

**School District of Mellen
Middle School
Course Description Handbook**

2022-2023



Board approved: February 16, 2022

OUR MISSION:

Work collaboratively in a respectful, responsible, safe, and ready environment to create an education where all students will succeed.

OUR VISION:

To thrive as a public school to promote education, embrace community involvement and maximize available resources.

OUR BELIEFS:

- Equip students to succeed in critical thinking, technological knowledge, and other 21st Century Skills after graduation.
- Recognize that students learn with individual styles.
- All students deserve a high quality and diversified education.
- We believe the District should seek and develop creative funding.

School + Community = Success

Statement on Diversity, Inclusion and Equity

The Mellen School District honors the uniqueness of each individual and embraces diverse backgrounds, values, and points of view to build a strong, inclusive community and to prepare students for a global society.

The best education occurs in a school comprised of students, teachers, and families drawn from a diverse socio-economic backgrounds, cultures, races, religions, and sexual orientations.

A diverse school alone is not enough. We seek to build on this commitment by striving to create a truly inclusive school: one where all students are welcomed and supported.

The Mellen School District is committed to providing every student an equal opportunity to participate and thrive in the academic, extra-curricular and co-curricular programs.

The Mellen School District believes that excellence for all students can be achieved by:

- Assuring that all Mellen School District staff members, with deliberate effort, continue to examine and eliminate institutional beliefs, policies, practices, and teaching that perpetuate disparities in achievement.
- We implement programs and practices that allow equitable access and enable all students to thrive academically, athletically, physically, socially, and emotionally.
- Providing all Mellen students with access to resources, opportunities, support, and interventions that maximize academic success and promotes social emotional growth.
- Identifying and removing barriers in our current policies, procedures, systems, or practices that limit opportunities for students.
- We teach and practice responsibility towards and engagement in our school, our community and the world.
- Ensuring every individual in the Mellen School District community is in a respectful environment, where hate speech is not tolerated and all forms of diversity are accepted.

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Language Arts/Reading

Language Arts

Grade 6

Language Arts 6 includes study in the following area: grammar, writing, literature, spelling enrichment, creative expression, and speech. Students will explore a variety of literary genres including narrative, expository, imaginative, descriptive, and persuasive writing and speaking.

Grade 7

Language Arts 7 includes learning to communicate effectively through writing and speaking. The skills covered include the basics of grammar, mechanics of writing and spelling taught in conjunction with a variety of writing. Students will explore a variety of literary genres including narrative, expository, imaginative, descriptive, argumentative, and persuasive writing and speaking.

Grade 8

Language Arts 8 consists of basic grammar and articulation of thoughts for creative speaking and writing. This course stresses usage, spelling accuracy, mechanics, and vocabulary through the writing process. Students will explore a variety of literary genres including narrative, expository, imaginative, descriptive, argumentative, and persuasive writing and speaking.

Reading

Grade 6

Reading classes in the middle school focus on more complex reading skills, strategies, and higher order thinking skills. There is an emphasis placed on the carryover of these skills into content area courses. A wide variety of genres, narrative, and expository materials, and use of writing in response to reading are all used to enhance and insure recreational and informational reading as lifelong pursuits.

Grade 7

Reading classes in the middle school focus on more complex reading skills, strategies, and higher order thinking skills. There is an emphasis placed on the carryover of these skills into content area courses. A wide variety of genres, narrative, and expository materials, and use of writing in response to reading are all used to enhance and insure recreational and informational reading as life-long pursuits.

Grade 8

The developmental reading classes in the middle school are an extension of the basic reading program in the elementary schools. In addition, more complex reading skills, strategies, and higher order thinking skills are taught with the emphasis placed on the carry-over of these skills into content area courses. Students will use a wide variety of genres, including narratives, expository materials, and use of writing in response to reading.

Grade 6, 7, 8

Language Arts Response to Intervention

This course is designed for middle school students in need of intensive and highly personalized language arts and reading help. Determining factors for students placed in this class are their universal screening scores, current grades for class work, and input from their classroom teachers. Due to the nature of most curriculum being based on literacy, students are given time to help decode and process assignments from *all* of their classes - ELA, Social Studies, and Science are very text-heavy subjects which require synthesizing of specialized information. Students are allowed time to work on their assignments as well as have time to focus on specific skills such as decoding, comprehension, organization, attitude, and study skills.

Mathematics

Grade 6

In Grade 6, instruction focuses on four major areas. First, connecting ratios and rates to whole number multiplication and division and using concepts of ratio and rate to solve real-life problems. Second, completing the understanding of division of fractions started in upper elementary and extending the knowledge of the number system by identifying rational numbers and integers among. Next, students learn to write, interpret and use expressions and equations to model and solve real-life situations. Finally, attention will be given to developing and understanding statistical analysis and probabilities.

Grade 7

In Grade 7, instruction builds off of the focus areas of Grade 6. Focus is given to developing and understanding proportional relationships, including representing and applying these relationships to real-life situations. A second focus strengthens operations with rational numbers, writing and simplifying, expressions, and writing, solving and interpreting multi-step equations and linear equations. Another focus area involves scale drawings and reasoning with geometric proof with lines and angle pairs, and working with two- and three-dimensional shapes to solve problems about perimeter, area, surface area and volume. Lastly, attention is given to statistical analysis and probabilities, especially how it pertains to predictions of events and populations based on sampling.

Grade 7 (Advanced)

Prerequisites: Recommendation of Math 6 teacher and a skills assessment

Students will explore the skills necessary to bridge from Math 6 to Algebra. This is the accelerated path and is designed for students interested in STEM fields upon graduation. Topics include geometry, probability, statistics and proportions and will be integrated through problem-solving activities and applications. Graphing calculators are incorporated for discovery, problem solving and modeling. Scientific calculators are required.

Successful completion of Math 7A will allow a student to enroll in HS Algebra 1.

Grade 8

This course includes the study of properties and operations of the real number system; evaluating rational algebraic expressions; solving and graphing first degree equations and inequalities; translating word problems into equations; operations with and factoring of polynomials; and solving simple quadratic equations. Students will explore the language of algebra in verbal, tabular, graphical and symbolic forms. Geometry, probability, statistics and exponential growth will be integrated through problem-solving activities and applications. Graphing calculators are incorporated for discovery, problem solving and modeling. Scientific calculators are required.

Grade 6, 7, 8

Math Response to Intervention

The intensive level, or Tier 3, is intended for learners whose needs extend well beyond the reach of Tier 1 instruction and interventions in the regular classroom.

The placement of your student is determined by the following three things:

1. Recent results from the STAR exam - a districtwide progress monitoring tool - and the Forward exam - a statewide test.
2. Recent and past performance in the classroom based on teacher recommendation.
3. Limited success with Tier 1 instruction and Tier 2 interventions.

The intervention time in Tier 3 math instruction is designed to strengthen their abilities and provide effective strategies that can be used to improve overall math skills. The instruction is also designed to improve and build upon your child's current skills. The specialized instruction your child will receive will focus on math strategies, comprehension, vocabulary, and fluency. There is a component of reteaching lessons and/or skills to fill gaps, and a component of pre-teaching to help prepare students for upcoming lessons. In addition, homework support is given to keep students caught up on current tasks, skills, and assignments.

Science

Grade 6

Life Science

Life Science covers the basic principles of life and life processes. Topics may include cells, species, ecosystems, reproduction, genetics, or other topics consistent with state academic standards for life science.

Grades 7

Earth and Space Science

Earth and Space Science introduces students to the study of the earth from a local and global perspective. In these courses, students typically learn about time zones, latitude and longitude, atmosphere, weather, climate, matter, and energy transfer. Advanced topics often include the study of the use of remote sensing, computer visualization, and computer modeling to enable earth scientists to understand earth as a complex and changing planet.

Grade 8

Physical Science

Physical Science involves the study of the structures and states of matter. Topics as forms of energy, wave phenomenon, electromagnetism, and physical and chemical interactions.

Social Studies

Grade 6

World History

This course provides students with an overview of the history of human society from early civilization to the contemporary period, examining political, economic, social, religious, military, scientific, and cultural developments. This course may include geographical studies, but often these components are not as explicitly taught as geography.

Grade 7

Geography

This course provides students with an overview of geography. Topics typically include the physical environment; the political landscape; the relationship between people and the land; economic production and development; and the movement of people, goods, and ideas. There is focus on the Eastern Hemisphere.

Grade 8

American History

This course examines American history beginning with the early European explorers and forward to the American Civil War. We will explore the time period where America gained its independence, establishes the Federal System of government, writes the US Constitution and builds a strong nation that has world influence.

Physical Education

Grades 6, 7, 8

Middle school students are able to participate with skill in a variety of modified sports, dance, gymnastics, and outdoor activities. Students achieve mature forms in the basic skills of the more specialized sports, dance, and gymnastics activities. They use the skills successfully in modified games or activities of increasing complexity and in combination with other skills. Students demonstrate use of tactics with sport activities. Students participate regularly in physical activity and may develop and implement an individual physical activity plan. Students acquire and apply knowledge of the fitness components for overall fitness. Students demonstrate safe practices, follow rules, etiquette, cooperation and teamwork, ethical behavior, and positive social interaction. Students demonstrate an awareness of the intrinsic values and benefits of participation in physical activity that provides personal meaning.

Music

Band

Grades 6, 7, 8

The Intermediate Instrumental Program is designed to continue the development of general musicianship. The class consists of rehearsal techniques that include choral techniques, ensemble skills, improvisation, composition, music literacy, listening, and critical analysis. Class M literature, from the Wisconsin School Music Association list, is introduced along with band for young concert bands. The Middle School Band performs in two concerts presented to the Mellen community. The Middle School Band also joins the High School Band in a trip to Ashland and Bayfield for parade marching.

Music Appreciation

Grades 6, 7, 8

Music History/Appreciation courses survey different musical styles and periods with the intent of increasing students' enjoyment of musical styles and/or developing their artistic or technical judgment. Music History/Appreciation courses may also focus on developing an understanding of a particular style or period.

Social and Emotional Learning and Wellness

Life Skills & Wellness 6th Grade

This sixth grade class will use the 6th-grade level Botvin Life Skills Curriculum. The curriculum focuses on age-appropriate lessons on: Self-Image, Self-Improvement, Making Decisions, Smoking: Myths and Realities, Marijuana: Myths and Realities, Advertising, Violence and the Media, Coping with Anxiety, Coping with Anger, Communication Skills, Social Skills, Assertiveness, and Resolving Conflict.

Life Skills & Wellness 7th Grade

This seventh grade class will use the 7th-grade level Botvin Life Skills Curriculum. The curriculum focuses on age-appropriate lessons on: Drug Abuse and Violence, Making Decisions, Media Influences, Coping with Anxiety, Coping with Anger, Communication, Social Skills, Assertiveness, Resolving Conflicts, and Resisting Peer Pressure.

Life Skills & Wellness 8th Grade

This sixth grade class will use the 6th-grade level Botvin Life Skills Curriculum. The curriculum focuses on age-appropriate lessons on: Cause and Effect of Drug Abuse, Making Decisions, Media Influences, Coping with Anxiety, Coping with Anger, Social Skills, Assertiveness, Resolving Conflicts, and Resisting Peer Pressure.

Business

6th grade

Word Processing: The word processing course provides Middle School students with an introduction to the keyboard (letters, numbers, and symbols), basic machine operation, and proper keystroke technique. As students' progress, they improve their speed and accuracy and produce increasingly complex documents. The word processing course helps students develop keyboard proficiency, document production skills, and problem-solving skills. In addition, a large emphasis will be on students learning basic formatting in Google's Office Suite information processing software. Students will apply their new skills by working on class projects utilizing Google Docs, Sheets, Drawing and Slides assigned to them at various intervals throughout the course. Additionally, students will be introduced to Xello where they will complete ACP lessons regarding but not limited to: time management, school subjects and their relation to the working world, personal interests, and decision making.

7th grade

Introduction to Business: The Introduction to Business course will survey an array of topics and concepts related to the field of business and information technology. This course will introduce business concepts such as banking and finance, the role of government in business, consumerism, credit, investment, and management. Introduction to Business also provides a brief overview of the American economic system, corporate organization, and business information technology. Introduction to Business exposes students to the varied opportunities in office administration, accounting, management, and related fields. In addition to gaining exposure to a variety of business concepts, Middle School students will advance their 21st Century Skills as they participate in activities and team projects that will give them a sampling of Business Education course opportunities they may wish to explore in the future. Additionally, students will continue to expand upon their ACP and Xello portfolios by researching jobs and employers, understanding their individual learning styles, educational pathways to career fulfillment, and biases and career choices.

8th grade

For one quarter, the focus is Consumer Economics/Personal Finance which provides students with an understanding of the concepts and principles involved in managing one's personal finances. Topics include savings and investing, credit, insurance, taxes, and social security, spending patterns and budget planning, contracts, consumer protection, and an overview of the American economy. For the second quarter, the focus is Careers which provides students with the opportunity to explore careers related to the 16 Career Clusters and their interests. Students will explore the skills, knowledge, and habits needed to be successful in different careers. Students will spend time continuing lessons in Xello by exploring their personal skills, how they align to career matches, and how to advocate for themselves in a business setting. Additionally, students will spend time in ACP regarding transitioning into high school.

Industrial Technology

6th Grade

In this quarter long course, students will be introduced to the world of technology through research projects and hands-on projects. Students will learn how to make simple 3-D designs using Autodesk Inventor. They will also create a simple design to be used in a laser engraver in order to make a small key chain. Finally, students will investigate the world of technology through researching how something is made and then presenting their findings.

7th Grade

In this quarter long course, students will continue their investigation of technology through research projects and a hands on project. Students will learn about careers in technology through researching and giving a presentation on a career of their choice. Students will also gain their first experience of creating something through the building of a simple puzzle.

8th Grade

This course will concentrate on preparing students for future courses in Technology Education. Students will learn how to accurately measure, use hand tools safely, and how to create basic plans for creating a project. Students will also get to practice what they have learned through building a folding stool as their first project.

Visual Arts & Design

Grade 6

In sixth grade art, students explore a variety of media as they continue to build their skills in drawing, painting, graphics, calligraphy, and sculpture. Theory is introduced to further elaborate upon ideas about color, perspective, and design. Teachers discuss artists, artwork, and provide technique demonstrations to develop the four strands of art education: art appreciation, art history, art production, and art criticism; as well as problem-solving and critical thinking skills.

Grade 7

In seventh grade art, students focus on further developing art skills, vocabulary, creativity, and concepts of design. Two-dimensional lessons may include painting, collage, drawing, and printmaking. Three-dimensional projects may include functional or sculptural ceramic experiences. Art history, art appreciation, and art criticism are integrated into the lessons as a framework of the curriculum.

Grade 8

In eighth grade art, students express themselves creatively through drawing, graphics, sculpting, painting, metalwork, 3D ceramic sculpture, and jewelry to develop art skills and concepts. Composition, technique, the elements and principles of design, and attention-to-detail are explored. Art history, art appreciation, problem solving, and critical thinking are integrated into lessons.

Additional Middle School Exploratory Classes

Makerspace

Makerspace is a collaborative work space inside our facility for making, learning, exploring and sharing that uses high tech to no tech tools. Makerspace provides hands-on learning, helps with critical thinking skills and even boosts self-confidence.

Genius Hour

Genius Hour is inquiry-based, student-directed learning. It gives students an opportunity to look at the big wide world around them and explore their own unique interests in a loosely structured, but supported, way. As a learning model, it promotes inquiry, research, creativity, and self-directed learning.”