Seventh Grade Courses

English 7 = 07 ENG

English 7 is a course that focuses on reading and writing skills. Students read four novels, a variety of short stories, and some non-fiction articles. They study vocabulary and grammar in conjunction with these literary works. Grammar lessons are taught utilizing new digital tools and more traditional methods. During this course, students learn to write descriptive and expository essays in the traditional five-paragraph format, as well as writing many shorter pieces including poems. The writing revision process focuses on sentence fluency, writing sentences of various lengths and structures in order to create more sophistication in their language and gain better control of their writing voice.

Civics 7 = 07 CIV

Civics is the study of citizenship and government. This course provides students with a basic understanding of civic life, politics, and government, and a short history of the government's foundation and development in this country. Students learn how power and responsibility are shared and limited by the government, the impact American politics has on world affairs, the place of law in the American constitutional system, and which rights the American government guarantees its citizens. Students also examine how the world is organized politically and how civic participation in the American political system compares to that in other societies around the world today.

There are 3 levels of math offered to 7th graders with placement by teacher recommendation

Math 7 = 07 MTH

Math 7 will focus on:

- developing problem-solving skills and strategies
- evaluating and simplifying algebraic expressions
- solving algebraic equations
- using proportional reasoning
- finding volumes and surface areas of cones, cylinders and spheres
- graphing data sets and analyzing statistical sampling methods
- identifying events, outcomes and sample spaces

Instruction will be highly focused and involve concrete experiences at all levels. Students will be challenged to solve difficult problems, requiring them to apply their math skills in novel ways. Problem solving and application are well balanced with skill development as basic skills fundamental are emphasized throughout the curriculum. This curriculum will prepare our students for Algebra when they are ready to take it.

Pre-Algebra = PALG

Pre-Algebra serves as a bridge between elementary mathematics and Algebra. This course will build a foundation of algebraic concepts through the use of technology, manipulatives, problem solving, and cooperative learning. Students will explore arithmetic operations, number systems and properties, measurement, geometry, and a detailed introduction to algebraic thinking and concepts.

Algebra I = Alg I

Algebra is a branch of mathematics that involves substituting letters for numbers. Algebra 1 introduces students to variables, algebraic expressions, equations, functions, inequalities, and their multiple representations. Algebra is concerned with finding the unknown, or putting real life situations into equations and then solving them. Algebra students will simplify and evaluate expressions, investigate functions, and solve and graph equations. This course lays the foundation for every subsequent course in mathematics. Success in Algebra I must be encouraged and emphasized since it is an accurate indicator of future success in further fields of mathematics.

Earth Science 7 = 07 SCI

This course will expose the students to an in-depth study of the major branches of earth science: geology, meteorology, and oceanography. Some astronomy with also be included as time allows (Please see the overview for details.) The instructional time is a blend of lecture, activities, discussion, and demonstrations focused on developing good study and note taking skills in addition to science content acquisition. The course is designed to give students an appreciation of the relevance of earth science in their lives and an understanding of the processes that shape our physical world.

World Language Wheel

Exploratory foreign language classes are offered to 6th and 7th-grade students as part of the World Language Wheel. These are semester-long classes that are meant to give students a glimpse of a structured language-learning experience. Students will choose two classes to complete throughout the year (one each semester), and their experiences in these classes will help them weigh their options as they choose a language to study in high school. Teachers will employ comprehensible input (CI) techniques, which allow for interactive lessons on culture, grammatical concepts, and useful vocabulary.

Language choices:

Exploratory French	Exploratory German	Exploratory Linguistics	Exploratory Spanish
= EXP FR	= EXP German	= EXP Ling	= EXP SPAN

Introductory Language option

Our introductory language program exist to both introduce students to language study and to transition students from classes solely based on comprehensible input (in LS and 6th grade) to a more structured understanding and use of the chosen language. The main goal of the class is to build a strong basis for language study in future years at TA. As such, the class aims to instill productive language study skills, while introducing and employing common vocabulary and basic grammar concepts. Teachers also hope to encourage an understanding of and appreciation for other cultures around the world. With the understanding that ample mistakes will be made during the learning process, emphasis is placed on daily usage of the language as students move towards higher levels of proficiency in reading, writing, listening, and speaking. For this reason, participation is sometimes prized over accuracy. When students complete the introductory level, they will likely have reached at least a novice-mid proficiency level. In order to track proficiency progress, introductory level students participate in writing and speaking benchmark assessments throughout the year.

Language choices:

Introductory French	Introductory German	Introductory Spanish
= Intro FR	= Intro GER	= Intro SPAN

German for Native speakers (7th Gr.) = 07 GER

This course is congruent with the German High School curriculum (Gymnasium) Grade 7 and is taught to German native speakers. Generally, the course furthers students' ability to think, read, and write (critically) in their native language. Basic literary theory is taught referring to the books and within the social and historical context of each piece. Throughout the year, students learn to compose a step by step summary. The 7th-grade approach towards language is designed to be normative and includes developing personal strategies for correct spelling, punctuation, grammar, and syntax. However, an introduction toward a more descriptive approach is encouraged through critical analysis of the language register. Course materials include three youth novels, as well as a text and workbook. Assessments include written tests, summaries, presentations, and participation.

French II (German) = GRM FR L2

French 2 is a course offered to German 7th or 8th graders who took and passed French 1 in the 6th or 7th grade. As such, this is a blended course that moves quickly through a review of level-one material before covering new topics. For all students, this class is a continuation of language study.

The major goal in this class is to help students increase their proficiency in listening comprehension, speaking, reading and writing attained in French 1, while also encouraging their cultural awareness. Foreign language acquisition is a cumulative process. Students need to build on past information and knowledge in order to progress. French 2 directly corresponds with and builds on the material learned in French 1. Care is taken to use the target language as much as possible, and students are encouraged to practice their skills daily. By the end of the year, students should be able to communicate effectively using spoken and written French in multiple tenses, to understand moderately complex French texts and conversations, and to have an appreciation for the French-speaking world and its culture. Upon completion of French 2, students will likely have reached at least an intermediate-low or intermediate-mid proficiency level. In order to track proficiency progress, Level 2 students participate in writing and speaking benchmark assessments throughout the year.

Computer 7 = 07 Comp

This course teaches the basic Microsoft Office products, digital design, coding and typing. When completing Mircosoft Office-driven projects, students utilize research skills and design skills to engage with real life situations, such as balancing a bank account using Excel formulas. Students utilize Code Combat for weekly coding exercises which includes binary, block, HTML, Javascript and Python coding languages. When coding, students learn to problem solve, develop resilience, and think and expand their creativity. Students will also explore app development, web page design/development, 3D printing, virtual and augmented reality where they can explore how different applications work in concert. Digital citizenship is also taught throughout the course to educate students in navigating their digital world.

Electives (7th & 8th) grade

Visual Arts = MS Art

This course covers a sequential development of different types of art, such as drawing, painting, and sculpture, with an emphasis on realism. An emphasis is placed on more in-depth individual and independent investigations of the art elements, the principles of design, the different types of art, and the process of creation. The students will explore in their artwork a sequential development of the subjects of art. Art Subjects that will be explored and the elements of art, include: Still Life (geometric shapes, straight lines, value), Portrait (curve lines, shapes) Figure Drawing (geometric shapes, value) Landscape (organic shapes, space) Three -dimensional art (three-dimensional forms), Architectural Exterior Perspective/3-D buildings, and independent (students personal subject choice).The student will able to incorporate their vision of real-world details in each artwork. Upon completion, students should be able to communicate a complete knowledge of drawing. The student will learn about: the art elements, the principles of design, descriptive analysis, critiquing process, effective art terminology, the creative process, use of technology in art creation, and the importance of art in relationship to the creative arts.

Cover-to-cover = MS C to C

This elective class is designed for students who love books and love to read. Cover-to-cover will include a book sharing time and book projects. Additionally, students will help make our library inviting, creative, and a happy place to be. You will help promote a 'love for reading' throughout the school.

Debate = MS Debate

The Debate Team is an academically challenging opportunity for students to explore current issues while developing presentation and public speaking skills. Students will work on research skills, writing skills and leadership skills. This team provides a co-curricular aspect in which students truly consider factual, logical and moral stances in which they have a voice. The goal of this team is to become confident, well-rounded speakers and possibly compete against other debate teams.

Design Thinking = MS Design

Students in this elective will explore creative ways to make their world a better place. Principles of design thinking will be utilized to craft hands-on projects for the betterment of the community. Students will examine the needs in our society and explore concepts of upcycling.*

(*Upcycling, also known as creative reuse, is the process of transforming by-products, waste materials, useless, or unwanted products into new materials or products of better quality or for better environmental value. Upcycling is the opposite of downcycling, which is the other half of the recycling process. -Wikipedia)

Digital Photography = MS Photo 7/8

The digital photography elective is designed for students who like playing with photography filters and enjoy crafting narratives. Students will explore the skills of framing a picture, exploring the effect of light, and emphasizing a macro perspective. Additionally, students will study the works of famous photographers, mimicking a wide array of photographic styles. The course will emphasize production and curation of student work. School-wide competitions of all kinds of art will be encouraged, as well as the use of digital tools to enhance our community.

Digital Storytelling = MS Story

Storytelling exists in human cultures throughout time. A powerful story can motivate, entertain, guide, or persuade others. In this elective, students will explore components of compelling narratives, using innovative Web 2.0 tools. Past projects have included green screen use, stop motion animation, cartoon creation and movie reenactments.

Environmental Issues = MS Env Iss

Environmental Issues is an elective class for middle school students who value the importance of a healthy environment. Students will brainstorm ways to conserve resources, reduce waste, and minimize pollution. They will implement some of their ideas through projects and student education. Students will collect recycling for the middle and upper school.

Physical Education = MS PE

Physical Education 7 teaches health skills, demonstrates various physical fitness levels, movement patterns, body awareness and sport skills. Upon completion of the course, students should be able to demonstrate correct form for each sport and movement pattern while also combining different movements with sports at different speeds. Students should also be able to provide accuracy and power in each sport skill, Identify and describe benefits to being physically active, compare and contrast an active and sedentary lifestyle, plan their own workout, track and record their heart rate, as well as, identify and understand strategies related to games and sports.

Robotics = MS Robot

This is a beginning course in robotics. We will be utilizing Lego Mindstorm kits, Lego Commander App and various Lego Robotics materials. The objective of this course is to introduce the student to basic programming as well as problem solving strategies. This course will involve students in the development, building and programming of a LEGO Mindstorm robot. Students will work hands-on in teams to design, build, program and document their progress. Topics may include motor control, gear ratios, torque, friction, sensors, timing, program loops, logic gates, decision-making, timing sequences, propulsion systems and binary number systems. Student designed robots will be programmed to compete in various courses as developed by me.Design, build, program and test robots that can complete complex tasks, record live data, respond to environmental changes and more. LEGO MINDSTORMS helps bring technology, science and computer programming to life with hands-on, project-based STEM learning using best-in-class robotics solutions.

Strength & Conditioning = MS Str-B (boys**) and MS Str-G (**girls**)**

An intensive course designed to teach students techniques designed to enhance flexibility, speed, agility, reaction time, and aerobic endurance. The weight training portion of the course is geared more toward proper technique than significant increases in strength and power.

Strings (grade 5 -8) = MS STRINGS

Join a small ensemble of students playing strings instruments in the middle and upper school. While most students play the violin, we also include students who play the cello, viola, harp, and other strings students. This elective typically meets twice a week in place of another elective class. We have students of all abilities in our ensemble, and while we accept students to their instrument, we do expect you to practice at home outside of class, and true beginners will likely need additional lessons to catch up.

Rock Music Production = MS Rock Bnd

Rock Music Production: Interested in rock music or in the ways music is produced? Join this class to explore the origins of rock and roll, many of its various subgenres, and to create all kinds of music through the use of instruments and music-making technology.

Theatre = MS Drama

The advanced level of middle school theatre, this course builds upon the previous courses to produce a final, middle-school-only performance. Students in this elective will learn physical and vocal presentation techniques and develop a basic knowledge of theatre arts. They can also become eligible to compete in the AISA Drama competition for solo acting, duet acting, musical drama, and ensemble performance. The course will focus on an overview of production concepts, including auditions, script analysis, rehearsal, production design, costuming, and culminate in a final performance of a one-act play.