

## General Information

Sixth, seventh, eighth grade students will participate in required core and encore classes. All students have the opportunity to select up to two additional encore classes per semester that are offered to the specific grade level. All classes are not offered to all grade levels.

## Special Education

Students may be enrolled in specialized programs when eligible. Parents or teachers may request special education testing by the school if they suspect the student has a need for a specialized program. An Individualized Educational Planning(IEP)Team meeting will be held to determine for which services the student is eligible. The team is composed of general and special education staff who confer to develop strategies to assist students in improving their achievement. <https://www.mattawanschools.org/special-education-eligibility/>

## ATYP

Academically Talented Youth Program (ATYP) is an advanced educational opportunity for middle school students that is designed to provide a challenging, fast-paced and above grade level curriculum for math and/or language arts. The classes are overseen by Western Michigan University. Please contact the school for more information about this program.

## High School Courses

If a parent/guardian believes their student is prepared for learning at a higher level based on a previous learning experience, and would like to enroll in a high school course, please contact the school for more information.

# Middle School Course Descriptions

## Required Academic Classes – Course Descriptions

### Required Full Year Core Courses

#### English/Language Arts

##### English/Language Arts 6th Grade

This course is broken down into the four main elements of the Language Arts. (Reading, Writing, Speaking, and Listening)

Students can read closely and analytically to comprehend a range of increasingly complex literary and informational texts. Students can produce effective and well-grounded writing for a range of purposes and audiences. Students can employ effective speaking and listening skills for a range of purposes and audiences. And finally, students can engage in research/inquiry to investigate topics, and to analyze, integrate, and present information.

##### English/Language Arts 7th Grade

This course ELA focuses on language arts concepts in a workshop environment. A workshop asks students to be active participants in their learning, make positive, productive choices, and take responsibility for creating and meeting their personal academic goals.

Students will use the reading process to construct meaning from text, develop written language as a tool to communicate in multiple genres, read to experience other times, places and events, acquire new information, gain insights into themselves and others, and prepare for 8th grade and beyond. Lastly, they will get to know themselves as a READER and writer and no matter their level- grow their skills and confidence!

##### English/Language Arts 8th Grade

Your last year of middle school is an important one, and in order to prepare for high school next year, we will focus heavily upon reading, writing, speaking, and listening. We'll start the year with narrative reading and writing and transition to persuasive writing. Students will also have the opportunity to prove their stances on topics they have researched during class discussions. Not only that, but they will also be discussing connections between themselves, the world, and other literature while participating in Book Clubs and Independent Reading.

##### ELA Essentials

ELA Essentials is a class offered to 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students that have a need for more focused instruction in reading. Students are assessed and will receive individualized and whole group instruction through the Language Live intensive reading program. This program uses a hybrid model of both computer and teacher directed instruction.

## **Math**

### **Math 6th Grade**

This mathematics course covers the 6th grade Common Core State Standards. Students will cover a variety of topics including: fractions, decimals, percents, factors, ratios, basic algebraic equations and expressions, area, perimeter, volume, and statistical measures of center. More information regarding grade level standards can be found using [THIS LINK](#).

### **Math Plus 6th Grade**

This mathematics course covers the 6th grade Common Core State Standards at an accelerated pace. Students will cover a variety of topics including: fractions, decimals, percents, factors, ratios, basic algebraic equations and expressions, area, perimeter, volume, and statistical measures of center. More information regarding grade level standards can be found using [THIS LINK](#).

### **Math 7th Grade**

This mathematics course covers the 7th grade Common Core State Standards. Students will cover a variety of topics including: fractions, decimals, percents, negative numbers, algebraic concepts, and geometric concepts. The goal of this course is to prepare students for 8th grade math.

### **Math Plus 7th Grade**

This mathematics course covers the 7th grade Common Core State Standards. Students will cover a variety of topics including: fractions, decimals, percents, negative numbers, algebraic concepts, and geometric concepts. The goal of this course is to prepare students for Algebra 1.

### **Math 8th Grade**

This course is designed to prepare students for high school Algebra 1. Units of study include: Square Roots and the Pythagorean Theorem, Linear and Non-linear Relationships, Scientific Notation and Exponent Properties, Transformational Geometry, Solving Equations, Three-Dimensional Geometry, and Systems of Equations.

### **Algebra 1 8th Grade**

This course is designed to promote a strong foundation for high school math courses to follow. Units of study include Square roots and the Pythagorean Theorem, Linear and Non-linear relationships, Scientific Notation and Exponent Properties, Exponential Relationships, Transformational Geometry, Solving Equations, Three-Dimensional Geometry, and Systems of Equations and Inequalities, Functions, and Quadratic Relationships.

## **Science**

### **Science 6th Grade**

This science course covers four units of study with an underlying theme of energy in each. Students will learn about Ecology, Energy, Solar System and Beyond, and Weather throughout the year. Students will participate in hands-on lab activities, project-based learning

opportunities, and student-led investigations. The curriculum is designed to engage all students and encourage confidence while learning new and challenging material.

### **Science 7th Grade**

This science course will investigate several different concepts and questions within the scientific fields of Biology and Chemistry. You will discover new ideas and information on topics such as human body systems and organs, until you work your way down from there until we reach the cellular and molecular level. You will also continue to hone your skills in using numerous tools and materials to observe the world around you, and use that information to explain all of the seemingly impossible things your universe is capable of.

### **Science 8th Grade**

This science course curriculum is taught with a hands-on approach. The students will be exploring the science curriculum through lab work, creative projects, problem solving skills, two challenge based learning units, online research, working cooperatively with others, and incorporating language arts, math and geography. Our goal is to improve students' confidence and have fun while increasing their knowledge of science.

## **Social Studies**

### **Western Hemisphere Studies 6th Grade**

This course students will build a foundation for what social studies encompasses. Students will focus on geography, world cultures and economics of the world. The second half of the course students will use this knowledge to study the history of the Western Hemisphere including ancient civilizations, governments, and human migration.

### **Eastern Hemisphere Social Studies 7th Grade**

This course focuses on the continents of Asia, Africa, Australia, and European History. Students will have exposure to various countries through economies, governments, history, and cultures. Students will be able to identify problems in the world and to be able to create possible solutions.

### **8th Grade History**

This course is both the last year in Middle School and the first year making Historical Connections as you study. We begin the year with the first American colonies, progress through the Foundational Documents (the Declaration of Independence, Constitution, and Bill of Rights) and then begin to study events and leadership of each President as we march chronologically through time. We make major historical connections with Presidents Washington, Jefferson, Jackson, Polk, and Lincoln. We use several simulations throughout the school year requiring students to debate and analyze opposing arguments. We end the school year in a six-week Simulation about the Civil War. Students break into teams and 'battle' as we personalize the Civil War. The school year ends with Reconstruction and the beginning of the Industrial Revolution.

## **Required Semester Core Courses**

### **6th Grade Leadworthy**

This course will help students Develop a healthy self-concept, healthy relationships, and a sense of personal responsibility. Understand emotional intelligence and the skills it measures, including self-awareness, self-control, self-motivation, and social skills. Students will also gain skills in public speaking, goal setting, and financial literacy.

### **6th Grade Automation and Robotics**

This course is a hands-on class where 6th grade students learn the basics of engineering while honing their ability to work with others. During the semester, students will start with basic mechanisms, learn a C.A.D. program to make their own designs. and then learn to put motors and sensors to these mechanisms. Finally, they will code their mechanisms that they have designed. This class challenges students, provides opportunities to work with others, allows for creative thinking, and provides strategies to be strong problem-solvers.

### **Spanish**

This course is designed to mirror the first and second semesters of high school Spanish I by developing students' abilities to speak, write, read, and understand basic Spanish. We will also explore the rich cultures and histories of Spanish-speaking countries so students may better understand and celebrate the diversity of people who speak Spanish.

### **Course Scope and Sequence**

**7th Grade-** Over the course of the first semester of Spanish, students will learn vocabulary related to the classroom, friendship, and food. Grammatically, we will be learning about “ar”, er”, and “ir” verbs.

**8th Grade** – The second semester of Spanish uses vocabulary dealing with the family, pastimes, and dinner foods. In terms of grammar, students will be using more irregular verbs, the present progressive tense, and adjective agreement.

### **Explore 7th and 8th Grade**

The class is designed for all students to gain knowledge about themselves and the world around them through exploration of the body, relationships, mind and growth. We hope to encourage students to, not only respect others, but to respect themselves as we further their understanding of changes that take place through adolescents. Some topics covered in this course include, relationships, communication, peer pressure, stress management, fitness, nutrition, career pathways, reproductive health, drugs, alcohol, diversity, and decision making. Our goal is that students would gain a new understanding of who they are in this world, they develop quality relationships, and that they will be able to face whatever challenges come their way with grace and dignity.

## **Encore/Electives**

### **Full Year Encore Courses**

#### **Choir**

Choir is an experience offered to 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students. It is recommended that students start their vocal music journey in 6th grade, but students can still join in 7th and 8th grade if they didn't start as a 6th grade student. This is a non-audition based singing opportunity in which we will focus on developing student musicianship through vocal music study, music theory, and performance. Students will be introduced to a variety of music literature, music theory, vocal technique, music history, music appreciation, and performance opportunities. Choir students will also develop their team building and leadership skills. Participation in the performances outside of regular class hours is required. Performances may include but are not limited to two to three evening concerts, district choral festival, clinician visits, and school assemblies.

#### **Band**

Band is a course offered to 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students. Beginning band students' instruments are chosen based on the best fit for the student and the ensemble. The sixth grade band is split into like-instrument groups before being combined into brass or woodwind/percussion groupings in seventh grade. Each grade level has at least three large ensemble performance opportunities during the school year. The seventh and eighth grade bands attend a District Band Festival in March, and have the option to perform at solo and ensemble. The eighth graders have additional performance opportunities in the fall with the high school marching band, and in May when they march in the Memorial Day Parade.

### **Semester Encore Courses**

#### **Fit for Life**

Fit for Life is a required course for 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students. Fit for Life is a class designed for students to engage in activities that develop and improve four components of fitness:

1. Cardiovascular strength and endurance
2. Muscular strength and endurance
3. Flexibility
4. Body Composition

Students will have the opportunity to participate in a variety of sports, as well as cooperative and team building activities. Basic skills of different sports are taught. By embedding knowledge and skills throughout the sports and fitness lessons, students experience many opportunities. Our goal is for each student to enjoy being physically active and, ultimately, become "Fit for Life"

#### **LINKS Peer to Peer Program 8th Grade**

This course is a peer to peer experience for students in Mr. Wright's "Strides" program, and 8th grade students who go through an application process. The purpose of the class is to build relationships, compassion and understanding between students with varying academic and behavioral strengths and weaknesses. Weekly activities include learning about various disabilities, building job skills by selling coffee to staff ("The Cat's Meow" Coffee Cart Business!),

volunteer activities such as recycling, and cooking lessons. Students also engage in relationship building activities such as structured conversations, games, music and more!

### **Art 6th, 7th and 8th Grades**

A hands-on course in which students will be exposed to a variety of lessons designed to give students an overview in several different mediums. Course content is designed to give students a general understanding of the areas studied and will help to prepare students for more advanced work in the next grade levels. Students will plan, prepare and execute projects in an intentional, skillful and expressive manner. Projects will give students a hands-on experience that helps further advance basic techniques learned in previous grade levels, while incorporating information on different artists, cultures and art eras. Students will learn that art is, in addition to a process, a reflection of history, culture and society.

### **6th Grade - Technology Literacy**

This course promotes computer skills and the ability to use computers and other technology to improve learning, productivity, and performance. This course allows students to broaden their technology knowledge and be able to apply the components to their daily lives. It is designed for students to develop a strong foundation in computer and media literacy. The students will learn to use the Internet more efficiently, develop basic and advanced skills, utilize Digital Citizenship lessons to address timely topics and prepare students to take ownership of their digital lives . Projects and assignments will incorporate content from core academic courses; whenever possible, as well as the STEAM curriculum. We are aiming to improve technology proficiency as students prepare for success in the real world and how to apply it to lifelong learning.

### **Global Issues 6th Grade**

This course offered to 6<sup>th</sup> grade will give students an opportunity to explore different cultures. We start with their own culture and help expand their vision to the global cultures in the world that we live in today. Students will add skills that will allow them to have a better understanding of themselves and where they fit in the world as it is today

### **Digital Media 7th Grade**

This course is a class that will allow 7th grade students an opportunity to work with many different areas of technology that are relevant to many different possible careers in their future. They will learn how to work with online formats to present information, making movies, and learning the best way to communicate the story they are trying to tell. The class does not require any previous computer knowledge

### **Computer Science for Innovators and Makers - PLTW-7th Grade**

This course offered to 7th grade students will allow the discovery of computer science concepts and skills by creating personally relevant, tangible, and shareable projects. Throughout the unit, students will learn about programming for the physical world by blending hardware design and software development. They will design and develop a physical computing device, interactive art installation, or wearable, and plan and develop code for microcontrollers that bring their physical designs to life. Physical computing projects will promote student awareness of interactive systems, including Internet of Things devices, and broaden their understanding of abstract computer science concepts through meaningful and authentic applications.

### **Broadcasting 8th Grade**

This course offered to 8<sup>th</sup> grade students is designed to give middle school students the opportunity to learn how to become digital storytellers on their own. Independence is key. Once they achieve proficiency in the basic terminology and use of the equipment, they will begin a

journalistic and technical *journey*, with an emphasis on video production. Students work alternately in teams and individually. Practical experience producing news and feature segments is emphasized. Students not only learn how to write their own news broadcasts, but how to present, edit, and distribute them. They'll develop camera presence and microphone technique, and have the opportunity to work with different types of equipment and editing software. All students in the course will rotate through the various roles in production and will be expected to appear on and work behind the camera

### **App Creators 8th Grade**

This course exposes 8th grade students to computer science by computationally analyzing and developing solutions to authentic problems through mobile app development, and conveys the positive impact of the application of computer science to other disciplines and to society. Students will customize their experience by choosing a problem that interests them from the areas of health, environment, emergency preparedness, education, community service, and school culture. Because problems in the real world involve more than one discipline, the course will introduce students to biomedical science concepts as they work on solutions for the specific problems they choose to tackle.

### **Life Management**

Life Management is a class offered to 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students. Life Management topics include Culinary Skills, Clothing Care and Consumer & Financial Education. During our Culinary Skills units, students will explore nutrients and the effects on the body, kitchen safety, food safety, safe appliance use and parts of a recipe. ***\*\*Since food is used in this class, it is likely that your student will come in contact with food allergens.\*\****

### **Communication Skills For Life**

This course students will develop communication skills to utilize in real life situations. Effective communication skills are essential to success in school, home, work, and in the community. We will accomplish this goal by teaching verbal, nonverbal, written, and visual skills. With these skills in mind students will also learn how to target feelings and communicate them effectively. In this class students will be graded on individual and group participation.