



**Course Description Book**  
**2023-2024**

# Table of Contents

<a href="#"><u>Our Mission &amp; Welcome</u></a>	pg 2
<a href="#"><u>Curriculum Overview</u></a>	pg 3
<a href="#"><u>Grade 5 Course Descriptions</u></a>	pg 4
<a href="#"><u>Grade 6 Course Descriptions</u></a>	pg 7
<a href="#"><u>Grade 7 Course Descriptions</u></a>	pg 10
<a href="#"><u>Grade 8 Course Descriptions</u></a>	pg 16

---

## **Our Mission**

**St. Francis Xavier Catholic School System is a Christ-centered community dedicated to the faith formation, academic excellence, community engagement, and individual growth of our students in a safe environment.**

## **Welcome**

Dear Students and Families

The faculty and staff of St. Francis Xavier Middle School are committed to providing our students with engaging, relevant course offerings and student life activities to capture their interests and provide a variety of intellectual experiences. The course offerings will allow our students to build lifelong habits all while generating a love for learning and a willingness to grow. These skills will be beneficial during their years at Xavier Middle School and will be carried with our students as they continue onto high school. The faculty and administration at Xavier Middle School devote considerable time and energy to reviewing current courses and developing new curriculum elements that are rigorous and aligned with the most current middle and high school standards.

This course description book provides a comprehensive listing and description of each course offered within each grade level at Xavier Middle School. We are excited to offer classes that serve a wide range of academic interests that focus on growing in our Catholic faith, exploring the important areas of Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM), and improving 21st-century learning skills.

It is our hope that the time spent at Xavier Middle School allows our students an opportunity to grow as individuals, discover ways to become servants within our community and gain knowledge as they become lifelong learners. We encourage each student to create lasting experiences that will stay with them as they continue their journey into becoming young adults.

Welcome to Xavier Middle School; we are excited to have you and your family be a part of the wonderful Xavier community.

Sincerely,

Sara Meyer  
Principal

# Xavier Middle School Curriculum Overview

5th Grade Course Offerings		
<b>Core Courses</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Math</li> <li>• Science</li> <li>• Religion</li> <li>• Literature</li> <li>• Language Arts</li> <li>• Social Studies</li> </ul>	<b>Encore Courses</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Art (once a week)</li> <li>• Physical Ed. (twice a week)</li> <li>• Library Skills (once a week)</li> <li>• Computer Applications (once a week)</li> </ul>	<b>Elective Courses</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Band (twice a week)</li> <li>• Orchestra (twice a week)</li> <li>• Choir (twice a week)</li> </ul>
6th Grade Course Offerings		
<b>Core Courses</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Math</li> <li>• Science</li> <li>• Religion</li> <li>• Literature</li> <li>• Language Arts</li> <li>• Social Studies</li> </ul>	<b>Encore Courses</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical Ed. (twice a week)</li> <li>• Computer Applications (twice a week)</li> </ul>	<b>Elective Courses</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Band (three times a week)</li> <li>• Choir (three times a week)</li> <li>• Orchestra (three times a week)</li> <li>• Art (twice a week)</li> </ul>
7th Grade Course Offerings		
<b>Core Courses</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Math</li> <li>• Science</li> <li>• Religion</li> <li>• Language Arts</li> <li>• Social Studies</li> <li>• Literacy Elective</li> </ul>	<b>Encore Course</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical Ed. (twice a week)</li> </ul>	<b>Elective Courses</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Art (three times a week)</li> <li>• Band (three times a week)</li> <li>• Choir (three times a week)</li> <li>• Orchestra (three times a week)</li> <li>• World Languages (Every day)</li> </ul>
8th Grade Course Offerings		
<b>Core Courses</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Math</li> <li>• Science</li> <li>• Religion</li> <li>• Language Arts</li> <li>• Social Studies</li> <li>• Literacy Elective</li> </ul>	<b>Encore Course</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical Ed. (twice a week)</li> </ul>	<b>Elective Courses</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Art (three times a week)</li> <li>• Band (three times a week)</li> <li>• Choir (three times a week)</li> <li>• Orchestra (three times a week)</li> <li>• World Languages (Every day)</li> </ul>

## **Grade Scale**

Grade	Percentage
A+	99-100
A	95-98
A-	93-94
B+	91-92
B	87-90
B-	85-86
C+	83-84
C	79-82
C-	77-78
D+	75-76
D	71-74
D-	69-70
F	0-68

## **Grade 5 Course Descriptions**

### **LANGUAGE ARTS**

The fifth grade Language Arts program promotes effective oral and written communication. The program is based on the writing process with all grammar, usage, mechanics, and spelling skills introduced, practiced, and reviewed in the context of writing and textbook work. For Spelling the 5th grade will use a program based on common spelling patterns, prefixes, suffixes, and root words. The *Wordly Wise* Vocabulary series concentrates on building vocabulary by using words in context. To develop their writing skills, the students and teachers use a combination of resources: English textbook, *Write*, web resources, and elements of Comprehensive Literacy. Three main pieces of writing in 5th grade include an opinion, an informative, and a narrative piece, all of which are taken through the writing process. Graphic organizers and rubrics are used to help students formulate their information.

### **LITERATURE**

Students learn through a variety of reading formats. Using novels the students learn how to quote accurately from a text, make inferences, determine the theme, summarize, find the point of view of characters, determine the meaning of words, learn about figurative language (similes, metaphors, personification, idioms, hyperbole) and identify genres in literature. Non-fiction reading skills learned include finding the main idea and details, learning about text structure (chronological order, compare and contrast, cause/effect, problem/solution), and using evidence from the text to support answers. The students will also have time for reading books of their own choosing and are tested on these in the Accelerated Reader Program. Through the STAR Reading Assessment, the students' goals are determined, based on their individual needs.

## **MATH 5**

Math 5 covers place value relationships, operations with whole numbers and decimals, the volume of right rectangular prisms, addition and subtraction of fractions with like and unlike denominations, multiplication and division of fractions, construction and interpretation of graphs and classification of two-dimensional figures. The class uses different mediums to learn, including math games, online practice, and paper and pencil problem-solving. Support Math is offered as needed to meet the instructional needs of students.

## **HONORS MATH 5**

*Recommended MAP Range: 220 and above and teacher recommendation*

Honors Math 5 is a core course that is taught at an advanced pace. Students will work in our Math program and will be evaluated informally and formally throughout the year. This program will build the foundation and launch the students into a successful transition to Middle School math. Students will begin to look at advanced topics covered in 6th and 7th grade math. This course will begin to study important middle school mathematics concepts and understand how they are related to real data and real-life application. Students will form a solid foundation in fundamental middle-grade topics such as decimals, fractions, geometry, and measurement with grade-appropriate introduction to key algebraic topics. Extensive application to word problems is a part of this course. Students who successfully complete Honors Math 5 will be placed in either Pre-Algebra in 6th grade or Honors Math 6.

## **RELIGION**

Fifth grade religion explores 7 central ideas that make up who we are as Catholics: Knowledge of the Faith, Liturgy and Sacraments, Moral formation in Jesus Christ, Prayer, Community Life in the Church, Missionary Spirit, Safe Environment. The integration of technology includes obtaining and exploring knowledge and information concurrent with Catholic teaching. Websites, online videos, and other video sources along with inspirational music that promotes Catholic identity are used to facilitate prayer, examine issues dealing with morality, and explain how the 7 sacraments bring grace to our lives. Study skills used and reinforced include classroom review, study guides for each chapter in the religion text, written and oral assignments, and in-depth discussions and memorization.

## **SCIENCE**

The fifth grade science curriculum gives students the experience of investigating, analyzing, and synthesizing through a variety of modalities. Students will read scientific articles, work with digital simulations, complete labs, and write conclusions. These lessons will enable students to demonstrate a deep understanding of phenomena and practices.

Units covered in fifth grade include Patterns of Earth and Sky, Modeling Matter, The Earth System, and Ecosystem Restoration.

## **SOCIAL STUDIES**

The 5th grade curriculum focuses on the beginnings of Human Society (prehistory) and the Ancient World which covers the geographical areas of the Fertile Crescent (Mesopotamia), Ancient Africa (Egypt & Nubia), Ancient India, Ancient China, Ancient Greece, and Ancient Rome. Students will learn about the geography, economy, society, and legacy of ancient civilizations while practicing and reinforcing literacy skills.

## **ART (Once a week)**

The fifth grade visual art curriculum continues to build on students' knowledge of, and experiences in art. Students work with color, line, shape, texture, form, and design in a variety of lessons. These lessons include two and three-dimensional art; drawing, painting, printing, metal tooling, collage, fiber

art, and sketchbooks. Developing an appreciation for art and art history is also emphasized, along with reading and writing about artists and their contributions to art and design.

### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION (Twice a week)**

At Xavier Middle School, the Physical Education staff is committed to a comprehensive quality program with a designed curriculum based on lifetime fitness and positive experiences. The units are designed to incorporate fundamental skills, physical fitness and knowledge of various lifelong activities. Students who choose to actively participate in a quality physical education program receive a variety of benefits, including:

- A variety of motor skills and abilities related to lifetime leisure activities
- Improved understanding of the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle
- Improved understanding of movement and the human body
- Self-confidence and self-worth as they relate to physical education recreation programs
- A feeling of success in a fitness facility where students learn how to plan and create their own personal fitness goals.

### **COMPUTER APPLICATIONS (Once a week)**

The Computer Application course for 5th-grade students will help equip students with the essential digital skills required for middle school while emphasizing the importance of responsible digital behavior. Through a combination of hands-on activities, interactive lessons, and engaging projects, students will develop a solid foundation in using computers for practical applications while cultivating essential skills to become responsible digital citizens.

## **Electives**

### **BAND (Twice a week)**

The 5th grade Band Program at XMS meets for two 40-minute full band rehearsals each week. Students receive individual lessons weekly during the school day. Our 5th Grade band students perform at our winter and spring concerts each year, They also participate in the annual Solo and Ensemble Competition. We study from the Standard of Excellence method book. We are excited to welcome our current 4th Grade band students to join us at XMS. Any students wishing to start a band instrument in 5th Grade are more than welcome. We do however strongly encourage them to take summer lessons. Please contact the 5th grade band instructor for details.

### **ORCHESTRA (Twice a week)**

Orchestra is available to students in grades 5-8 at XMS. Orchestra meets two times per week in 5th grade, and each student has one 15-minute private lesson per week. Students perform in 2-3 concerts per year and are encouraged to participate in the annual Solo and Ensemble Festival at XMS in March. Students will continue to learn how to play and perform on their instruments as a large ensemble through the Essential Elements book, in addition to learning a variety of string orchestra repertoire in both class and at their lesson. If a student is beginning orchestra for the first time as a 5th grader, summer lessons are highly recommended. Please contact the 5th grade orchestra teacher for a list of instructors.

### **CHOIR (Twice a week)**

The Fifth grade Choir meets as a full group twice a week. Sight-singing skills, music notation, parts singing, and proper vocal technique are developed. Students will also explore and perform music of various styles. Performances include several concerts each year, opportunities to sing at Mass, and students are encouraged to participate in the Solo/Ensemble Festival in March.

## **Grade 6 Course Descriptions**

### **LANGUAGE ARTS**

Students are given the opportunity to experiment with and develop different styles of writing. The emphasis is on writing as a process using the ideas and vocabulary and methods of Comprehensive Literacy. The study of grammar, plus sentence and paragraph structure, provides students with the tools needed to write fluently. Vocabulary practice and mastery are also incorporated into the curriculum.

### **LITERATURE**

Students learn to appreciate good literature in many forms. Trade books, short stories, poetry, and plays are used to develop basic reading skills. Students develop strategies to comprehend, analyze and use inferences to gain a better understanding of literature. Five thinking strategies are stressed: recall, analysis, inference, synthesis, and evaluation. Opportunities are given in units to build and develop listening skills. In addition, many of the literature selections are tied to other curricular areas. Time is set aside for silent reading, which is encouraged through the use of the Accelerated Reader program. Through the STAR Reading Assessment, the students' goals are determined, based on their individual needs.

### **MATHEMATICS**

#### **PRE-ALGEBRA**

*Recommended MAP Range: 235 or higher and teacher recommendation*

This Pre-Algebra course will help students develop the skills necessary to manipulate numbers, solve equations and understand the general principles at work. Students will compute interest through percentages, graph linear functions, compare rational numbers with scientific notation, and convert fractional numbers between fractions, decimals, and percents. Practical application through the incorporation of word problems is required in this course.

#### **HONORS MATH 6**

*Recommended MAP Range: 225 to 240 and teacher recommendation*

This course will take students through a spiraling fast paced review of 6th grade math, while looking ahead to 7th grade math skills. Students will develop algebraic concepts and processes that can be used to solve a variety of real-world mathematical problems. Students will continue to build on a foundation in fundamental middle-grade topics such as decimals, fractions, geometry, and measurement with grade-appropriate introduction to key algebraic topics. Extensive application to word problems is a part of this course.



## **MATH 6**

Courses offered in sixth grade Mathematics focus on problem-solving as a method of inquiry and application; communication skills and techniques for conveying mathematical ideas and concepts; reasoning experiences and processes that reinforce and extend thinking skills; and investigations of mathematical connections that students use in their daily lives. Topics explored are general computation using the four properties of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division with whole numbers, decimals, and fractions; and measurement using standard and metric. Upon completion of the 6<sup>th</sup> grade Mathematics course students will be ready for the 7<sup>th</sup> grade Mathematics course.

## **RELIGION**

The Hebrew Scriptures are the focal point of study in sixth grade religion. Students learn how to use the Bible and how to interpret what they read. Units also include a continuing study of prayer, Catholic worship, and the history of the Bible. Students express their faith through participation in prayer services, liturgies, and retreats. Sixth graders participate in two retreats (a camp experience in September and a service retreat in April). The focus is on choices, consequences, and Catholic moral teachings. Students are also given the opportunity to write their own Psalms. Our program follows the Standards of the Green Bay Diocese.

## **SCIENCE**

The sixth grade science curriculum gives students the experience of investigating, analyzing, and synthesizing through a variety of modalities. Students will read scientific articles, work with digital simulations, complete labs, and write conclusions. These lessons will enable students to demonstrate a deep understanding of phenomena and practices.

Units covered in sixth grade include Microbiomes, Metabolism, Traits and Reproduction, Thermal Energy, Oceans and Atmosphere, Weather Patterns, and Earth's Changing Climate.

## **SOCIAL STUDIES**

In 6<sup>th</sup> grade social studies, students will learn about the Medieval Period in the Arabian Peninsula, Africa, China, Japan, and Europe. Students will also learn how major religions influenced the regions in the Middle Ages. Students will learn about the achievements, economy, geography, leadership, religion, and social structure of each region. After the Middle Ages, the course will follow Europe through the Reformation, Renaissance, and Scientific Revolution. Students will engage in learning through many different ways including simulations, presentations, projects, and hands-on activities.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION (Twice a week)**

At Xavier Middle School, the Physical Education staff is committed to a comprehensive quality program with a designed curriculum based on lifetime fitness and positive experiences. The units are designed to incorporate fundamental skills, physical fitness, and knowledge of various lifelong activities. Students who choose to actively participate in a quality physical education program receive a variety of benefits, including:

- A variety of motor skills and abilities related to lifetime leisure activities
- Improved understanding of the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle
- Improved understanding of movement and the human body
- Self-confidence and self-worth as they relate to physical education recreation programs
- A feeling of success in a fitness facility where students learn how to plan and create their own personal fitness goals.

### **INTRODUCTION TO COMPUTER PROGRAMMING (Twice a week)**

The Introduction to Computer Programming course for 6th-grade students is designed to spark curiosity and foster problem-solving skills through the exciting world of coding. Through a series of interactive lessons, hands-on projects, and collaborative activities, students will learn the fundamentals of programming and develop the ability to create their own computer programs.

### **STUDY SKILLS (Up to twice a week depending on electives)**

The Study Skills class is designed to assist students in learning independent study skill strategies. All students will be registered for this class. Students have the opportunity to develop and strengthen good study habits like staying organized, taking notes, managing time, and taking tests. Students will also be utilizing typing.com to practice and grow their typing skills.

## **ELECTIVES**

***Each 6<sup>th</sup> Grade student needs to choose two of the 4 electives below. Please see the course section form for requirements and procedures.***

### **BAND (Three days a week)**

. The 6th grade Band Program at XMS meets for three 40-minute full band rehearsals each week. Students receive individual lessons weekly during the school day. Our 6th Grade band students perform at our winter and spring concerts each year, They also participate in the annual Solo and Ensemble Competition. They also participate in one Pep Band performance with the Xavier High School Band. Second-semester students are given the option of participating in the Jazz Ensemble. This group meets two times each week outside the school day. We study from the Standard of Excellence method book. Music programs like Smart Music and Music.net are also used to supplement our musicians' learning. Any students wishing to start a band instrument in 5th Grade are more than welcome. We do however strongly encourage them to take summer lessons. Please contact the 5th grade band instructor for details.

### **CHOIR (Three days a week)**

The Sixth grade Choir meets as a full group three times a week. Sight-singing skills, music notation, parts singing, and proper vocal technique are developed. Students will also explore and perform music of various styles. Performances include several concerts each year, Mass music, and a Solo/Ensemble performance in March.

### **ORCHESTRA (Three days a week)**

Orchestra is available to students in grades 5-8 at XMS. Orchestra meets 3 times per week, and each student has one 15-minute private lesson per week. Students perform 2-3 concerts per year, and are encouraged to perform for the Solo and Ensemble Festival at XMS or the WSMA Solo and Ensemble Festival in March. Students will continue to develop their skills learned in 4th and 5th grade, through the Essential Elements and Sound Innovations books, in addition to a variety of string orchestra repertoire both in class, and at their lesson. If a student is beginning orchestra for the first time as a 6th grader, summer lessons are highly recommended. Please contact the 6th grade orchestra teacher for a list of instructors.

## **ART (Twice a week)**

Sixth grade art is devoted to the elements of art; line, shape, color, texture, value. The implementation of this goal focuses on two things: developing core art ability and fostering creative thinking skills.

Projects include a still life drawing, an Art history unit, a portraiture study, and an oil pastel illustration.

The students will also create a carve and peel - a study in positive and negative space, The curriculum is designed to meet important developmental goals in a relevant, sequential, and invigorating manner.

## Grade 7 Course Descriptions

### **LANGUAGE ARTS/LITERATURE**

Language Arts and Literature are combined and taught together throughout the entire year. Grammar, descriptive, and persuasive writing are included in the Language Arts portion. Comprehensive Literacy methods and elements of *6+1 Trait Writing* provide the platform for written expression. During the year research is conducted and a persuasive piece is written. Sensory language is taught and practiced using different styles such as narrative, descriptive, and expository texts. Literature includes reading, discussing, and working with many different literary genres including fiction, nonfiction, biography, drama, poetry, and more. Plot elements are learned and applied to explore how an author uses a plot to shape a story. Theme and inference are important components in applying comprehension to the various stories. Reading outside of class is encouraged. Content is compared with film versions and comparisons are drawn between the two venues. The students will also have time for reading books of their own choosing and are tested on these in the Accelerated Reader Program. Through the STAR Reading Assessment, the students' goals are determined, based on their individual needs.

### **LITERACY ELECTIVES**

***Each 7<sup>th</sup> grade student is required to be enrolled in one literacy elective course each semester. These classes focus on writing and reading. Each elective is a semester class and may only be taken once during the student's 7<sup>th</sup> grade year. Please review the requirements and procedures on the class selection form. When choosing literacy electives, each student needs to select one "A Literacy Elective" and one "B Literacy Elective". The letter is not a determination of when the class is taught.***

### **"A" LITERACY ELECTIVES(Semester Courses)**

#### **LITERATURE 7A - BOOK CLUB**

**This class is faster-paced and recommended for someone who loves to read.**

Reading enthusiasts who enjoy talking with friends, look no further, this is the course for you! This class is geared toward those students who have a love for reading. We will read as an entire class as well as in smaller book clubs to explore different novels. Find people who share similar interests in books and discover books that you fall in love with. Get ready to talk about your favorite characters and make predictions about the outcome of books.

### **LITERATURE 7A - WRITING WITH iPADS**

Students will explore different types of writing by using a variety of iPad apps. Some of the apps used are *Visual Poetry*, *Max Journal*, *ToonTastic*, *Write About*, *SpellGrid*, *Prezi*, *WordJoust*, *BookCreator*, and *Animoto*. Students will also write an essay utilizing 'song' as the overall theme and they will create *Powtoons*, utilizing an app in Google. In this course, students will also analyze how the elements of a story interact. They will participate in a variety of technology projects to enhance their overall writing techniques. Students will also have the opportunity to share some of their projects with their classmates.

### **LITERATURE 7A - FITNESS AND NUTRITION**

In Fitness and Nutrition, students will be learning about fitness techniques and nutrition. We will research different diets, and reflect on things we like and dislike about them. We will debate the pros and cons of nutrition and fitness fads. We will learn how to prepare meals and search different recipes that we can use for optimal nutrition. Students will also research weightlifting routines that the students see beneficial for their interests. They will write reflections on why they chose the exercises that they did. We will have days to use our workouts in the fitness room. We will also research different types of workouts, and look at the pros and cons of those workouts, and whether we think that the advertising of them is realistic or not for the average person.

### **LITERATURE 7A and 7B - AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE (ASL)**

ASL is a visual-gestural language used by Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals to communicate in place of or in conjunction with spoken English. ASL is the fourth most used language in the United States and is also used in Canada and parts of Africa. In language education, we focus on the 5 C's: Communication, Communities, Connections, Comparisons and Cultures. The student will learn to COMMUNICATE using ASL while focusing on the COMMUNITIES where ASL is used and how it influences Deaf CULTURE. The student will also learn to make CONNECTIONS between ASL and English as they COMPARE the hearing and Deaf worlds. Students will read, write, and analyze communication similarities and differences. **This is a yearlong course that will cover all of the standards from Literature 7A and Literature 7B.**

## **"B" LITERACY ELECTIVES(Semester Courses)**

### **LITERATURE 7B - A TOUR OF EAST ASIA**

In A Tour of East Asia, students will learn about the many different cultures in East Asia. We will take a look at popular forms of media, food, language, and more. Students will read stories and graphic novels written in East Asia and compare them to classics from America. This class is designed to give students a taste of what countries are like on the other side of the world. And to hopefully see that other cultures are not so different from ours.

## **LITERATURE 7B - MYTHOLOGY**

Mythology is a study of how ancient societies learned to function, communicate, and grow. How did all things begin? Students will see the world through the eyes of the gods and will strive to find connections to different cultures and religions. Students will read about the Greeks and how gods were a part of daily life. Students will also use Greek and Latin root words to apply to the vocabulary they use today.

## **LITERATURE 7B - DISCOVERING LATIN AMERICA**

This class will discover and explore different aspects of modern Latin America. During this literary elective, students will read and explore several cultural components of the Latin American countries including climate, cuisine, art, music, sports, education, transportation, holidays and festivals, religion, and tourism. Students will apply their knowledge by creating artwork to resemble that of Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera. They will cook and bring in Mexican food to share with the class to have a taste of the exceptional cuisine. Students will also learn about holidays and festivals in several countries as they occur. The way of life among the communities in each country will be compared and contrasted with readings and discussions.

## **MATHEMATICS**

### **ALGEBRA**

*Recommended MAP Range: 245 or higher and teacher recommendation*

Algebra is an upper-level math course and follows the high school curriculum. Students will be challenged and work at a rigorous pace with an above-normal workload. This course examines the following concepts of Algebra: operations with real numbers and powers; expressions, equations, and inequalities; linear functions; polynomial and nonlinear functions; and rational functions and radicals. Learning these major topics will set the foundation for future math courses.

### **PRE-ALGEBRA**

*Recommended MAP Range: 230 or 250 and teacher recommendation*

Prior knowledge of basic computation skills, order of operations, and basic fraction skills such as finding a common denominator and simplifying a fraction are recommended. Pre-Algebra is designed to give students the fundamental skills necessary to succeed in the Algebra course taken the following year. Students will explore arithmetic operations, number systems and properties, measurement, geometry, and have an introduction to algebraic thinking and concepts. They will solve one-step and multi-step equations and inequalities, compute with integers, follow the order of operations with exponents and square roots, master computation skills with rational numbers, classify and name basic geometric figures, calculate the area and volume of 2-dimensional and 3-dimensional figures, calculate percent problems, and learn the basics of linear equation.

Beyond the textbook, students will use resources such as *Khan Academy* (a non-profit educational organization that provides free video tutorials and interactive exercises) and *KUTA* software as enrichment and extra practice. Students who successfully complete Pre-Algebra with a B average or better will move on to Algebra the following year.

## **MATH 7**

This course prepares students to transition to more advanced mathematical topics such as Algebra and Geometry while enhancing their basic arithmetic knowledge. Students develop abstract reasoning and symbolic manipulation skills and will support answers by showing various process steps. Problem-solving reinforces concepts and makes mathematical connections to their daily lives. Topics in this course include order of operations, exponents, basic pre-algebra, integers, rational numbers (positive and negative fractions and decimals), proportions, percentages, basic geometry, and probability. Upon completion of this course, students will be ready for Pre-Algebra.

## **RELIGION**

The seventh grade Religion curriculum focuses on the life of Christ. Students gain a deeper understanding of what it means to be a member of the Church and a follower of Christ. Parts of the New Testament are studied, *The Catholic Faith Handbook for Youth*, as well as parts of the *Catholic Catechism*. Exciting faith and character-building experiences include learning, making, and praying the Rosary, followed up by a visit to the Shrine of Our Lady of Good Help for Mass and a tour, and Christmas Cookie Decorating and donations to St. Joseph's Food Program. The 7<sup>th</sup> graders also attend a special Winter Camp that harnesses the teaching of our Lord's Beatitudes.

The school year is full of liturgies, retreats, seasonal units, hands-on activities, technological communications and projects, activities of the Church year, as well as service projects, all of which provide a means for students to grow and express their faith. Seventh grade religion also has a special focus on the *Theology of the Body*, Pope John Paul II's integrated vision of the human person, body, soul, and spirit. The religion department also works closely with our school counselors to bring awareness and education on the topics of alcohol, and other drug abuse prevention. The focus is on choices, consequences, and Catholic moral teachings.

## **SCIENCE**

The seventh grade science curriculum gives students the experience of investigating, analyzing, and synthesizing through a variety of modalities. Students will read scientific articles, work with digital simulations, complete labs, and write conclusions. These lessons will enable students to demonstrate a deep understanding of phenomena and practices.

Units covered in seventh grade include Geology on Mars, Plate Motion, Rock Transformations, Phase Changes, Chemical Reactions, Populations and Resources, and Matter and Energy in Ecosystems.

## **SOCIAL STUDIES**

The purpose of seventh grade Social Studies is to provide a more in-depth study of the figures and events that shaped America's early history. The course begins with researching local and national Native American groups and concludes with the end of the Civil War. Topics explored in this course also include early colonial America, the American Revolution, early government, the Jacksonian Era, Western Expansion, and the complex origins and progression of the Civil War. This course utilizes several different methods to enhance student learning such as presentations, short essays, perspective journaling, competitive debates, video reports, and role-playing simulations.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION (Twice a week)**

At Xavier Middle School, the Physical Education staff is committed to a comprehensive quality program with a designed curriculum based on lifetime fitness and positive experiences. The units are designed to incorporate fundamental skills, physical fitness, and knowledge of various lifelong activities. Students

who choose to actively participate in a quality physical education program receive a variety of benefits, including:

- A variety of motor skills and abilities related to lifetime leisure activities
- Improved understanding of the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle
- Improved understanding of movement and the human body
- Self-confidence and self-worth as they relate to physical education recreation programs
- A feeling of success in a fitness facility where students learn how to plan and create their own personal fitness goals.

## ELECTIVES

Each 7<sup>th</sup> grade student is required to choose 2 elective courses. Please see the course selection form for requirements and procedures.

### **ART (Three days a week)**

The theme of seventh-grade art is “Communicating with Visual Images”. The internet and global marketplace have made this a tremendously valuable tool in any student’s skill set.

Projects include printmaking and composition, art theory - an in-depth look at the elements of art and principles of design, putting art theory to use: landscape painting, and a study in symbolism.

The curriculum is designed to meet important developmental goals in a relevant, sequential, and invigorating manner.

### **BAND (Three days a week)**

In seventh grade, band rehearsals are 40 minutes in length and held three days per week. Students receive individual lessons weekly during the school day. Students participate in band festivals, solo ensemble recitals and festivals, and winter and spring concerts. Seventh grade band students participate in one Pep Band performance with the Xavier High School Band. They will also participate in our annual System band concert. This combined concert includes all band members from grades 5 - 12. Second semester students are given the option of participating in Jazz Band. Each quarter students are given a variety of music theory and listening assignments. Computer programs such as *Smart Music* and various iPad apps are used to evaluate and drill music skills.

### **CHOIR (Three days a week)**

Seventh grade Choir meets three times each week for large group rehearsal and once each week in a small group session. Lesson time is used to enhance the overall vocal technique and repertoire. Sight-singing skills, music notation, parts singing, and proper vocal techniques are further developed. In addition, students will learn about composers and musicians of varied genres and careers in music. Performances include several concerts each year, Mass music, and a Solo/Ensemble performance in March.

### **ORCHESTRA (Three days a week)**

Orchestra is available to students in grades 5-8. If students are beginning orchestra for the first time, summer lessons are highly recommended and instructor approval is required. This course meets three times per week for 6<sup>th</sup> -8<sup>th</sup> grade. Each student has one 15-minute private lesson per week. Students

perform in 3 performances each year and are expected to perform as a group at WSMA Solo Ensemble.

### **WORLD LANGUAGES (Five days per week)**

Completing two years of a world language at Xavier Middle School in 7th & 8th grade is equivalent to a Level 1 course at a high school. This will allow students to complete up to a Level 5 world language course in high school with the possibility of earning college credit as a senior in high school.

A good understanding of basic grammar is necessary for students to learn a world language. Therefore, students must have average or better grades in Language Arts in sixth grade in order to take a world language.

### **FRENCH 1A**

French 1A includes the first three units of the book, *Discovering French Nouveau, Bleu 1*. Students learn basic necessary vocabulary including days, months, colors, weather, foods, beverages, the body, nationalities, etc. In addition, French 1A focuses on sentence formation, proper grammar, pronunciation, and conversation development. This is accomplished through fun dialogues, skits, and lots of repetition. Google Docs and Drive are used for class projects including skits and other writing activities. Students who complete French 1A with a C+ or better are prepared for and encouraged to continue on to French 1B.

### **GERMAN 1A**

German 1A will introduce students to the German language and culture and enable them to speak and understand German at a basic level. Students will learn listening, reading, writing, and speaking skills in the target language. Interpretive listening and reading skills will be practiced and assessed through listening activities, music, and reading short passages and realia from the target culture. Interpersonal speaking will be practiced and assessed through basic conversations and pair work. Presentational writing and speaking skills will be assessed through larger projects and presentations. The themes explored are those found in chapters 1-4 of *Komm mit!* and include "Who am I?", free time activities, home and family, and school. The corresponding grammatical structures include verb conjugations, present tense, pronouns, adjectives, adverbs, and sentence structure. In addition to the textbook, several online resources are available for practice. This course is continued in 8<sup>th</sup> grade (German 1B).

### **SPANISH 1A**

Spanish 1A will introduce basic Spanish verbal and written skills with an emphasis on good pronunciation and written and oral comprehension. Vocabulary is continually enlarged and grammar skills are stressed. Grammar units include numbers, alphabet, definite and indefinite articles, possessive adjectives, adjective/noun agreement and subject/verb agreement, interrogatives, present tense, simple future tense, gustar, ser and estar. Classroom work is primarily in Spanish and exams are frequent. Students will use the *Conjuguemos* webpage to help practice vocabulary and grammar. This course is continued in 8<sup>th</sup> grade (Spanish 1B).



# Grade 8 Course Descriptions

## **LANGUAGE ARTS**

Throughout the year, students will focus on both reading and writing. Students will review proper writing for narrative, comparison and contrast, informational pieces, and will also work on writing about what they've read. Each quarter, students will also continue to work on their writing skills using journals. Spelling, grammar, and vocabulary are incorporated into each unit. Students have Accelerated Reader (AR) book checkout in the library during class time and are expected to read books in their Lexile range. They must also meet a minimum requirement of AR test points, which are determined on an individual basis by the STAR Reading Assessment.

Students will start off the year focused on elements of stories and the reinforcement of grammar basics. They will read short stories like Flowers for Algernon. Literary elements covered are conflict, plot, irony, point of view, and voice. Students then read and analyze the play The Diary of Anne Frank. The third quarter will be focused on nonfiction writing, and students will complete a research project. This will consist of students being able to research a variety of topics, writing a formal research paper in MLA format, and presenting their research. The students will also take part in book clubs throughout the third quarter. The students will also read stories such as The Outsiders and The Giver.

## **LITERACY ELECTIVES**

***Each 8<sup>th</sup> grade student is required to be enrolled in one literacy elective course each semester. These classes focus on writing and reading. Each elective is a semester class and may only be taken once during the student's 8<sup>th</sup> grade year. Please review the requirements and procedures on the class selection form. When choosing literacy electives, each student needs to select one "A Literacy Elective" and one "B Literacy Elective". The letter is not a determination of when the class is taught.***

### **"A" LITERACY ELECTIVES (Semester Courses)**

#### **LITERATURE 8A - CREATIVE WRITING**

Students will produce a range of written work and create a writing portfolio. While learning to develop characters as well as their imaginations, students will be able to think and write outside the box. We will be dabbling in parodies, screenwriting, and working on connecting our writing with the senses and our personal experiences. We will also spend time evaluating and editing each other's pieces, learning how to critique without criticizing.

#### **LITERATURE 8A - HEALTH**

Within this course, students will dive deep into the world of lifelong health and what that means for their future. We will have in-depth discussions and challenging units which will include Social Health/Teen Relationships, Mental/Emotional Health, Alcohol and other Drugs, Spiritual Health, Cognitive Health, Cultural Health, Financial Health, and Nutrition/Physical Activity. Students will learn the ways to live out their best life as God planned. **This course fulfills the high school health requirement.**

## **LITERATURE 8A - EVOLUTION OF JAZZ**

This course is designed to take the student through the diverse musical styles of American jazz through performance and study (ragtime, blues, Dixieland, big band/swing, bebop, rock, funk, bossa nova, and Latin). Other elements of study will include the theory of jazz as well as jazz history. The Jazz Band will be featured at a benefit concert for Dan's House of Hope, at the International Food Fair, and participate in the school's Solo & Ensemble Festival.

**Prerequisite:** Students must play an instrument (band, orchestra, drum set, piano, guitar, or bass guitar) to register for this course.

## **"B" LITERACY ELECTIVES(Semester Courses)**

### **LITERATURE 8B - THE EVOLUTION OF THEATER**

Students will be reading and analyzing a variety of scripts from different genres. Students will identify the genre of a screenplay and will build their analysis on the shape of the story. Students will be asking active questions about the protagonist's goals, conflicts, and the shape of their journey as they read and analyze scripts. A script reader will practice gaining a strong understanding of how each genre varies in its requirements. Students will experience the creative arts of the playwright, director, actor, and designer as well as their collective contributions to the form of the play that ultimately evolves on stage. There will be discussions of the institutions in contemporary American theater. There will be optional field trips to the Fox Cities Performing Art Center.

### **LITERATURE 8B - LATINO STUDIES**

In this course, students will begin to analyze culture and read a variety of literature (books, articles, biographies, etc.) to explore Latin America. Students will research, create, and present projects on a variety of topics including famous Latinos and Latin American countries. Students will also have the opportunity to prepare and taste food from a variety of Latin American countries.

### **LITERATURE 8B - ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

In this class, students will learn what it means to be an entrepreneur, the characteristics of an entrepreneur, and will research famous entrepreneurs. Students will learn the fundamentals of starting and running a small business through their participation in running our school store, called The Snack Shack. They will also work on a "Starting a Small Business" project in which they will generate an idea for a business and learn how to write a business plan, determine the target market of their business, learn how to gain information from their customers and learn how to use that information to enhance their business. The students will then "pitch" their business idea to the class, similar to the tv show "Shark Tank." Students will also be reading a novel to learn more about entrepreneurs.

## **MATHEMATICS**

### **HONORS GEOMETRY**

*Recommended MAP Range: 250 or higher and teacher recommendation*

This course covers the essential topics in geometry, concepts such as congruence; similarity; perpendicular and parallel lines; quadrilaterals; right triangle trigonometry; circle relationships; polygons; surface area and volume of three-dimensional solids; as well as coordinate and transformational geometry. Fundamentals of deductive and inductive logic are presented using mathematical proofs, geometric proofs, and real-world problem-solving as tools. This course will include all topics covered in Geometry, but the topics will be covered in greater depth with more challenging problems and a greater emphasis on problem-solving.

### **ALGEBRA**

*Recommended MAP Range: 230 - 255 and teacher recommendation*

Students must have successfully completed the Pre-Algebra class with a B average or better to be able to take Algebra. Prior knowledge of computing with rational numbers, integers, and solving basic equations is recommended. This course is designed to give students the requisite skills that provide a foundation for all future mathematics courses. Students will explore writing and solving linear equations, learn identity and equality properties, and use proportional reasoning when using trigonometric ratios, solving interest formulas and weighted averages word problems. Students will solve quadratic equations, equations with polynomials and factoring, and learn to graph and solve linear functions and inequalities.

Beyond the textbook, students will use *Khan Academy* (a non-profit educational organization that provides free video tutorials and interactive exercises) and *KUTA* software for enrichment and extra practice. Students who successfully complete Algebra will move on to Honors Geometry the following year.

### **PRE-ALGEBRA**

Prior knowledge of basic computation skills, order of operations, and basic fraction skills such as finding a common denominator and simplifying a fraction are recommended. Pre-Algebra is designed to give students the fundamental skills necessary to succeed in the Algebra course taken the following year. Students will explore arithmetic operations, number systems and properties, measurement, geometry, and an introduction to algebraic thinking and concepts. Students will solve one-step and multi-step equations and inequalities, compute with integers, follow the order of operations with exponents and square roots, master computation skills with rational numbers, classify and name basic geometric figures, calculate the area and volume of 2-dimensional and 3-dimensional figures, calculate percent problems, and learn the basics of linear equation.

Beyond the textbook, students will use resources such as *Khan Academy* (a non-profit educational organization that provides free video tutorials and interactive exercises) and *KUTA* software as enrichment and extra practice. Students who successfully complete Pre-Algebra will move on to Algebra the following year.

## **RELIGION**

This course covers the history of the Catholic Church from its beginning to the present day. Students learn who, when, why, and how Church traditions were formed to better understand and deepen their own faith. Prayer, world religions, Marks of the Church, Trinity, Catholic Social Teaching, laws of the Church, and other doctrines are studied in the curriculum. Articles from *The Compass*, the Green Bay Diocesan Newspaper, are read and discussed on a regular basis. Students express their faith through participation in daily prayer, prayer services, liturgies, and retreats. Theology of the Body is also a part of the religion program. Projects will be done on prayer, the saints, and world religions. Completing five hours of community service each semester is expected. Students are encouraged to witness their faith in their daily lives.

## **SCIENCE**

The eighth grade science curriculum gives students the experience of investigating, analyzing, and synthesizing through a variety of modalities. Students will read scientific articles, work with digital simulations, complete labs, and write conclusions. These lessons will enable students to demonstrate a deep understanding of phenomena and practices.

Units covered in eighth grade include Harnessing Human Energy, Force and Motion, Magnetic Fields, Light Waves, Earth, Moon, and Sun, and Natural Selection.

## **SOCIAL STUDIES**

Social Studies in 8th Grade takes the time to focus on American History from the Industrial Era (the late 1800s to present day). This class will make connections from events in the past and how it relates to students today. Students learn America's role in both World Wars and the connection America has with other countries and cultures on a global level. The Roaring Twenties, Great Depression, and Civil Rights Movement help students understand the challenges our country faced as America moved forward. Eighth graders will look at the political, economic, cultural, and social events throughout each of the decades. This is an interactive class that pushes students to connect to people from the past and recognize their role in the world around them. Primary documents, projects, simulations, and classroom discussions are tools used to help students become involved members of our community on a local, national, and global level.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION (Twice a week)**

At Xavier Middle School, the Physical Education staff is committed to a comprehensive quality program with a designed curriculum based on lifetime fitness and positive experiences. The units are designed to incorporate fundamental skills, physical fitness, and knowledge of various lifelong activities. Students who choose to actively participate in a quality physical education program receive a variety of benefits, including:

- A variety of motor skills and abilities related to lifetime leisure activities
- Improved understanding of the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle
- Improved understanding of movement and the human body
- Self-confidence and self-worth as they relate to physical education recreation programs
- A feeling of success in a fitness facility where students learn how to plan and create their own personal fitness goals.

## ELECTIVES

Each 8<sup>th</sup> grade student is required to choose 2 elective courses. Please see the course selection form for requirements and procedures.

### **ART (Three days a week)**

Eighth grade art is a time for advanced work in visual art. The year is dedicated to the concept of space: the illusion and actual use of three-dimensional space.

Projects include advanced still life drawing, one-point perspective studies and research, one-point perspective scenes, and papier-mache sculpture

The curriculum is designed to meet important developmental goals in a relevant, sequential, and invigorating manner.

### **BAND (Three days a week)**

In eighth grade band rehearsals are 40 minutes in length and held three days per week. Students receive individual lessons weekly during the school day. Students participate in band festivals, solo ensemble recitals and festivals, and winter and spring concerts. 8<sup>th</sup> grade band students participate in one Pep Band performance with the Xavier High School Band and also participate in our annual System band concert. This combined concert includes all band members from grades 5 - 12. Second semester students are given the option of participating in Jazz Band. Each quarter students are given a variety of music theory and listening assignments. Computer programs such as *Smart Music* and various iPad apps are used to evaluate and drill music skills.

### **CHOIR (Three days a week)**

Eighth grade Choir meets three times each week for large group rehearsal and once each week in an individual or small group session. Lesson time is used to enhance the overall vocal technique and repertoire. Sight-singing skills, music notation, vocal independence, parts-singing, and proper vocal technique are further developed throughout the school year. Students will explore the many composers and musicians of varied genres and careers in the music industry. Performances include several concerts each year, Mass music, and a Solo/Ensemble performance in March.

### **ORCHESTRA (Three days a week)**

Orchestra is available to students in grades 5-8. If students are beginning orchestra for the first time, summer lessons are highly recommended and instructor approval is required. The course meets three times per week for 6th-8th grade. Each student has one 15-minute private lesson per week.

Students perform in 3 school performances each year and are expected to perform as a group at WSMA Solo Ensemble.

### **WORLD LANGUAGE (Five days per week)**

#### **FRENCH 1B**

*Prerequisite: French 1A with passing grades*

French 1B includes units four through six of the book, *Discovering French Nouveau, Bleu 1*. Students add to the basic building blocks they learned in the previous year to become more independent speakers and writers. Learning to ask for directions, expressing opinions about various topics, and

building on their vocabulary are skills stressed in level 1B. Students continue to build their irregular and regular present tense verb lists while learning to converse in the near future and past tense. Several student-created skits are created and presented. GoogleDocs and Drive are used for any writing project for the class. Students that earn a C+ or better will be able to enter French 2 in high school.

## **GERMAN 1B**

*Prerequisite: German 1A with passing grades*

After reviewing the concepts of German 1A, the students continue to expand their knowledge of German through further development of listening, reading, speaking, and writing skills in the target language. The themes explored are those found in chapters 5-8 in *Komm mit!* and include clothing, making plans, expressing obligations, and shopping. More advanced grammatical concepts are also introduced. The 8<sup>th</sup> grade course also exposes the students to extended reading selections where the students will read graded readers and be expected to discuss the content in German. This course is a continuation of German 1A. Completion of the two-year course allows interested and excelling students to be able to enter German 2 in 9<sup>th</sup> grade and ultimately reach German 5 at the high school, potentially earning a substantial number of college credits.

## **SPANISH 1B**

*Prerequisite: Spanish 1A with passing grades*

After a review of Spanish 1A concepts, new grammar and vocabulary units are added. Grammar units include adjectives/agreement, reflexive verbs, ser/estar, present progressive and present perfect tenses, and the related use of gerunds and past participles. Conversational skills are constantly reinforced. Frequent oral and written exams test students' comprehension of the target language. Classroom work is primarily in Spanish. Students will use the *Conjuguemos* webpage to help practice vocabulary and grammar. After completing this course many students will go on to Spanish 2 in high school.