

# Course Descriptions

## 2023-2024



The School District of Fort Atkinson does not discriminate against students on the basis of sex, race, religion, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital or parental status, sexual orientation, physical, mental, emotional, learning disability or handicap in the education programs or activities. Federal law prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of age, race, color, national origin, sex, religion, or handicap.

**GRADE 6****\*\*ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS 6**

English Language Arts 6 is a required core academic course that meets for two periods daily implementing a curriculum aligned to the Common Core English Language Arts Standards. Language Arts is an integrated discipline in which reading, writing, listening, speaking and language skills are developed within a reading and writing workshop approach allowing students to learn independently and collaboratively. Throughout the year, students will be challenged to increase their proficiency within these disciplines through reading and analyzing complex texts in a variety of genres, utilizing the writing process to research and produce narrative, informative, and argumentative texts, participating in listening and speaking experiences, acquiring and applying English language conventions knowledge, and learning and using vocabulary-solving strategies. Technology is integrated into instruction on a regular basis to both engage learners and enhance 21st century skills.

Because English Language Arts instruction builds an understanding of the human experience through critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, collaboration, and creativity, the curriculum is delivered through a thematic approach centered on a quarterly theme to provide a common context for learning grounded in the exploration of essential questions driven by inquiry to acquire deeper meaning and understanding of content and literacy skills. Grade 6 quarterly themes are empowerment, connections, discovery, and triumph.

**\*\*MATHEMATICS 6**

Math 6 is a required core academic course that meets for two periods daily. Wisconsin State Math Standards, which align to National Common Core Math Standards for content and math practices are the focus of instruction. In sixth grade, these standards cover: ratio concepts and reasoning with ratios and rates, division of fractions, the standard long division algorithm, operations with decimals, common factors and multiples, rational numbers, algebraic expressions, equations and inequalities, area, surface area and volume, and understanding and use of statistics.

Math concepts at every grade level are taught with a focus on the common core eight mathematical practices. The common core math practice standards describe a set of student behaviors that, when developed over time ensure a deep understanding of math concepts. These standards focus on developing reasoning and building mathematical communication skills in students, critical 21st century skills. The eight mathematical practices are: 1.) Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them, 3.) Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others, 4.) Model with mathematics, 5.) Use appropriate tools strategically, 6.) Attend to precision, 7.) Look for and make use of structure, and 8.) Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning.

For more information on Wisconsin DPI's vision for math instruction, Wisconsin Math Standards, and the eight mathematical practice standards, please visit:

<https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/standards/pdf/math-standards.pdf>

**\*\*SOCIAL STUDIES 6 – A HISTORY OF THE WORLD**

Through the sixth grade world history course students will see how they are connected to the world, both past and present. Students will learn how all cultures change due to technology, interactions with others and the development of new ideas. This course will also provide the background knowledge for the seventh grade U.S. history course.

**\*\*SCIENCE 6**

Science is a required course that meets every day during the school year . It is an activity-based course that is centered on the concepts of science and process of scientific inquiry.

**\*\*HEALTH 6**

This course meets every other day opposite physical education classes. It is designed to help provide students with the knowledge to make decisions leading to a healthy, productive life. Major units are mental health, drug education, exercise and nutrition, and diseases.

**\*\*PHYSICAL EDUCATION 6**

Physical education is a required course that meets every other day. Units include adventure education, soccer, basketball, volleyball, fitness, swim, archery, handball, biking and rollerblading.

**\*\*ART 6 EXPLORATION- REQUIRED**

This is the art class that all of our 6th graders get to take. Experiences in drawing and design, clay, paint, and other materials will lay the foundation for our artists who are on their way to becoming better craftspeople, designers, creative thinkers, and problem solvers. This class meets every other day and lasts 1 semester.

**BAND 6**

The 6th grade band course is open to students who have previous band experience, and students with no previous experience need the permission of the instructor to enroll. Students will be required to participate in three concerts, the Performing Arts Festival (small groups & solos), and attend occasional small group lessons. There may be optional extra curricular opportunities such as jazz ensemble as well.

In 6th grade band, students will develop fundamental performance skills and embark on a lifelong exploration of music and musicianship. Students will also discover and apply the artistic elements of music through interpretive and expressive playing. Tone quality and reading skills will be stressed along with leadership, teamwork, and character building will also be emphasized in this course.

**CHOIR 6**

Sixth grade choir is open to all 6th graders who have a love for singing. In this course choir students will sing a wide variety of music. There will be an emphasis on learning to read music, singing harmony, and focusing on how to use our changing voices.

Each of our middle school choirs is expected to perform in a choral concert for the public once each quarter. The middle school choirs also participate in several vocal choral contests in the area.

**ORCHESTRA 6**

Sixth grade orchestra is open to students new to orchestra and students who have previous experience with 5th grade orchestra. 6th grade Orchestra class combines all instrument groups every day, as a large group setting of violin, viola, cello and bass players. In 6th grade Orchestra, students will be required to participate in three concerts, the Performing Arts Festival (small groups & solos) and attend occasional small group lessons.

The primary focus of 6th grade orchestra is the development and expansion of basic skills.. Topics covered in orchestra include: tone development and bowing technique; counting, timing, and rhythmic development; reading and notation skills; sight reading; scales and simple music theory; composing and conducting; development of an extensive vocabulary of musical terms and symbols; ear training and listening skills; equipment care and maintenance; and effective practice habits. Orchestra is a great opportunity for students to gain leadership and teamwork skills.

**GENERAL MUSIC 6***(required of students who do not choose another music course)*

This course is designed to give 6th graders a wide variety of experiences that will help them understand, appreciate, and enjoy music. Students will learn how to play the guitar or piano in a unit that teaches the basic skills. There are also units in music theory and music technology.

**PHYSICAL EDUCATION 6 - FIT FOR LIFE**

This course meets every other day for a semester. This elective course is offered in addition to the 6th grade Physical Education requirement and is recommended for anyone committed to becoming healthy and fit. A variety of personal and group fitness activities designed to improve your strength, quickness, endurance, flexibility, and agility will be incorporated into each daily lesson. The class will focus on improving your overall fitness, establishing healthy habits to last a lifetime, and help you to become “fit for life.”

**STEM 6**

This course is still being developed and will be impacted by the program selected and will include new learning experiences, while still enjoying traditional components of our previous programming including across the course sequence:

- Experiencing engineering and manufacturing processes
- Designing and building models
- Introduction to Robotics
- Understanding and controlling various power sources
- Introduction to Computer Aided Design (CAD)
- Construction with various materials (wood, metal, etc.) and associated tools including 3D printing
- Machine and tool safety

**COMPUTER EXPLORATIONS 6**

This offering is designed to help students master the touch operation of the keyboard and learn basic computer parts and their significance in the operation of the computer. This will include basic

computer terminology, how technology is used in society, and online safety as well as introduction to artificial intelligence. Students will use a variety of programs like Google tools to produce projects with these concepts.

### **ART 6 ELECTIVE**

This class goes beyond Art 6 Exploratory and is highly recommended for all students interested in visual arts. It provides an extra semester of art in addition to the required Art 6 Exploratory course. Units in digital art, clay, sculpture, drawing, painting, and more will give artists the opportunity to expand their creative thinking skills, and experiment with materials in new ways. This class meets every other day and lasts 1 semester.

## **GRADE 7**

### **\*\*ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS 7**

English Language Arts 7 is a required core academic course that meets for two periods daily implementing a curriculum aligned to the Common Core English Language Arts Standards. Language Arts is an integrated discipline in which reading, writing, listening, speaking and language skills are developed within a reading and writing workshop approach allowing students to learn independently and collaboratively. Throughout the year, students will be challenged to increase their proficiency within these disciplines through reading and analyzing complex texts in a variety of genres, utilizing the writing process to research and produce narrative, informative, and argumentative texts, participating in listening and speaking experiences, acquiring and applying English language conventions knowledge, and learning and using vocabulary-solving strategies. Technology is integrated into instruction on a regular basis to both engage learners and enhance 21st century skills.

Because English Language Arts instruction builds an understanding of the human experience through critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, collaboration, and creativity, the curriculum is delivered through a thematic approach centered on a quarterly theme to provide a common context for learning grounded in the exploration of essential questions driven by inquiry to acquire deeper meaning and understanding of content and literacy skills. Grade 7 quarterly themes include identity, loyalty, preservation/conservation, and perseverance.

### **\*\*MATHEMATICS 7**

Math 7 is a required core academic course that meets for two periods daily. Wisconsin State Math Standards, which align to National Common Core Math Standards for content and math practices are the focus of instruction. In seventh grade, these standards cover: using proportional relationships to solve real world mathematical problems, operations with rational numbers, using properties of operations to generate equivalent expressions and solve equations in one variable, constructing and comparing geometrical figures, solving real world mathematical problems involving angle, measure, surface area and volume, and working with probability using sample populations. Concepts are taught with a focus on the eight mathematical practices.

Math concepts at every grade level are taught with a focus on the common core eight mathematical practices. The common core math practice standards describe a set of student behaviors that, when developed over time ensure a deep understanding of math concepts. These standards focus on developing reasoning and building mathematical communication skills in students, critical 21st century skills. The eight mathematical practices are: 1.) Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them, 2.) Reason abstractly and quantitatively, 3.) Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others, 4.) Model with mathematics, 5.) Use appropriate tools strategically, 6.) Attend to precision, 7.) Look for and make use of structure, and 8.) Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning.

For more information on Wisconsin DPI's vision for math instruction, Wisconsin Math Standards, and the eight mathematical practice standards, please visit:

<https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/standards/pdf/math-standards.pdf>

### **\*\*SCIENCE 7**

Science is a required course that meets every day during the school year. It is an activity-based course that is centered on the objectives of teaching the concepts of science, and process of scientific inquiry.

### **\*\*SOCIAL STUDIES 7- U.S. HISTORY**

Social Studies is a required 7th grade course that meets every day during the school year. It is a mix between traditional and inquiry based learning, covering topics that stretch from the discovery of the New World through WWI.

### **\*\*PHYSICAL EDUCATION 7**

Physical education is a required course, which meets every other day. Units include speedball, softball, swimming, volleyball, pickleball, rollerblading, biking, and fitness training.

### **\*\*HEALTH 7**

This course meets every other day opposite physical education class. It is designed to help provide students with the knowledge to make decisions leading to a healthy, productive life. Major units may include human growth and development, wellness, nutrition, mental health, drug and alcohol education, body systems, and diseases.

### **BAND 7**

Seventh grade band is open to students who have previous band experience, and students with no previous experience need the permission of the instructor to enroll. Students will be required to participate in four concerts, the Performing Arts Festival (small groups & solos) and attend occasional small group lessons. There will be optional extra curricular opportunities such as jazz ensemble as well.

In 7th grade band, students will continue to develop fundamental performance skills and embark on a lifelong exploration of music and musicianship. Tone quality and reading skills will be stressed.

Students will also discover and apply the artistic elements of music through interpretive and expressive playing. Leadership, teamwork, and character building are also emphasized.

### **CHOIR 7**

Seventh grade choir is open to all 7th graders who have a love for music and singing. In this course students will sing a wide variety of music. Choir students will concentrate on learning to read music and on singing three part harmonies. Frequently we explore the vocal development of tenor and/or baritone parts as the boys' voices change.

Much of our focus will be on how to use our maturing and changing voices. Students are expected to do their very best in class and to attend two lessons per quarter. Each of our three middle school choirs are expected to perform in a choral concert for the public once each quarter. In addition, the middle school choirs participate in several vocal choral contests in the area.

### **ORCHESTRA 7**

Seventh grade orchestra is open to students new to orchestra and students who have previous orchestra experience. In seventh grade orchestra, students will be required to participate in three concerts, the Performing Arts Festival (small groups & solos) and attend occasional small group lessons.

Seventh grade orchestra provides students with learning and performance opportunities on violin, viola, cello, and bass. Students will develop fundamental performance skills and an exploration of music that will last a lifetime. Topics covered in orchestra include: tone development and bowing technique; counting, timing, and rhythmic development; reading and notation skills; sight reading; scales and simple music theory; composing and conducting; development of an extensive vocabulary of musical terms and symbols; ear training and listening skills; equipment care and maintenance; and effective practice habits. Orchestra is a great opportunity for students to gain leadership and teamwork skills.

### **STEM 7**

This course is still being developed and will be impacted by the program selected and will include new learning experiences, while still enjoying traditional components of our previous programming including across the course sequence:

- Experiencing engineering and manufacturing processes
- Designing and building models
- Introduction to Robotics
- Understanding and controlling various power sources
- Introduction to Computer Aided Design (CAD)
- Construction with various materials (wood, metal, etc.) and associated tools including 3D printing
- Machine and tool safety

### **INTRODUCTION TO I.T. (INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY)**

This course is designed to acquaint students with the role of computers in our society. It will help

students become efficient in their use of technology tools and learn basic computer knowledge of hardware, software, internet basics along with digital citizenship skills and keyboarding skills. Students will look at the history-present-future of technology and be introduced to basic business concepts. Students will use a variety of programs like Google tools to produce projects with these concepts.

### **SPANISH 7**

Spanish 7 is an elective course that meets every other day for the entire year and is open to all students. This course exposes students to the basics of the Spanish language. Topics include greetings, alphabet, numbers, colors, calendar, the classroom, etc.. Students will learn about the culture of the twenty-one Spanish speaking countries. This course is highly recommended for students who plan to take Spanish I in 8th grade.

### **ART 7 -- INTRODUCTION TO 2D & 3D ART**

If you liked 6<sup>th</sup> grade art you'll love this class, because it lasts for the entire year! That's good, because there is so much art to learn about, experience, and explore. Drawing, painting, sculpture, clay, photography, digital art, graphic design, and printmaking will make 7<sup>th</sup> grade your most creative year yet. This class meets all year, on alternating days. You will take it concurrently with another .5 elective.

### **ACCELERATED ART 7**

This is year 1 of the 2 year long Accelerated Art program. This class is designed for students who have applied and have been accepted into this advanced course.

Topics/media will include photography and digital art, carving, ceramics, sculpture, drawing, painting, and printmaking. Artists will experience critique/discussion, and will learn about writing artist statements and creating a portfolio. Art history and art analysis will be interwoven through it all. Hands-on workshops and field trips will expand the experience further. The small class size and advanced nature of the curriculum will allow for a great deal of individual instruction and creative independence.

Interested students must complete an application to be considered for enrollment. Please contact your art instructor to get the form, or if you have questions. Students traditionally apply and are accepted during their 2nd semester of 6th grade. Exceptions can be made based on individual student needs. Please bring your acceptance letter to course sign up to ensure you are registered for the correct class.

## **GRADE 8**

### **\*\*ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS 8**

English Language Arts 8 is a required core academic course that meets for one period daily implementing a curriculum aligned to the Common Core English Language Arts Standards. Language Arts is an integrated discipline in which reading, writing, listening, speaking and language skills are



developed within a reading and writing workshop approach allowing students to learn independently and collaboratively. Technology is integrated into instruction on a regular basis to both engage learners and enhance 21st century skills.

Because English Language Arts instruction builds an understanding of the human experience through critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, collaboration, and creativity, the curriculum is delivered through a thematic approach. Each quarter a new theme provides a common context for learning focused on essential questions. Grade 8 quarterly themes include resiliency, alliances, modernization, and perspective.

## **\*\*MATHEMATICS 8**

*All 8th grade students will be placed in either Math 8 or Algebra 8. If students were enrolled in and successful in the Math 7-8 compacting course as 7th grade students will be enrolled in Algebra as an 8th grade student.*

### **MATH 8**

In Math 8, the eighth grade Wisconsin State Math Standards, which align to National Common Core Math Standards for content and math practices are the focus of instruction. These standards cover: an introduction to irrational numbers, working with radicals and integer exponents, understanding the connection between proportional relationships, lines, and linear equations, defining, evaluating and comparing functions, linear models, the Pythagorean Theorem, congruence and similarity of 2-D figures, and patterns in bivariate data,

Math concepts at every grade level are taught with a focus on the common core eight mathematical practices. The common core math practice standards describe a set of student behaviors that, when developed over time ensure a deep understanding of math concepts. These standards focus on developing reasoning and building mathematical communication skills in students, critical 21st century skills. The eight mathematical practices are: 1.) Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them, 2.) Reason abstractly and quantitatively, 3.) Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others, 4.) Model with mathematics, 5.) Use appropriate tools strategically, 6.) Attend to precision, 7.) Look for and make use of structure, and 8.) Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning.

For more information on Wisconsin DPI's vision for math instruction, Wisconsin Math Standards, and the eight mathematical practice standards, please visit:

<https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/standards/pdf/math-standards.pdf>

## **\*\*SOCIAL STUDIES 8 – WESTERN CULTURE STUDIES**

Eighth grade students will begin the year studying the Five Geographic Themes, climatic determinants, types of governments, types of religions and world demographics, time zones and mapping skills. The remainder of the year is spent applying the skills learned in quarter one to Western cultural regions including the United States, Canada, Latin America, Europe and Australia. Each regional unit will include cultural characteristics and historical events.

**\*\*SCIENCE 8**

Students perform a variety of laboratory experiments that give them a valid understanding of the nature of science and the way that knowledge in science has been accumulated. It arms the student with the skills and concepts that will help them interpret the natural phenomena and technology that confronts them in their lives.

**\*\*PHYSICAL EDUCATION 8**

Physical education is a required course that meets every other day. Units include flag football, floor hockey, rollerblading, archery, ultimate sports, weight training, volleyball, basketball, badminton, biking, and fitness training.

**\*\* CAREERS**

Careers is a semester course required for all eighth graders for the purpose of career exploration. The course is divided into two parts - career exploration and employment skills. The first half of the course is designed to enable students to identify their personal interests, aptitudes, and attitudes. They complete a variety of surveys that help determine careers for which they might be suited. Those careers are then researched in some depth. During the second half of the class, students learn about the world of work. Throughout the year, students are also introduced to the world of banking, credit, marketing and ethics. At the end of the year, students select a career/salary and attend a Fair put on by the Chamber of Commerce to simulate the real world of living.

**BAND 8**

Eighth grade band is open to students who have previous band experience. Students with no previous experience need the permission of the instructor to enroll. Students will be required to participate in four concerts, the Performing Arts Festival (small groups & solos) and attend occasional small group lessons. There will be optional extra-curricular opportunities such as jazz ensemble.

In 8th Grade Band, students will develop advanced performance skills to prepare them for the high school music experience. Tone quality, intonation, and reading skills will be stressed. Students will also discover and apply the artistic elements of music through interpretive and expressive playing. Leadership, teamwork, and character building are also emphasized in this course.

**CHOIR 8**

Eighth grade choir is open to all students who have a love for music and singing. In this choir, students will sing a wide variety of music. Choir students will concentrate on a deeper understanding of musicianship, learning to read music, and singing in three or four part harmony. Of course, much of our focus will be on how to use our new maturing and changing voices.

Students are expected to do their very best in class and attend two lessons per quarter. Each of our three middle school choirs is expected to perform in a choral concert for the public once each quarter. In addition, the middle school choirs also participate in several vocal choral contests in the area.

**ORCHESTRA 8**

Eighth grade orchestra is open to students who have previous orchestra experience. Students with no previous experience need the permission of the instructor to enroll in orchestra. In 8th grade orchestra, students will be required to participate in three concerts, the Performing Arts Festival (small groups & solos) and attend occasional small group lessons.

Eighth grade orchestra meets every day. As such, this is a year when students will show a tremendous amount of growth in their musicianship. Students will develop intermediate and advanced performance skills to prepare for high school orchestra. Topics covered in orchestra include: tone development and bowing technique; counting, timing, and rhythmic development; reading and notation skills; sight reading; scales and simple music theory; composing and conducting; development of an extensive vocabulary of musical terms and symbols; ear training and listening skills; equipment care and maintenance; and effective practice habits. Orchestra is a great opportunity for students to gain leadership and teamwork skills.

**ART 8 - 2D**

Learn to draw what your eyes (and your mind) can see through the exploration of perspective and grid drawing methods. Expand your photography skills and explore some of the ways graphic designers and photographers use Adobe Photoshop. Experience some “old school” art forms by trying printmaking methods such as Intaglio. Discover the power of color, and learn about painting techniques you can use to express yourself. This one semester course will meet every day, allowing artists time to hone their technical skills and expand their creative thinking. Students who wish to be in an art class for the entire year may elect to take both 2D Art 8 and 3D Art 8.

**Art 8 - 3D**

Two dimensional art has height and width. 3D art has depth too, and so does this class! Create wonderful things using found objects and mixed media. Play with clay - both hand built and on the potter's wheel. Experience sculpting techniques through both additive and subtractive methods. Learn engineering methods for armature building, which will act as a base for many sculptures. After this class, you will never see ordinary objects in quite the same way again. This one semester course will meet every day, allowing artists time to hone their technical skills and expand their creative thinking. Students who wish to be in an art class for the entire year may elect to take both 2D Art 8 and 3D Art 8.

**ACCELERATED ART 8 - HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL COURSE**

This is year 2 of the Accelerated Art program. This class is designed for students who have successfully completed Accelerated Art 7 and have received their art instructors recommendation to continue into Accelerated Art 8.

This is a high school equivalent class open to 8th graders who are serious about art. With successful completion and teacher recommendation it will take the place of the entry level Art Foundations course at the high school, creating a path for students who may be aiming for AP Art Studio and AP Art History in their senior year. Topics/media will include photography and digital art, metals, carving, hand built and wheel thrown ceramics, wearable art, sculpture, drawing, painting, and printmaking.

Artists will experience critique/discussion, and will learn about writing artist statements and creating a portfolio. Art history and art analysis will be interwoven through it all. Hands-on workshops and field trips will expand the experience further. The small class size and advanced nature of the curriculum will allow for a great deal of individual instruction and creative independence.

Students traditionally apply and are accepted during their 2nd semester of 6th grade. Exceptions can be made based on individual student needs. Please bring your acceptance letter to course sign up to ensure you are registered for the correct class.

### **AGRICULTURE AND YOU**

This is a semester-long course that meets daily. In this course students are introduced to the diverse field of agriculture. Students learn about careers in the agriculture industry, animal, plant, and food sciences, leadership, and about the intracurricular leadership and self-development organization, FFA. By taking this class students are eligible to be active members of the National FFA Organization and our local FFChapter.

### **BUSINESS CONCEPTS 8**

This elective class offering is a semester course designed to acquaint students with the role of computers in our society in the world of business. Students will create a business plan while learning different business concepts that include: keyboarding, communication documents, computer graphics, templates, desktop publishing, spreadsheets, presentations, website design and other basic business concepts. Students will use a variety of programs like Google tools and Microsoft Office to produce projects with these concepts.

### **STEM 8**

This new course is still being developed and will be impacted by the program selected and will include new learning experiences, while still enjoying traditional components of our previous programming including across the course sequence:

- Experiencing engineering and manufacturing processes
- Designing and building models
- Introduction to Robotics
- Understanding and controlling various power sources
- Introduction to Computer Aided Design (CAD)
- Construction with various materials (wood, metal, etc.) and associated tools including 3D printing
- Machine and tool safety

### **SPANISH CULTURE & CONVERSATION**

Spanish 8 meets daily for one semester and is open to all students. It is geared for students who wish to explore the Spanish language and culture. This course exposes students to the basics of the Spanish language with a focus on conversation and situational Spanish. This course would provide students with experiences to feel more comfortable having a conversation in Spanish with a native Spanish speaker.

### **SPANISH I - HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL COURSE**

Spanish I is a high school level course being offered to 8th graders. It is an **intense course geared for students who are committed to a rigorous study of the Spanish language and culture** and highly recommended to have taken Spanish 7. Students who are successful in Spanish I will be able to move directly to Spanish II at the high school. This is a year-long course that meets on a daily basis. Students who continue to take Spanish at the high school are able to access an AP level Spanish course. Spanish I incorporates speaking, listening, reading, and writing tasks which lay the groundwork for oral and written communication skills. The study of the culture of Spanish speaking countries will also be part of the course. An additional course fee is assessed per student to cover the cost of a course workbook. This workbook is used in the Spanish I and Spanish II classes.