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# **Middle School Course Catalog**

**2020-2021**

**Grades 6-8**

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## **Middle School Course Catalog**

The purpose of this course catalog is to provide students and parent's information regarding middle school course offerings. This catalog is designed to offer students descriptions about the courses we offer and it is also a helpful resource to find out prerequisites for certain courses and read a description about particular courses. It is our intended goals that you will be empowered to make informed decisions about what classes you would like to be enrolled in.

### **Class placement**

The courses you choose in middle school make an impact on your high school education. It is important to consider several things when selecting your middle school courses.

- **Challenge yourself**  
Select courses that match your abilities, but are also challenging. You, your parents/guardian and teacher should work together to determine the appropriate classes to enroll in. Don't choose easy classes thinking that middle school doesn't matter. The more you challenge yourself now, the better prepared you will be in high school.
- **Investigate your options**  
Look at the course catalog and read about your options. Many classes are predetermined per grade level, but there are elective courses for students who progress through their courses that will enhance your middle school experience and also prepare you for high school courses.
- **Meet with your teacher**  
Set up a time to talk with your teacher about what interests you and what you have in mind for your future plans. He/she is a wealth of information and can help steer you in the right direction.
- **Remember**  
The education you receive in high school is directly connected to what you do in middle school. Think about these decisions carefully. We want you to do your personal best and enjoy your education journey.

## Course Planning Sheet

|                       | <b>6<sup>th</sup> GRADE</b>           | <b>7<sup>th</sup> GRADE</b>                     | <b>8<sup>th</sup> GRADE</b> |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| <b>Language Arts</b>  | MS English 6                          | MS English 7                                    | MS English 8                |
| <b>Mathematics</b>    | MS Math 6                             | MS Math 7                                       | MS Math 8                   |
| <b>Science</b>        | MS Science 6                          | MS Science 7                                    | MS Science 8                |
| <b>Social Science</b> | MS History 6~<br>Ancient Civilization | MS History 7~<br>World History and<br>Geography | MS History 8~<br>US History |
| <b>PE</b>             | PE                                    | PE  | PE                          |
| <b>Electives</b>      | If time permits                       | If time permits                                 | If time permits             |

### COURSE OFFERINGS

The following classes are offered at San Diego Virtual School. There are prescribed courses that must be taken during the respective grade level. At the end of the catalog, please see the elective courses. If time permits, you may add classes that will enrich your middle school experience. Please see your teacher to add courses when the time is appropriate.

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

### **MS English 6**

This course provides a strong foundation in grammar and the writing process. It emphasizes simple but useful composition and language mechanics strategies with multiple opportunities for modeling practical, real-world writing situations that will enable students to improve their written communication skills quickly. Through a variety of grade-appropriate reading selections, students develop a clear understanding of key literary genres and their distinguishing characteristics.

### **MS Math 6**

This middle school course will provide students with a deep understanding and mastery of the objectives that will prepare them for algebra. It is aligned to Common Core State Standards, and is based on best practices in the teaching of mathematics and the disciplines of STEM learning. Students will develop 21st century skills as they master ratios and proportional relationships; the number system; and number visualization. The course is highly engaging while being easy for teachers to customize and manage.

### **MS Math 6 Prescription (By permission only)**

This class is designed to help review and/or strengthen foundational math skills and concepts needed for sixth grade math. Students are assigned an individualized curriculum that focuses on areas of need specific to each student. Students are strongly encouraged to work regularly with a math teacher.

### **MS Science 6**

Science 6 is an integrated science course that covers topics selected from Earth and space science, life science, and physical science. The course discusses the structure and properties of matter, force interactions between objects, and the role gravity plays in Earth and space systems. The course also takes a look at Earth's history, the physical and biological elements of its ecosystems, and how the uneven heating of Earth from the Sun leads to its various climates and weather patterns.

### **MS History 6**

MS History examines the significance of geography in the development of ancient civilizations. Students will study the archeological evidence of early human societies then move on to the development of ancient cultures. The course provides a context for the understanding of history through a survey of the geographic, political, economic, religious, and social structures of the early civilizations of Mesopotamia, Egypt and Kush, Ancient Hebrews, and Ancient Greece. Students will analyze the contributions of these early civilizations to the modern world.

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

### **MS English 7**

English 7 Integrates the study of writing and literature through the examination of a variety of genres. Students identify the elements of composition in the reading selections to understand their function and effect on the reader. Practice is provided in narrative and expository writing. Topics include comparison and contrast, persuasion, and cause and effect essays, as well as descriptive and figurative language. Lessons are supplemented with vocabulary development, grammar, and syntax exercises, along with an introduction to verbal phrases and research tools.

### **MS Math 7**

Math 7 builds on material learned in earlier grades, including fractions, decimals, and percentages and introduces students to concepts they will continue to use throughout their study of mathematics. Among these are surface area, volume, and probability. Real-world applications facilitate understanding, and students are provided multiple opportunities to master these skills through practice problems within lessons, homework drills, and graded assignments.

### **MS Math 7 Prescription (By permission only)**

This class is designed to help review and/or strengthen foundational math skills and concepts needed for seventh grade math. Students are assigned an individualized curriculum that focuses on areas of need specific to each student. Students are strongly encouraged to work regularly with a math teacher.

### **MS Science 7**

Science 7 is an integrated science course that covers topics selected from Earth and space science, life science, and physical science. The course discusses cell function and the major life processes of organisms, including nutrition, growth and development, and reproduction. The course also takes a look at chemical changes that occur in matter and energy transformations in both natural and human-made systems and how to identify them. It also investigates the factors that affect the strength of gravitational, electric, and magnetic force fields.

### **MS History 7**

In Middle School World History, learners will study major historical world events from early human societies through to the present day. Multimedia tools including custom videos as well as videos from the BBC, custom maps, and interactive timelines will help engage learners as they complete this year-long course. They will explore the development of early humans and early civilizations. They will be introduced to the origins of major world religions, such as Hinduism and Buddhism. Also, learners will study the medieval period. Historical thinking and geography skills will be taught and utilized throughout the course.

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

### **MS English 8**

Extends the skills developed in English 7 through detailed study of parts of sentences and paragraphs to understand their importance to good writing. Students also acquire study skills such as time management and improved test-taking strategies. Other topics include punctuation, word choice, syntax, varying of sentence structure, subordination and coordination, detail and elaboration, effective use of reference materials, and proofreading.

### **Math 8**

This course is designed to enable all students at the middle school level to develop a deep understanding of math objectives and leaves students ready for algebra. The first semester covers objectives in transformations, linear equations, systems of equations, and functions. The second semester focuses on scientific notation, roots, the Pythagorean Theorem and volume, and statistics and probability. The course is based on the Common Core State Standards Initiative and on a modern understanding of student learning in mathematics.

### **MS Math 8 Prescription (By permission only)**

This class is designed to help review and/or strengthen foundational math skills and concepts needed for eighth grade math. Students are assigned an individualized curriculum that focuses on areas of need specific to each student. Students are strongly encouraged to work regularly with a math teacher.

### **Algebra I (By permission only)**

A comprehensive study of all of the concepts of Algebra I required to meet state and Common Core standards. With multiple opportunities for practice and review, students easily master skills including variables, linear equations, quadratic equations, function notation, and exponential functions.

### **MS Science 8**

This course focuses on Physical Science and is all about matter and energy. It discusses the atomic and molecular structure of substances and how chemical reactions lead to changes in properties of substances. The course also models how forces affect the motion of objects, including fields of force such as gravity, electricity, and magnetism. Students will see practical applications of forces and energy as they investigate simple machines, motors, generators, and electromagnets. They will also experience how sound, light, and heat interact with different forms of matter.

### **MS History 8**

In Middle School U.S. History, learners will explore historical American events with the help of innovative videos, timelines, and interactive maps and images. The course covers colonial

America through the Reconstruction period. Learners will develop historical thinking and geography skills, which they will use throughout the course to heighten their understanding of the material. Specific topics of study include the U.S. Constitution, the administrations of George Washington and John Adams, the War of 1812, and the Civil War.

### **MS Electives**

Middle schools students have the opportunity to take an elective course once they have finished their core classes. Please contact your teacher for more information or the school counselor.

#### **Middle School Career Explorations**

What career are you best suited for? In this course, students will explore career options in many different fields including business, health science, public administration, the arts, and information technology.

#### **Middle School Health**

Middle School Health aids students in creating a foundation of personal health. Beginning with properly defining health, this course then builds upon basic health practices to emphasize the importance of balance. Attention is given to each of the six dimensions of wellness; namely, physical, intellectual, emotional, spiritual, social, and environmental. Students are taught the skills necessary to improve every aspect of health. They are also encouraged to reflect upon their own personal wellness each week.

#### **Middle School Journalism**

Who? What? When? Where? Journalism provides us with the answers to these questions for the events that affect our lives. In this course, students will learn how to gather information, organize ideas, format stories for different forms of news media, and edit their stories for publication. The course will also examine the historical development of journalism and the role of journalism in society.

#### **Middle School Photography: Drawing with Light**

“A picture is worth a thousand words.” Photographs play an important role in our world today. We photograph to preserve memories, document events, and create artistic works. This course introduces students to the basics of photography, including camera functions and photo composition. Students will learn what it takes to create a good photograph and how to improve photographs of animals, people, and vacations. They will also begin working with their photographs using photo-editing software. Through a variety of assigned projects, students will engage their creativity by photographing a range of subjects and learning to see the world through the lens of their cameras.

#### **Middle School Spanish**

Spanish is the most spoken non-English language in U.S. homes, even among non-Hispanics, according to the Pew Research Center. There are overwhelming cultural, economic, and

demographic reasons for students to achieve mastery of Spanish. Spanish 1A and B engage students and use a variety of activities to ensure student engagement and to promote personalized learning. These courses can be delivered completely online, or implemented as blended courses, according to the unique needs of the teacher and the students.