

VIRGINIA MIDDLE SCHOOL

Course Offerings

2022-2023

Subject Area	Sixth Grade	Seventh Grade	Eighth Grade
Language Arts	English / Reading 6	English / Reading 7 *Adv. English / Reading 7	English / Reading 8 *Adv. English / Reading 8 to combine with: **Spanish I
Mathematics	Math 6	Math 7 *Adv. Math 7	Pre-Algebra ***Algebra I
Science	Science 6	Life Science	Physical Science
Social Studies	US History 1877 – Present	Civics and Economics	Contemporary World Issues ***World History to 1500
Wellness	Wellness / Health (Alternating with Keyboarding)	Wellness / Health (Alternating with Careers)	Wellness / Health (Alternating with Computers/Careers)
Elective Options	Band – Woodwinds Band – Brass / Percussion Choir 6 Elective Rotation: • Visual Arts • Computer Solutions • Exploratory Music • Technology Education	Band – Woodwinds Band – Brass/Percussion Choir Visual Arts Technology Education	Band 8 Choir Visual Arts Technology Education
Required SOL Tests	English Math	English Math Civics —	English Writing Math Science End of Course SOL Tests: Algebra I, World History I

*Prerequisite: see course description

**Prerequisite: see course description; High School Credit Class

***Prerequisite: see course description; High School Credit Class and End of Course SOL Test

INTRODUCTION

Virginia Middle School provides early adolescents with an environment in which they can learn and grow during the transitional years between elementary and high school. With the active support of teachers, staff, parents, community, and students, Virginia Middle School provides an atmosphere of acceptance, understanding, and respect for a diverse population.

The intellectual, social, emotional, and physical growth of middle school students is the focus of the curriculum. At Virginia Middle School, grades 6-8, students pursue a core curriculum of academic subjects that include English, mathematics, science, social studies, and non-core electives. Through comprehensive academic learning in a caring environment, students have the opportunity to become thoughtful, productive, and contributing members of society.

Students whose academic achievement levels indicate a need for accelerated work and who plan to take advanced placement classes in high school should consider enrolling in a rigorous schedule of academic classes in middle school. Virginia Middle School offers advanced classes in English and Math in 7th and 8th grade and the following high school credit-bearing courses (all considered Pre-AP):

Course	Units of High School Credit
Algebra I	1
Spanish I	1
World History to 1500	1

Some students who take high school courses in middle school years have difficulty with those courses. Parents may request that the student's grade from a high school course taken at the middle school level be removed from the high school transcript, along with any credit the student may have earned in the course. This request should be made in writing to the Superintendent's office no later than July 1 following the student's ninth grade year.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

LANGUAGE ARTS

Students are required to take three years of English and Reading. The prerequisite for each level is successful completion of the previous level.

English / Reading 6

Students will be taught writing skills focusing on sentence structure and variety, with vocabulary skills taught through writing activities, textbook study, and drills. Students will also be taught reading skills through readings in the genres of short story, novel, poem, and play. Instruction will accent reading comprehension and basic application of literary terms to the materials students read.

There will be a required SOL test.

English / Reading 7

Students will be taught writing skills focusing on paragraph organization and basic rhetorical strategies including description, narration, and cause and effect. They will also develop vocabulary skills through writing activities, textbook study, and drills. Students will be taught reading skills through readings in the genres of fiction, non-fiction, poetry, and drama. Instruction will accent reading comprehension, application of literary terms to the materials students read, and authorial intent implied in written passages.

There will be a required SOL test.

Advanced English / Reading 7 (Pre-AP)

Students will study five major categories of literature: the short story, poetry, nonfiction works, drama, and novel. Instruction emphasizes the continued development of critical reading skills through student interpretation and analysis rather than recall. Students will develop skills that include an understanding of theme, specific patterns of plot, characterization, setting, and style in traditional literature. Instruction includes vocabulary development and oral communication skills. This class will hold students to rigorous standards in terms of workload and grading in order to prepare them for eventual AP or DE studies in English.

Prerequisites: a 93 or higher average in English/Reading 6 **and** an advanced score on the sixth grade English SOL test OR teacher recommendation.

There will be a required SOL test.

English / Reading 8

Students will be taught the relationship between the meaning of a work of literature and its structure. They will continue to develop skills using terms from literacy criticism to discuss and write about what they read. They will read in the genres of short story, novel drama, and poetry. Vocabulary development will focus on words from the works that they study as well as context clues and Latin and Greek word roots.

There will be a required reading and writing SOL test.

Advanced English / Reading 8 (Pre-AP; combine with Spanish I)

Students will study five major categories of literature: the short story, poetry, nonfiction works, drama, and novel. There will be an increased emphasis on the development of individual writing skills and more intensified literary analysis. Students will study Latin and Greek roots in depth to increase their ability to decode new words. This class will hold students to rigorous standards in terms of workload and grading in order to prepare them for eventual AP studies in English. Students in this Advanced English class must take Spanish I.

Prerequisites: a 93 or higher average in English/Reading 7 **or** a 85 or higher average in Advanced English/Reading 7 **and** an advanced score on the seventh grade English SOL test or Teacher Recommendation.

There will be a required reading and writing SOL test.

MATHEMATICS

Students are required to take three years of Mathematics. The prerequisite for each level is successful completion of the previous level. In addition, advanced students may qualify for enrollment in Algebra I in 8th grade.

Math 6

Students will be taught the six content strands as outlined in the Virginia Standards of Learning. These content strands are: Number and Number Sense; Computation and Estimation; Measurement; Geometry; Probability and Statistics; and Patterns, Functions, and Algebra. Students will use “hands-on” materials including calculators and computers to reinforce mathematical concepts.

There will be a required SOL test.

Math 7

Students will be taught mathematics with emphasis on proportional reasoning, problem solving, and critical thinking skills. Studies will include topics on number theory, geometry, ratio and proportion, probability and statistics, percents, integers, and basic algebraic concepts. Calculators, models, and measuring tools will be used to explore relationships and apply mathematics to real-world situations. Students will also be encouraged to use appropriate vocabulary to display knowledge of mathematical concepts and skills.

There will be a required SOL test.

Advanced Math 7 (Pre-AP)

Advanced Math 7 covers all seventh grade and a large portion of the eighth grade Standards of Learning. The seventh-grade standards emphasize solving problems with consumer applications and proportional reasoning, toward the goal of gaining proficiency in computations with integers. The students will acquire an understanding of the properties of real numbers, solve linear equations and inequalities, and use data analysis techniques to make inferences, conjectures, and predictions. Two- and three-dimensional representations, graphing transformations in the coordinate plane, and probability will be extended.

The eighth-grade standards contain content that extends concepts and skills learned in previous grades and new content that prepares students for more abstract concepts in algebra and geometry. Students will gain proficiency in computation with rational numbers (positive and negative fractions, positive and negative decimals, whole numbers, and integers) and use proportions to solve a variety of problems. New concepts include solving two-step equations and inequalities, graphing linear equations, visualizing three dimensional shapes represented in two-dimensional drawings, applying transformations to geometric shapes in the coordinate plane, and using matrices to organize and interpret data. Students will verify and apply the Pythagorean Theorem and represent relations and functions using tables, graphs, and rules. The academic rigor in Advanced Math 7 is designed to prepare students to begin their studies in Algebra in their 8th grade year.

Prerequisites: completion of Math 6 with a 93 or higher average **and** an advanced score on the sixth grade math SOL test or Teacher Recommendation.

Students will take the seventh grade mathematics SOL test in the spring.

Pre-Algebra 8

Students will be taught integers, equations, inequalities, geometry, proportion, percent, probability, statistics, and graphing. This course provides the necessary background for students entering Algebra I.

There will be a required SOL test.

Algebra I (Pre-AP)

Students will be taught Algebra I in one academic year. This course includes the study of sets, variables, equations, problem solving, fractions, linear equations, and inequalities. Polynomials, factoring, and solving quadratics will be covered in this class. Students qualify for this class by demonstrating math proficiency through past performance and teacher recommendation. The pace and rigor of this class will prepare students for future studies in AP mathematics. Upon successful completion of this course, students will earn one high school credit for Algebra I.

Prerequisites: completion of Advanced Math 7 with an 85 or higher average **and** an advanced score on the seventh grade math SOL test or Teacher Recommendation

There will be an end-of-course Algebra I SOL test.

SCIENCE

Students are required to take three years of Science. The middle school sequence for science is general science in grade 6, life science in grade 7, and physical science in grade 8.

Science 6

Students will be taught matter, life processes, energy, and the solar system. The course offers opportunities for hands-on learning in lab situations, as well as the chance to observe life processes first hand. Students will be utilizing a variety of technology to analyze, report, and interpret scientific concepts. Students will be writing about their observations to help grasp a deeper understanding of subject matter.

Life Science 7

Students will be taught and introduced to the world of living things. It is designed to help students develop an appreciation and understanding of living things. Students will explore the following areas: cellular structure, animals, plants, disease and microorganisms, heredity, classification, the human body, and ecology. Inquiry skills are enhanced by laboratory investigations.

Physical Science 8

Physical science stresses an in-depth understanding of the nature and structure of matter and the characteristics of energy. This class places considerable emphasis on the technological application of physical science principles. Major areas covered by the standards include the organization and use of the periodic table; physical and chemical changes; nuclear reactions; temperature and heat; sound; light; electricity and magnetism; and work, force, and motion. In addition, standards from 6th and 7th grade science will be reviewed in order to prepare for the end of course SOL.

There will be a required SOL test.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Students are required to take three years of Social Studies. The middle school sequence for social studies is US History 1877 to Present at grade 6, Civics and Economics at grade 7, and either Contemporary World Issues or World History I at grade 8. If a student enrolls in World History I, upon successful completion of the course, the student will receive one high school credit in World History I.

Social Studies 6 (US History 1877 – Present)

Students will be taught the history of the United States from the end of the Reconstruction period (1877) to the present day. Fundamental concepts in civics, economics, and geography in the context of United States history will continue to be reviewed and taught. Students will also review map and globe skills, skills in interpreting and using information, and historical thinking skills.

Civics and Economics 7

Students will be taught a basic understanding of civic life, politics, and government. It is designed to help students understand political systems as well as the relationship of American politics and government to world affairs.

There may be a required SOL test.

Contemporary World Issues 8

Students will be taught current contemporary world issues. Students will study these issues from a historical perspective, relating past conflicts to present-day international disputes and unrest. Students will use current events, newspaper articles, news magazines, news broadcasts, and other relevant materials while exploring these issues. Contemporary World Issues is also designed to familiarize 8th grade students with current issues prevalent in their region, country, and across the globe. Focus topics for the course can vary based on events and issues as they happen which allows the students to gain an understanding of an event as it is being played out rather than after the fact. CWI is a non-SOL class. There will be no end of year state mandated test. However, students will use quite a bit of class time to enrich their English writing skills. Students will write often, with focus on details, word choice, and grammar. Course work in CWI will emphasize critical and creative thinking, communication, collaboration, and citizenship, the 5 Cs in the profile of a Virginia Graduate.

World History to A.D. 1500 (Pre-AP)

Students will be taught the historical development of societies from ancient times until A.D. 1500. Students must be able to use critical thinking skills to describe, analyze, and evaluate the economic, political, and technological developments of these societies during the time period. This class is designed for the highly motivated student or the student who enjoys a challenging course. The pace and rigor of this class will prepare students for future studies in AP history. Students who successfully complete this course will receive one high school credit for World History I.

Prerequisites: a 93 or higher average in Civics **and** an advanced score on the Civics SOL test or Teacher Recommendation.

There will be a required end-of-course SOL test.

FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Students at the middle school level have the opportunity to enroll in a foreign language course. Students are able to earn high school credit in a foreign language through the successful completion of Spanish I.

Spanish I (Pre-AP, must be enrolled in Advanced English / Reading 8)

Students will be taught to speak, read, write, and understand Spanish in a variety of contexts. Students gain knowledge and cultural understanding of Spanish-speaking countries. Upon successful completion of this course, students receive one high school credit.

Prerequisites for rising 8th graders: a 93 or higher average in English/Reading 7 **or** an 85 or higher in Advanced English/Reading 7 **and** an advanced score on the seventh grade English SOL test or teacher recommendation. Must be enrolled in advanced English/Reading 8.

WELLNESS

The school division recognizes and promotes healthy habits for all students. The wellness program at the middle school emphasizes the benefits of exercise and activities that students can enjoy throughout their lifetime. Students are required to take Wellness at the 6th, 7th, and 8th grade levels.

Wellness / Health 6, 7, and 8

Wellness provides each student with the opportunity to participate in a variety of physical activities. Physical fitness tests are administered to students in the fall and again in the spring. Students will also be taught drug education, family living, social and interpersonal relationships, and personal health and hygiene. Students will also have health and/or technology classes that typically meet once a week. Sixth grade classes will be taught keyboarding, computers, the basics of Windows and Microsoft Office and career exploration. Seventh grade students will have classes on wellness/health and career exploration. Eighth grade classes will also have computer classes, Career Exploration, and health classes.

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

The middle school recognizes the need for students to have introductory opportunities in Career and Technical Education. Students are provided experiences in technology education, video production, business, and computer/keyboarding.

Technology Education 7 and 8

Exploratory Technology, a revolutionary new curriculum, meets the needs of middle school students as they explore technologies that impact their daily lives. Students will be taught the application of math, science, reading, writing, research, computer and hands-on skills in a cooperative learning environment. Topics covered in Technology Education include robotics, electricity, electronics, rocketry and space, engineering, transportation, energy and power, graphic communications, flight, graphic animation, applied physics, audio broadcasting, and research design. Students design and build robot blinkers, bridges, Metric 500 racers, airplane wings, and model rockets. Students also orchestrate a fifteen-minute radio broadcast with music, news, and weather.

FINE ARTS

The middle school recognizes the development of the talents and abilities in the fine arts. Students are encouraged to explore and refine individual skills in art and music during the middle school years.

Exploratory Rotation 6

Students will be taught nine-week exploratory courses offered to students on a rotating basis. Included in the rotation are Visual Arts, Computer Solutions, Exploratory Music, and Technology Education.

Band 6 (Beginning Band)

Students will be taught to play a musical instrument, understanding musical notation, and performing in public. Students do not need any prior musical experience. The class is a year-long course. Outside practice is required and students are required to purchase or rent an instrument. Students are expected to participate in two concerts.

Band 7 (Intermediate Band)

Students will be taught Grade II and Grade III band literature, Book II band techniques, and will develop ensemble sound. The class will be split with woodwinds in one class and brass and percussion in a separate class. Outside practice includes a few after-school rehearsals and performances. Placement in this class is based on one year of band experience or special permission from the band director.

Band 8 (Advanced Band)

Students will be taught Grade III band literature, concentrate on ensemble sound and performance, and practice advanced instrumental techniques. Outside practice is required and students are expected to participate in all aspects of the program including a few after-school rehearsals and performances. Placement in this class is based on two years of band experience or special permission from the director.

Choir 6

Beginning choir students will sing two part and possibly three part music, learn to read music using solfege, and will have many performance opportunities. This is a mixed choir class.

Concert Choir 7 and 8

Choir students will continue learning to sing complex harmonies while singing four part acapella music and reading music within an octave using solfege with increasingly difficult rhythm patterns. Students will have the opportunity to audition for All County Choir and All District Choir and will be required to perform in various concerts and possibly a musical.

Visual Arts 7 and 8

Students will be taught to develop skills in producing art in a variety of media and techniques. Students will work both independently and in groups and will be evaluated by observation. Grades are determined by observing behavior, understanding art concepts, and demonstrating those concepts on paper. Students will learn vocabularies and concepts associated with various types of visual arts. Students will apply knowledge of the elements and principles of design. Students will learn how to use various tools, techniques and processes and will experience drawing, painting, sculpture, and design. Students will develop critical judgment and become aware of art from other cultures. Students will analyze and evaluate their own art and that of major artists. Students will recognize the elements and principles of design in works of art. Students will develop skills to help them communicate through visual expression. Students will also learn responsibility for the care of materials and projects, safety in the classroom, and the clean up of personal space.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Student Resources 6, 7, and 8

The instruction of special education students in the middle school is in accordance with federal and state regulations. Special education students are placed in the least restrictive environment to the greatest extent possible. Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) determine the placement of special education students.

Standard Diploma Graduation Requirements

Discipline Area	Standard Units of Credit Required	Verified Credits Required – Class of 2022 and beyond
English	4	2
Mathematics ¹	3	1
Laboratory Science ^{2, 6}	3	1
History and Social Sciences ^{3, 6}	3	1
Health and Physical Education	2	
Foreign Language, Fine Arts or Career and Technical Education ⁷	2	
Economics and Personal Finance	1	
Computer Information Systems	1	
Electives	3	
Student Selected Test ⁵		
Total	22	5

A student must also complete the following:

- 1. Earn a board approved career and technical education credential**
- 2. Successfully complete one virtual course, which may be non-credit bearing**

¹Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include at least two different course selections from among: Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra Functions and Data Analysis, Algebra II, or other mathematics courses above the level of Algebra II. The board shall approve courses to satisfy this requirement.

²Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include course selections from at least two different science disciplines: earth sciences, biology, chemistry, or physics. The board shall approve courses to satisfy this requirement.

³Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include U.S. and Virginia History, U.S. and Virginia Government, and one course in either world history or geography or both. The board shall approve courses to satisfy this requirement.

⁴Courses to satisfy this requirement shall include at least two sequential electives as required by the Standards of Quality.

⁵A student may utilize additional tests for earning verified credit in computer science, technology, career and technical education, economics, or other areas as prescribed by the board in 8 VAC 20-131-110.

⁶Students who complete a career and technical education program sequence and pass an examination or occupational competency assessment in a career and technical education field that confers certification or an occupational competency credential from a recognized industry, or trade or professional association or acquires a professional license in a career and technical education field from the Commonwealth of Virginia may substitute the certification, competency credential, or license for (i) the student selected verified credit and (ii) either a science or history and social science verified credit when the certification, license, or credential confers more than one verified credit. The examination or occupational competency assessment must be approved by the Board of Education as an additional test to verify student achievement.

⁷Pursuant to Section 22.1-253.13:4, Code of Virginia, credits earned for this requirement shall include one credit in fine or performing arts or career and technical education.

Students who score between 375 and 399 on any social studies or science SOL test and who have attempted the same test at least twice and have passed the course may be awarded a local verified credit.

Advanced Studies Diploma Graduation Requirements

Discipline Area	Standard Units of Credit Required	Verified Credits Required – Class of 2022 and beyond
English	4	2
Mathematics ¹	4	1
Laboratory Science ²	4	1
History and Social Sciences ³	4	1
Foreign Language ⁴	3	
Health and Physical Education	2	
Fine Arts or Career and Technical Education	1	
Economics and Personal Finance	1	
Computer Information Systems	1	
Electives	2	
Student Selected Test ⁵		
Total	26	5

Students must successfully complete one virtual course, which may be non-credit bearing, to graduate with an Advanced Studies Diploma.

¹Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include at least three different course selections from among: Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, or other mathematics courses above the level of Algebra II. The board shall approve courses to satisfy this requirement.

²Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include course selections from at least three different science disciplines: earth sciences, biology, chemistry, or physics. The board shall approve courses to satisfy this requirement.

³Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include U.S. and Virginia History, U.S. and Virginia Government, and two courses in either world history or geography or both. The board shall approve courses to satisfy this requirement.

⁴Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include three years of one language or two years of two languages.

⁵A student may utilize additional tests for earning verified credit in computer science, technology, career and technical education, economics, or other areas as prescribed by the board in 8 VAC 20-131-110.