

# **NORTH KIRKWOOD MIDDLE SCHOOL** **8TH GRADE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS**

## **Core Teams**

Eighth graders will be assigned to a team of teachers for the core instructional subjects of English Language Arts, \*Math, Science and Social Studies. Core teams share the same students, the same schedule and the same part of the building. This provides for close personal contact between the student and his/her teachers. Core team teachers have a daily common planning period, which is used to discuss student academic and behavioral progress, to plan interdisciplinary units, and to meet with students, parents, the team counselor or the principals.

\*Students taking Integrated Math will receive ½ of an elective high school credit. Students taking Algebra will receive 1 high school math credit. The grade earned in either class will be included on their high school transcript.

## **Wellness**

The Eighth Grade Wellness Program covers the skills and objectives of physical education, fitness, and health. This year-long course will focus on allowing students to become intrinsically motivated to pursue a life that involves health and wellness. Furthermore, students will be required to develop behaviors that value inclusion, self advocacy and empathy for others while fostering an appreciation for fitness, nutrition and overall wellbeing. This is accomplished through team/individual sports, fitness training and conditioning, and establishing positive health behaviors. Students will fitness test quarterly in order to set fitness goals and mark progress throughout the year.

Health instruction is also a vital and integral part of the total school curriculum and is designed to help each child understand him/herself as a physical, mental, and social being. It provides the opportunity for students to develop attitudes and good health habits. Students will be in the Health classroom for two 4-week rotations as part of their Wellness rotation. Eighth grade content strands are lifetime growth and development, reproductive health, and substance education.

## **FULL YEAR ELECTIVES**

### **World Language (French, German or Spanish)**

\*The grade earned in 8<sup>th</sup> grade World Language will be included on a student's high school transcript.

**French 1B** is the continuation of French IA. This course is a study of the language and cultures of the French-speaking world. Students will continue to master the sound system, verb structures in the present, near future and simple past tenses and obtain a basic communicative vocabulary. The emphasis in the class is on proficiency in the spoken language; therefore, daily participation in the group discussion is required. Students will also be evaluated on homework, oral, listening and written quizzes and unit tests. Students who complete this course with proficiency will receive high school credit and be recommended to take French II in 9th grade.

**German 1B** is the continuation of German IA. Students will continue communicating in German using basic grammatical structures and vocabulary in social situations such as shopping, going out, entertainment, past times, holidays, eating and tourist "survival" by means of interviews, role-plays,

skits, listening-comprehension activities, weekly quizzes, short written assignments, and unit tests. Students will also explore German history, songs, idioms, poetry and the Grimm Fairy Tales. Students who complete this course with proficiency will receive high school credit and be recommended to take German II in 9th grade.

**Spanish 1B** is the continuation of Spanish IA. This course is a study of the language and cultures of the Spanish-speaking world. Students will continue to master the sound system, verb structures in the present and near future tense, and obtain an extensive communicative vocabulary. The emphasis in the class is on proficiency in spoken, written and auditory language in the present, near future and beginning past tense; therefore, daily participation in the group discussion is required. Students will also be evaluated on homework, oral production, listening and written quizzes, unit tests and semester exams. Students who complete this course with proficiency will receive high school credit and be recommended to take Spanish II in 9th grade.

### **8<sup>th</sup> Grade Band/Orchestra**

8<sup>th</sup> Grade Band/Orchestra members must successfully complete 7<sup>th</sup> grade Band/Orchestra and meet director approval based on musical aptitude and rehearsal skills prior to enrollment. Students will develop skills that lead to advanced levels of proficiency in technique on their instrument. Students will gain an understanding of music theory as it pertains to their instrument and continue to experience a variety of literature for the modern band/orchestra. Members of the ensemble will have opportunities to perform solos and small ensemble literature as well as large ensemble selections to be performed at required concerts and festivals.

## **SEMESTER ELECTIVES**

### **Art**

The content of this semester-long course is derived from the four art disciplines: aesthetics, art criticism, art history, and art production. Students will interpret and explain the elements and principles of art and design through frequent journal writing, reading and hands-on activities that involve various media techniques in both two and three-dimensional design. Specific artists and art movements throughout history will be investigated through reading and art making, with some art project connections to the social studies curriculum. Students will be given a sketchbook to be used outside the art classroom to develop drawing skills through teacher guided activities.

### **Choir**

This class offers an in-depth study of vocal music, building on what was learned in 7<sup>th</sup> grade Choir. Students will develop skills in both performance and music literacy. They will learn the fundamentals of good tone production, rhythm, diction, musicianship, and ensemble. Students will have performance opportunities both in and out of the classroom, participate in competitions, and learn music from a wide variety of genres. 7<sup>th</sup> grade Choir is not required to take 8<sup>th</sup> grade Choir.

### **Debate**

This class focuses on research, gathering evidence, organizing the information, and then presenting a case before an audience. Students will practice developing claims from evidence they have gathered through research and then debate the issue before their peers. Students taking this class can expect to read about issues that are a part of current culture, participate in planned classroom debates, and trial simulation.

### **Advanced Drama**

Advanced Drama is for students who are passionate about acting, plays, and theater in general. We learn more about acting, read amazing, funny plays, and explore why Drama is important. We have interesting discussions, think, write, and learn about how stories teach us about ourselves. We also learn about how drama has always been an important part of our culture and civilization. If you enjoyed 6th or 7th grade drama, or if you have been a part of the plays here at North or elsewhere, this is the next step. This class is made for you.

### **Ecology**

This class will study the relationship between living things and their environment. Students will learn about sustainability, invasive species, native Missouri plants, pollution and other environmental issues that are affecting our planet. A variety of community partnerships may be formed to support the work done within this class (ex: Missouri Department of Conservation, Green Buildings Council, private corporations, as well as other community resources). Students will compete in the Gateway Green Schools Quest. They will develop a project and implement their action plan to promote sustainability and lower North Kirkwood Middle School's impact on the planet.

### **Economics**

This class will focus on the fundamentals of the economy with regard to how goods and services are produced, transported, sold and used, as well as the effects of taxes on the distribution of money within an economy. Students will also experience the fundamentals of organizing and operating a business with regard to cost and profit. A partnership with Junior Achievement may be included in this course.

### **Engineering/Technology**

This is a class for students who like to use their hands and minds to investigate, create and build. Students trace the history, development, and influence of automation and robotics as they learn about mechanical systems, energy transfer, machine automation, and computer control systems. Students use the VEX Robotics® platform to design, build, and program a variety of devices that offer real world challenges.

The construction of the projects will require familiarity with and the safe handling of hand and power tools, accurate measurement skills in both English Standard and Metric systems, an understanding of applied mathematics and physics, and excellent communication skills. This course is being offered in partnership with Project Lead the Way.

### **Great Outdoors**

NKMS is fortunate to have bee hives, chickens, gardens and a greenhouse. This class will help maintain these areas and learn about each of them in the process. From processing honey to building raised-bed gardens to planting the next harvest, we will get our hands dirty to keep the NKMS courtyard thriving.

### **Guitar**

Students will learn the fundamentals of instrumental performance and music literacy through the media of guitar. Technique will be emphasized, as well as reading notation on the staff and various kinds of tablature. Students will experience various kinds of guitar music and compose songs of their own.

### **Journalism**

This course will focus on reading and writing like a journalist as well as capturing strong images using

principles of photography. Students will read newspapers, magazines, editorials, and other forms of media to uncover journalistic techniques and then write their own stories. These stories will result in the development of the school newspaper. Students will effectively interview, report, and edit a story. In addition to news writing, students will also understand the ethics and laws surrounding mass media communication and the technology features of page design.

### **Music**

Students will explore music as a form of communication through listening activities, instruments (voice, percussion, guitar), movement, and technology. Students will learn songs from a variety of cultures, countries, and time periods, while theory and composition are examined.

### **Reading Zone**

This class invites you to find the right books for you, the ones that fit you, the ones that YOU choose. This class offers you the time to read those books in an environment devoted to just that: finding the Reading Zone where everything else disappears but you and the story. You will have the means to listen to and provide reviews. talk over your impressions and get recommendations for the next trip you take in pages. You'll write responses to your books, you'll conference with your instructor about them, and you'll discuss them with classmates.

### **Scientific Exploration**

Scientific Exploration is designed for students who have a passion for science. Students will learn how to channel their passion into action that will make a positive impact on the world. This class is for students who want to dig deeper into topics covered in class and for students who like to work independently or in small groups to discover and share new knowledge.

### **Tech Time**

Tech Time is designed to help students optimize their technology use to enhance learning. Students will improve their proficiency in high-yield apps/programs, study basic coding languages, and promote digital citizenship.

### **Zoology**

This course will be focused on studying the animal kingdom. Course content includes the following: animal taxonomy and classification, characteristics of major animal phyla, animal adaptations and behavior, predator / prey relationships and Missouri native wildlife. Students will conduct multiple independent and group projects designed to deepen their understanding of the animal world for all creatures big and small.

### **News Team**

The NKMS News Team creates the daily morning newscast. This consists of announcements, reporters' stories and special features about life at North. All students will plan, produce, and edit stories for the morning news and take turns as morning anchors. **Students interested in News Team must complete the attached application in order to be considered for the class.**

### **Yearbook**

The Yearbook Team is responsible for creating the NKMS Yearbook, "The North Spirit". This consists of creating a theme; taking photographs before, during and after school; designing layouts and pages; writing editorials; and editing. **Students interested in Yearbook must complete the attached application in order to be considered for the class.**

## **ACADEMIC SUPPORT CLASSES – SEMESTER**

### **Literacy Support**

Students who would benefit from added literacy support will be selected for a seminar class to receive specialized help. One-on-one instruction and other activities to enhance understanding will be used to improve skills in literacy.

### **Math Support**

Students needing additional support in Math will be selected for a seminar class to receive specialized help. Computer software, one-on-one instruction, and other activities to enhance understanding will be used to improve skills in math.

# NKMS News Team Application

The North News Team creates the daily morning newscast. This consists of announcements, reporters' stories and special features about life at North. The News Team is a class that meets one hour every day for one semester. There will be a first semester team and a second semester team.

All students will plan, produce, and edit stories for the morning news and take turns as morning anchors.

**NOTE:** Students who take a **World Language AND Instrumental Music** DO NOT have a class period available for additional Elective classes, so you **cannot participate** on the News Team.

**QUESTIONS?** Please see Mr. Decker in room 43 or lab 10.

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**IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO BE CONSIDERED FOR THE 2019-2020 NEWS TEAM, PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING FORM AND RETURN IT WITH YOUR REGISTRATION FORM BY March 4th.**

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Current Team [circle one]    7E    7W

I would like to be a part of the NKMS News Team because:

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Responsibility for your learning, character, respect and relationships is very important at NKMS. Give an example(s) of how and when you have had to display the R4. Also include what that example says about you as a person (feel free to use the backside of this sheet if needed).

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Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

# NKMS Yearbook Application

The Yearbook team is responsible for creating the yearbook each year. This consists of creating a theme; taking photographs before, during, and after school (so being available during non-class time is important); designing yearbook layouts; designing yearbook pages on the computer; writing editorials; editing and working well in a group setting.

**NOTE:** Students who take a **World Language AND Instrumental Music DO NOT** have a class period available for additional Elective classes, so you **cannot participate** on the Yearbook Team.

**Questions?** Please see Mrs. Thomas in the Library

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**IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO BE CONSIDERED FOR THE 2019-2020 YEARBOOK TEAM, PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING FORM AND RETURN IT WITH YOUR REGISTRATION FORM BY MARCH 4<sup>th</sup>.**

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Current Team:(circle one)    7E    7W

Please describe what special skills or training you would bring to the Yearbook Team.

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Why would you be a valuable member of the Yearbook Team?

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**Parent Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_