn advanced essay writing skills. Independence and self-initiative are expected for this class. Students requesting this course should have a strong body of evidence in language arts, including teacher input, attendance, habits of mind and PARCC/CMAS scores in the upper quadrant of "Meets" or "Exceeds" category in reading and writing, as well as, student interest.

8th Grade Science

The focus of this course is the theme of energy. Topics include forms of energy and energy transformation, matter and chemical reactions, waves (sound, seismic, ocean, and electromagnetic), force and motion, weather, genetics, and Earth, Moon & Sun relationships. Throughout the school year, students will complete STEM oriented project based learning activities and are required to engage in critical thinking and arguing from evidence, both through speech and in written form.

8th Grade Pre-AP Science

Pre-AP Science has the same area of focus and topics as 8th grade science (see above). This course involves discussion that is more rigorous and more complex reading and writing as well as more challenging assessments. Students in this course are expected to take intellectual risks and synthesize and effectively communicate complex ideas. Students requesting this course should have a strong body of evidence in science, including teacher input, attendance, habits of mind and PARCC/CMAS scores in the upper quadrant of “Meets” or “Exceeds” category in reading, writing, and math, as well as, student interest.

8th Grade Social Studies

This is a United States history and government class. The curriculum covers the history of the U.S. from the American Revolution through the Reconstruction period. Primary documents from our nation’s history, such as the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights, are analyzed. Curriculum also includes American geography, personal financial literacy and economics. Current events, Socratic seminars and discussions of public issues are included.

8th Grade Pre-AP Social Studies

This course is designed to instruct students in a wider range of required content to prepare them for rigorous academic work in high school social studies. This class covers content and practical knowledge of U.S. history; practice in critical thinking skills; analysis of primary documents; and experience in communicating effectively. The curriculum includes American Geography, Personal Financial Literacy and Economics. Students should be prepared to participate daily in class through pre-class assignments, readings, and should invest additional time for independent preparatory background knowledge. Students requesting this course should have a strong body of evidence in social studies, including teacher input, attendance, habits of mind and PARCC/CMAS scores in the upper quadrant of “Meets” or “Exceeds” category in reading and writing, as well as, student interest.

8th Grade Electives Course Offerings

Electives courses at Thunder Ridge Middle School are designed to complement the education of the middle school student. There are a wide variety of opportunities and at each grade level the students are given more freedom to choose which classes they would like to take to enrich their learning.

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. This class can be taken alone or as an addition to Art Mixed Media. (quarter)

Art Digital Photography

Photography is about learning to look at the world around you through a camera. This course is an introduction to the purpose and process of taking photos. 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 evaluate a photograph, as well as learning and applying what makes a great photo. The skills and concepts learned in this class can be applied to all of your photography now and in the future. (quarter)

Art Mixed Media

In this class, students will take their creative ideas and skills and apply them to both two- and three-dimensional projects. Projects may include pen and ink on paper, plaster masks, paper mache sculpture, large graffiti relief sculpture, and other multimedia projects. (quarter)

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. Since this is a yearlong class, *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. Students will also develop their singing and music reading skills through special choral warm-ups and sight-reading exercises. Choir involvement in 7th grade is preferred but not required. (year)

Drawing

Drawing is the foundation for all types of artwork. Students will learn tips, tricks, and skills for drawing. The course will cover the major technical aspects of fine art drawing including: figure and face, shading and texture, perspective and grid. This class is for students interested in developing the skills to make their art more advanced and realistic. These skills can carry over into painting, sculpture, pottery, and any creative media; these are the basic building blocks for becoming a great artist in high school and beyond. (quarter)

French B

French B is for students who have completed French A. This course continues the development of speaking, reading, writing and listening skills from French A. Students are required to speak more in class and work towards the mastery of present tense. They also learn to communicate using the past and future tenses. *Students taking this course must have the approval of the French A teacher. Middle school world language does not count as a high school world language credit:* It does however put students on track for more advanced opportunities in language courses. (year)

Guitar 1

This 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. (quarter)

Health (Highly Recommended)

This 8th grade health course teaches students the content and skills that apply to real-world situations. This course includes the following units: mental and emotional health (self-esteem, eating disorders, depression, and suicide prevention), communication empathy and conflict resolution, sexuality education, personal safety, social aggression and violence prevention, drug education (marijuana, alcohol, exstasy, GHB, and other drugs). (quarter)

Indoor Physical Education 8 (Highly Recommended)

This course enhances the motor, intellectual, and social development of students through physical movement. Students will learn cooperation, team play, and sportsmanship through various activities including climbing wall, weight training, basketball, volleyball, polo, and team handball. Fitness components and wellness concepts are integrated into the activities. (quarter)

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, students will have the chance to compose music with 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.

Orchestra 8

This 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 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)

Team Sports 8 (Highly Recommended)

This course enhances the motor, intellectual, and social development of students through physical movement. Students will learn cooperation, team play, and sportsmanship through various activities including soccer, flag football, track and field, lacrosse, softball, and an Olympics unit. Fitness components and wellness concepts are integrated into the activities. (quarter)

Physical Education: Strength and Fitness

This class will be primarily in the weight room. Students will learn the importance of being physically fit and will use circuit training, cardiovascular exercises/equipment, and weight training to increase their fitness levels. Students will be taught exercises that can be performed with little or no weight at relatively high repetitions. Students will also create individual fitness programs/routines to meet their fitness goals. Cardiovascular equipment, weight training machines, and free weights will be used in this course. (quarter)

Robotics Engineering I

This course uses Lego EV3 Education Systems. Students will design and build a robot and program it to solve various challenges. Robots will use a variety of sensors to complete difficult tasks. Be ready to explore how technology works, to work in a team environment, and problem solve with robotics. (quarter)

Robotics Engineering II

Are you interested in another course in Robotics in 8th grade? This advanced course is project based. Students will explore different missions and projects through robotics. Students will be working in groups to complete difficult challenges using project based learning. (quarter)

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 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)

Tech WEB Graphics and Design

In this course, students will use HTML and CSS to code webpages from scratch. Students may also have the opportunity to learn to use Adobe Dreamweaver to design webpages. This course will help to prepare students for computer courses in high school. (quarter)

Tech Computer Animation

This course introduces students to skills in design and animation. Students will learn the basic functionalities of software programs that will enable them to design 2-dimensional objects and animate them on the computer. By the end of the course students will have a strong understanding of computer animation techniques and will have the skills to create a short animated story. (quarter)

Theatre Arts 8

In this course, students will experience a wide range of exciting activities that 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. (quarter)

Theatre Productions

This class is for students who enjoy performing plays for an audience. *It is highly recommended that students have had at least one other theatre class or have been in one of our after-school plays prior to taking this class.* The class will focus on creating or choosing a short play to produce. We will learn acting and backstage roles to make it an exciting success. This will culminate in a performance for students and families. (quarter)

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)