

**NORTHFIELD MIDDLE SCHOOL**  
**Curriculum Summary**  
**Grade 7**

**Required Classes**

**English:** This course is designed to strengthen students' reading and writing skills. Students write for a variety of purposes; the writing process and The Six Traits of Writing are focused upon throughout the year. Students read classic and contemporary literature, fiction and non-fiction, and are encouraged to challenge themselves, question their readings, begin using basic literary analysis skills, and develop an appreciation for both written and spoken language.

**Life Science:** Students in 7th grade life science are actively involved in the exploration of ecology, plants, animals, human physiology, microbiology, and genetics. Emphasis is placed on science process skills in addition to content knowledge. Examples of process skills include observing, predicting, measuring, organizing data, analyzing data, and controlling variables, as students learn how to set up their own experiments. This is a hands-on class where students do a variety of in-class activities, frequently using lab equipment such as microscopes.

**Math:** Students are grouped for math based upon previous achievement and successful completion of prerequisite courses. All students are required to have their own basic calculator.

**Pre-Algebra A** - This course covers the 7th grade Minnesota math standards. The course will focus on problem solving and calculation skills, along with introductory probability, statistics, algebra, and geometry.

**Pre-Algebra AA** - Pre-Algebra AA covers the Minnesota 7th grade standards at a faster pace than Pre-Algebra A. Due to the faster pace, additional topics will be covered.

**7th Grade Algebra** - This advanced course prepares students to take Algebra II in 8th grade.

**Social Studies:** This class is designed to introduce students to general concepts contained in the seven areas of social science: economics, psychology, history, political science, anthropology, geography, and sociology. Through this course, concentration is given to interpretation, analysis and inquiry. The core theme that runs through the course is how defining moments have shaped our past, influence our lives, and direct our path to the future. The students will have opportunities to express themselves through critical thinking, inquiry, role-playing, decision-making, analytical writing, individual and group presentations, and various discussion formats.

**Physical Education:** Students should change into clothes that allow them to move and are appropriate for the weather. Students will be participating in lifetime sports (tennis, badminton, ping-pong, weightlifting, swimming, and other recreational activities), and team sports (football, volleyball, basketball, floor hockey, soccer, speedball, and softball). A locker with a lock will be assigned to each student.

**Health 7:** (Full year, every other day): The intent of this course is to help students gain practical knowledge and skills in taking personal responsibility for their social, mental/emotional, and physical health. A continuation of the district-wide Social/Emotional Learning (SEL) curriculum through Second Step will be utilized. As well as, there are Career and College lessons through Ramp-up to Readiness curriculum.

## Language and Music Electives Classes

**Amistades 7:** (Full year, every day) Amistades 7 is a full-year course that meets every day and is designed specifically for students who have been in the elementary Compañeros program and the Amistades 6 course. This offering will contain a variety of topics including more structured language study and cultural issues. A continuation course will be offered in eighth grade.

**World Language (Spanish IA, French IA, or German IA):** (Full year, every other day)

The thematic content is greeting and leave taking, family, house, school, colors, numbers/money, clothing, time, etc. The grammatical content is present tense-regular verbs, present tense-irregular verbs, definite and indefinite articles, subject/verb agreement, adjectives, subject pronouns, direct objects, question words, basic prepositions, alphabet, word order, punctuation, basic negatives, possessive adjectives, formal/informal forms of address, future time, introduction to past tense and more. World language electives IA & B are a two-year plan of study resulting in the student completing the equivalent of a first year high school language course (no high school credit is earned for any middle school course).

**Prerequisite:** Grade 6 GPA of 3.2 or higher. Students must pass each semester in order to advance to the next semester. To advance to level IB, the student must have "C" average or higher in the level IA course.

**Band:** Students continue learning basic theory and technique while becoming exposed to a wide variety of musical selections of increasing difficulty. Evening concerts are presented, and students receive a weekly lesson with a band instructor. Students are expected to stay in band for the entire year, and practice for at least 60 minutes in addition to the full band rehearsals.

**Prerequisite:** Successful participation in 6th grade band. Students having no prior band experience are welcome to contact the director to begin lessons on a band instrument. These students will be included in band rehearsals after they have gained sufficient technique on their band instrument.

**7/8th Grade Choir:** (Combined 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade sections) This course continues the development of more advanced vocal skills and musicianship. Significant music of the past and present will be studied, as well as proper singing technique and sight-reading. These are skills that are continuing to develop. Evening concerts are presented during the school year, as well as a district choral festival during the day. Individual/Small Group voice lessons are introduced. Final unit of the year is Small Ensembles & or Solos/Groups. Singers get to pick a pop artist/song (Lyrics appropriate) of their choice. Students use rehearsal time and class sharing to improve skills. They can also make an appointment to be shared with just the teacher.

**Prerequisite:** Successful participation in choir from the previous year, or an interest in developing singing skills.

**Orchestra:** The class is designed to be a learning experience as well as a time for preparing for performances. A few topics that students learn and review include the following: scales and etudes, shifting, vibrato, tuning, solos and rhythmic patterns. Each group strives to achieve a balance of sound, good tone, and the ability to play together musically. Each student receives orchestra lessons, has an opportunity to participate in an orchestra festival, and may audition for an extra-curricular chamber orchestra that meets outside of the school day. Evening concerts are presented during the school year.

**Prerequisite:** Successful participation in 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Orchestra or consent of the instructor. Students having no prior orchestra experience are welcome to contact the director to begin lessons on an orchestra instrument. These students will be included in rehearsals after gaining sufficient technique on their instrument.

## Additional Elective Classes

**Art Lab:** Crafting three dimensional sculpture, and drawing & painting objects from life are just a few of the approaches students will take to increase their skills and study influential artists in this course. Students will have the opportunity to utilize a range of media and methods to help increase their skills and confidence in expressing themselves visually. The goal is to have all students experience success in art.

**Creative Food and Design:** Explore your creative side. Are you the next Iron Chef? Students will develop culinary skills while preparing and serving a variety of foods and snacks. Are you the next top designer? Sewing and design will expose students to the use of the hand and machine sewing, fashion design, and creative crafts. Participants will explore other important topics such as nutrition, money management, budgeting, and it's all a game of Life.

**Robotics & Woodworking:** This course explores all that is Robotics! We begin by exploring electricity and electronics by building and testing circuits. This unit wraps up with a hands-on **SOLDERING** project they will take home. We then explore block programming using the **Sphero Robot**. **VEX Robotics Equipment** is then used to explore **Mechanisms**. Students will learn how to use and manipulate mechanisms to change speed, torque and type of movement. We use the VEX equipment to build some machines and program them using a C-based computer **programming** through **RobotC**. This course is a very hands-on, fun, project-based class. We end the year exploring **Fluid Power**, where students will use the woodshop to build a **Fluid Power Project**.

**Intro to Journalism: Intro to Journalism:** This course is for students interested in exploring opportunities that involve video production and careers in broadcasting. Students will learn how to use production equipment while creating morning news footage and learn how to use multiple applications to produce news segments. Students will learn how to positively critique news productions and learn about careers in the field of broadcasting and journalism through research and guest speakers. Students will read the daily news in class and will become aware of the headlines. **Please note:** Students in this class take part in **all** aspects of TV production: operating equipment, directing, writing, and on-air delivery of news and entertainment. This elective is open to all 7th and 8th grade students.

**Brain Games for Building Higher Order Thinking Skills:** Brain Games are not just for fun! Playing carefully crafted and complex games can positively impact the way brains develop, process, discern, and organize information. The purpose of this course is to exercise our brains through puzzles and games. This course will help develop skills in problem-solving, strategizing, memorization, predicting and deliberate decision-making. The goal is to provide an engaging social and collaborative environment that inspires critical thinking, opportunities for healthy competition, and surmountable challenges that spark excitement and success. A small sample of the games we will use are Chess, Mancala, Mastermind, Katamino, and Sudoku.

**Drop/Add Policy:** Withdrawal from courses requires parental consent, and must be done the first few weeks of school.