

2008-2009

MIDDLE SCHOOL  
**CURRICULUM GUIDE**

*Equipping students for a life of faith and learning*

WESTERN MENNONITE HIGH SCHOOL

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Printed in U.S.A. September 23, 2008

## INTRODUCTION

Middle school provides an important transition in the lives of young people from childhood to adolescence. Educational practices must reflect awareness and sensitivity to this transition. It is our goal that the curriculum content meets the developmental needs unique to children of this age, while providing a solid foundation for the academic rigors of high school. The program focuses on building upon and refining established knowledge and skills in language arts, science, math, the arts, social studies, and physical and health education. Within the curriculum content is a central emphasis on nurturing faith development and expanding biblical knowledge.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

### **6<sup>th</sup> GRADE**

Bible 6: Full year course; Old Testament part one

Language Arts 6: Full year course

Mathematics: Full year course in Math Foundations, Introduction to Pre-Algebra, or Pre-Algebra

Physical Education: 18 weeks (alternates every six weeks)

Health: 6 weeks

6<sup>th</sup> Grade Science: Full year course of general science

World Geography: Full year course

Academic Enrichment: Keyboarding for 6 weeks and Information Literacy for 6 weeks

Fine/Applied Arts: Students choose from Beginning Band, Intermediate Band, or Choir/Art (or other options as available)

### **7<sup>th</sup> GRADE**

Bible 7: Full year course; Old Testament part two

Language Arts 7: Full year course

Mathematics: Full year course in Introduction to Pre-Algebra or Pre-Algebra

Physical Education: 18 weeks (alternates every six weeks)

Health: 6 weeks

7<sup>th</sup> Grade Life Science: Full year course

World History: Full year course

Academic Enrichment: Keyboarding for 6 weeks and Literature Circles for 6 weeks

Fine/Applied Arts: Students choose from Beginning Band, Intermediate Band, Choir, or Creative Writing/Drawing (or other options as available)

### **8<sup>th</sup> GRADE**

Bible 8: Full year course; Book of James, early church history, and practical Christian living

Language Arts 8: Full year course

Mathematics: Full year course in Pre-Algebra or Algebra I (high school credit)

Physical Education: 18 weeks (alternates every six weeks)

Health: 6 weeks

8<sup>th</sup> Grade Earth Science: Full year course

US History: Full year course

Academic Enrichment: Keyboarding for 6 weeks and Oregon History/Geography for 6 weeks

Fine/Applied Arts: Students choose from Beginning Band, Intermediate Band, Choir, or Yearbook/Woodworking (or other options as available). With teacher approval, students can also choose Spanish I for high school credit.

## **BIBLE DEPARTMENT**

Emphasis in the Bible program is on the relational aspects of our faith. Throughout the curriculum, the message is repeatedly given that through Jesus Christ, we are reconciled to God. This reconciliation begins the journey of living in right relationship with others and the physical world.

Course content is divided thematically by grade. Learning activities for each unit include Bible studies, memory passages, drama and creative expression, worship ideas and mission projects. In addition to competency of information, students will be expected to show its application to their personal lives and spiritual growth.

026061

### **BIBLE 6:**

**Full year**

Sixth grade Bible starts with the beginning of the biblical story and continues through the Old Testament setting the background for the redemption of God's people through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. A variety of student learning activities are utilized to teach concepts, provide in-depth understanding, and help students apply biblical lessons to their own lives.

026071

### **BIBLE 7:**

**Full year**

This course takes a deeper look at the major themes of the Old Testament. The thematic units covered in Bible 7 include creative Bible study techniques, an overview and history of the people of Israel, a study of the Major Prophets, and metaphors and images of God. Within each unit, students are involved in activities that develop a deeper understanding of God's active and redemptive role in our lives.

026081

### **BIBLE 8:**

**Full year**

Four units comprise the Bible 8 curriculum: a book study of James, early church history from the book of Acts, Anabaptist/Mennonite History, and practical Christian living. The emphasis of these units is on developing a life of faithfulness to God's call and purpose in our lives. Students are engaged in various learning activities to examine and discern their own life of faith.

## **LANGUAGE ARTS**

010061

### **LANGUAGE ARTS 6:**

**Full year**

The goal of 6<sup>th</sup> grade Language Arts is to provide a solid foundation in study skills, reading and writing. Students will practice strategies for reading critically and for meaning. To aid comprehension, students will learn new vocabulary. They will read a variety of literature, including short stories, poetry, plays, nonfiction, and novels. Students will practice writing in a variety of forms including imaginative, narrative, expository, descriptive, reflective, and persuasive. Emphasis is placed on organization, development of strong paragraphs, creativity, and mechanics. In order to strengthen mechanics, students will practice strong sentence structure, punctuation, capitalization, parts of speech, and spelling. Ample opportunities will also be provided for improving listening and communication skills through class discussions, small group work, and presentations.

010071

**LANGUAGE ARTS 7:**

**Full year**

The goal of 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Language Arts is to develop a solid foundation in reading and communication skills. Class readings explore the basic elements of literature, develop comprehension skills, and support opportunities for self-directed writing and reading. In the area of writing, emphasis is placed on learning and utilizing the writing process, exploring a variety of modes of writing, and learning/reinforcing English writing conventions. Oral communication skills are practiced through discussion, and planned and impromptu presentations. In addition, organization of materials and time and the cultivation of mutual respect, a positive attitude, and a healthy work ethic are stressed.

010081

**LANGUAGE ARTS 8:**

**Full year**

The goal of 8<sup>th</sup> grade Language Arts is to prepare students to enter high school by strengthening their thinking, communication, and organizational skills. Writing emphasizes use of the writing process and explores a variety of modes, critical as well as creative. Learning/reinforcing English writing conventions continue. Reading, particularly for an understanding of theme and author purpose, is explored in a number of genres and forms. Oral communication skills are practiced through discussion, and planned and impromptu presentations. Deepening students' thinking skills, cultivating a mutually respectful and positive attitude, and developing a sound work ethic are stressed.

**MATHEMATICS**

020061

**MATH FOUNDATIONS:**

**Full year**

Aimed at 6th and 7th graders who have yet to gain proficiency with upper elementary math skills. Students will study graphs, percents, fractions, decimals, scientific notation, standard and metric measures, and calculator skills. Learning takes place through group and individual instruction with the goal of the student mastering each concept. Grade is based on attitude, completing assignments and periodic assessments. Each student needs a scientific calculator with instructions, pencils, ruler with inches and centimeters, and a protractor.

020071

**INTRODUCTION TO PRE-ALGEBRA:**

**Full year**

In this course, the student will study middle grade mathematics concepts and discover how they are interrelated. Students will be introduced to the principles upon which algebra and geometry are based. Emphasis will be placed on preparing students for Pre-Algebra.

020211

**PRE-ALGEBRA:**

**Full year**

Students will progress from working with numerical expressions to manipulating algebraic expressions. The course seeks to develop thinking skills, the use of concrete experiences, and exploration. Coursework includes inequalities, introduction to probability, geometry concepts, and graphing linear equations.

020311

**ALGEBRA 1:** (HS level, full year course) **Credit: 1**

This course is a continuation of Pre Algebra. A review of the nature and structure of the number system and the properties of number and algebraic terms leads into the study. Students solve quadratic equations and systems of linear equations, perform fundamental operations upon polynomial and rational fractions, and manage simple algebraic operations. Students must earn a C in Algebra I to advance to Geometry.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND HEALTH**

014061, 014071,

**HEALTH A & B:**

The middle school Health curriculum will help the student desire acceptable practices and standards for healthy Christian living. The five units included are: the power of choice, human biology, nutrition, fitness and exercise, and diseases. An emphasis will be placed on individuals seeing themselves as unique creations of God. Health is offered on varying schedules based on grade level.

014081

**HEALTH 8:**

Health 8 continues the middle school Health curriculum with the purpose of helping the student desire acceptable practices and standards for healthy Christian living. Additional units include Mental Health: "Who am I?" and "Let's Talk About Success," and Social Health: "Building Strong Friendships," "The 7 Habits of Highly Popular Teens," and "Living the Supernatural High." The emphasis will be placed on individuals seeing themselves as uniquely gifted creations of God, placed here on earth to live in relationship with Him and others. Health is offered on varying schedules based on grade level.

02361, 023071, 023081

**PHYSICAL EDUCATION:**

The course will encourage the personal development of each student to give his/her best effort in all activities. The curriculum will include a mixture of individual, leisure and team sports, along with an exercise program. PE is offered on varying schedules based on grade level.

## **SCIENCE**

017061

**6<sup>th</sup> GRADE SCIENCE:**

**Full year**

This course is an activity and inquiry based course, teaching students science by having them think, talk, and write about what they do and discover. Topics covered in this course include introductions into the three main areas of science - physical, earth, and life – with most of the focus on physical science involving matter, work, force, energy, machines, motion, etc. Less time will be spent on earth science involving the solar system, materials and structures that make up earth, water, and the atmosphere. The least amount of time will be spent on life science involving cells, heredity, reproduction, diversity, adaptations, ecology and resources.

017071

**7<sup>th</sup> GRADE LIFE SCIENCE:**

**Full year**

This course is an activity and inquiry based course, teaching students science by having them think, talk, and write about what they do and discover. Topics covered in this course include: genetics, cell structure and processes, human body systems and plants.

017081

**8<sup>th</sup> GRADE EARTH SCIENCE:**

**Full year**

This course is an activity and inquiry based course, teaching students science by having them think, talk, and write about what they do and discover. Topics covered in this course include: minerals, rocks, weather and erosion, atmosphere, climate and human interaction with the environment.

**SOCIAL STUDIES**

027061

**WORLD GEOGRAPHY (grade 6):**

**Full year**

Students begin the year studying the five themes of geography: location, place, human/environment interaction, movement, and region. They will then study different regions of the world in the context of these themes. Learning takes place through text readings, worksheets, cooperative learning, map projects, and research assignments for individuals, or groups that require the utilization of various sources of information.

027071

**WORLD HISTORY (grade 7):**

**Full year**

Students begin by studying the earliest world civilizations. The focus is mainly on western civilization, including ancient Greece and Rome and the Middle Ages and ending with the United States. Learning takes place through text readings, worksheets, cooperative learning, map projects, Internet assignments, art projects, tests/ quizzes, and group projects. While group projects require much time, energy and enthusiasm, they help students learn team-building skills.

027081

**US HISTORY (grade 8):**

**Full year**

Students take a chronological approach to the history of the Americas and the US from first contact between Europeans and Native Americans through the 1800s, and ending with the Civil War and Reconstruction years. Learning takes place through text readings, worksheets, cooperative learning, map projects, Internet assignments, art projects, and group projects. Johnny Tremain may be read in Language Arts at the same time students are learning about the War for Independence. While group projects require much time, energy and enthusiasm, they help students learn team-building skills.

**ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT (REQUIRED) COURSES**

002046, 002047, 002048

**KEYBOARDING (required for six weeks each year):**

This class will offer students an opportunity to develop and improve keyboarding skills.

008163

**INFORMATION LITERACY (required for grade 6):**

Students will learn basic research skills including how to find, evaluate, and use information from print and non-print sources. They will have an opportunity to read for pleasure and choose from a variety of fiction genres. Students will learn how to follow a six-step research process and develop effective presentation skills using a variety of visual aids including Power Point and Publisher. Students will also learn how to care for library materials and the basics of computer care and safety. They will learn how to be responsible users of information by citing sources and following MLA format.

010101

**LITERATURE CIRCLES (required for grade 7):**

This course helps build confidence in reading, as well as helping student learn to be critical readers. In a literature circle, groups of three to five students read the same book and share their observations, questions, and interpretations with each other. The teacher poses questions and reads the journal responses of students as they make connections to other readings and life experiences. A variety of books are read throughout the duration of the course.

027180

**OREGON HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY (required for grade 8):**

Students will learn about the history and geography of Oregon.

**FINE ARTS AND APPLIED ARTS COURSES**

011361

**CHOIR/ART (elective for 6<sup>th</sup> grade):**

[Get description from Russell](#)

011361, 011371

**CHOIR (elective for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade):**

This introductory music course is an elective for all middle school students at Western Mennonite School. Students learn basic vocal techniques and music-reading skills by singing a variety of choral literature, playing music theory-derived games, and using solfege. Students also gain experience working together as a community, learning how to function in rehearsals and performance settings. **Students are required to participate in concerts and festivals throughout the year.**

011261

**BEGINNING BAND (elective for 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade):**

This course is for students beginning a band instrument for the first time or reviewing the fundamentals. Students supply their own instruments. Those interested in percussion (drums) must contact the teacher for an interview/audition before registering. Students are required to participate in the spring concert at the end of the year. Prerequisite: consent of instructor

011271

**INTERMEDIATE BAND (elective for 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade):**

This course is for students with one or more years experience on their instrument. Students supply their own instruments. Developing technique, music-reading, rhythm, musicianship and ensemble skills are emphasized. Students are required to participate in concerts throughout the year. Prerequisite: consent of instructor

**004170**

**WOODWORKING (elective for 8<sup>th</sup> grade):**

This introductory course is designed to expose the student to the tools and terminology used in the building of wooden projects. Students will be required to build projects according to their abilities, while broadening their skills and learning new concepts.

019310

**YEARBOOK (elective for 8<sup>th</sup> grade):**

Yearbook students have the responsibility for capturing the experiences and events of the WMS Middle School by writing about and photographing campus life for the current year and producing a yearbook. The course develops students' communication, photography, and design skills through instruction in the principles of yearbook production. Students will write copy and design layouts for assigned yearbook pages. Emphasis will be placed on skill development, organizational skills, and working as a team.

**019370**

**CREATIVE WRITING AND DRAWING (elective for 7<sup>th</sup> grade):**

This course, divided into three segments over the course of the year, will explore the basics of story writing and provide opportunities for the students to try a variety of modes. During the second segments, the students will be introduced to a variety of techniques of art and drawing. And during the third segment, will combine what they have learned to write and illustrate their own book.

112011

**SPANISH I (elective for 8<sup>th</sup> grade): HS level, full year course** **Credit: 1**

This course provides students with the opportunity to develop basic communication skills in Spanish. Students acquire skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing as they become acquainted with the cultures and peoples of the Spanish-speaking world. This course is the equivalent of the first year of high school Spanish.