

**Jamesville – DeWitt  
Middle School**

**Grade Eight**

**Academic Program Guide**



**2019 – 2020**

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We believe that a robust academic program challenges students to think deeply about what they are learning, inspires students to seek out new ideas, and prepares students for the challenges of the outside world. We want our children to excel as:

- **Communicators**
- **Collaborators**
- **Thinkers**
- **Problem Solvers**
- **Innovators**
- **Individuals committed to themselves and others**

With that in mind, our teachers work throughout the school year and over the summer to carefully design curriculum and units of study aligned with the New York State Common Core Learning Standard and the specific above mentioned values held by our unique Jamesville-DeWitt community. All of this work occurs with an eye towards enriching and enhancing the quality of student learning throughout our school.

If you have questions about any of our programs, please feel free to contact any member our our administrative curriculum team at **315-445-8360** as follows:

Principal Curriculum Leader: Andy Eldridge  
Vice Principal Curriculum Leaders: Kerri McKee & Mia Woolery  
Math Department Chairperson: Molly Anthony  
Science Department Chairperson: Anna Endreny  
E.L.A. Department Chairperson: Denise Stillitano  
LOTE Department Chairperson : Kitty Robinson  
Social Studies Department Chairperson: Kari Sebast

We are proud of the academic programs our school offers your children. We want Jamesville-DeWitt Middle School to be a place where learning is challenging, joyful, and inspiring for our students. At the same time, we always strive to improve the quality of our work with your children, and we are eager for your feedback and comments. As you continue your journey with us, please do not hesitate to reach out to me directly.

Sincerely,

*Andy Eldridge*

Principal

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# Grade 8: Program Overview



Our grade 8 program recognizes the significant developmental growth of our middle level students and is designed to challenge our students to take on coursework in a caring and supportive middle level atmosphere. As such, we continue to organize students on to teams and we continue to focus on grade level essential questions that will prepare our students to be: **communicators, collaborators, thinkers, problem solvers, innovators, and individuals committed to themselves and others.**

It is our goal to support our students as we want our 8<sup>th</sup> graders to be excellent readers, writers, and communicators, guaranteeing their success in high school and beyond. In addition, we will continually improve our educational program through the concurrent development and regular re-evaluation of a high quality standards-based curriculum, diverse extra-curricular programming, a comprehensive instructional delivery system, effective assessment methods and technological support for teaching and learning.

# Units of Study



## Academic Core:

- English Language Arts – 2 Units, 2 periods a day
- Mathematics – 1 Unit, 1 period a day
- Social Studies – 1 Unit, 1 period a day
- Science – 1 Unit, 1 period a day

## Wellness:

- Physical Education –  $\frac{1}{2}$  Unit, 1 period every other day for the entire school year
- Health –  $\frac{1}{4}$  Unit, 1 period every other day for 20 weeks of the school year

## Fine Arts:

- Technology –  $\frac{1}{4}$  Unit, 1 period every other day for 20 weeks of the school year
- Home & Careers –  $\frac{1}{4}$  Unit, 1 period every other day for 20 weeks of the school year
- General Music –  $\frac{1}{4}$  Unit, 1 period every other day for 20 weeks of the school year
- Art / Advanced Art –  $\frac{1}{4}$  Unit, 1 period every other day for 20 weeks of the school year

## Electives:

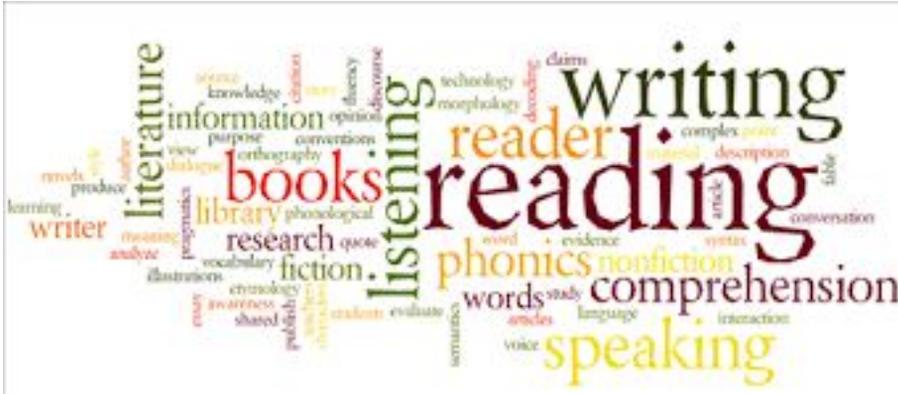
- Band / Orchestra – 1 period every other day for the entire school year (weekly lessons)
- Chorus – 1 period every other day for the entire school year

## High School Credit Classes:

- Algebra 1 – 1 period a day, 1 high school credit upon successful completion of class and regents exam\*
- Advance Art – 1 period every other day for the entire school year, .5 high school credit
- Chinese, French and Spanish 1 and 1 Honors – 1 period a day, 1 high school credit upon successful completion of class and final exam

*\*Prerequisite – Accelerated Math 7*

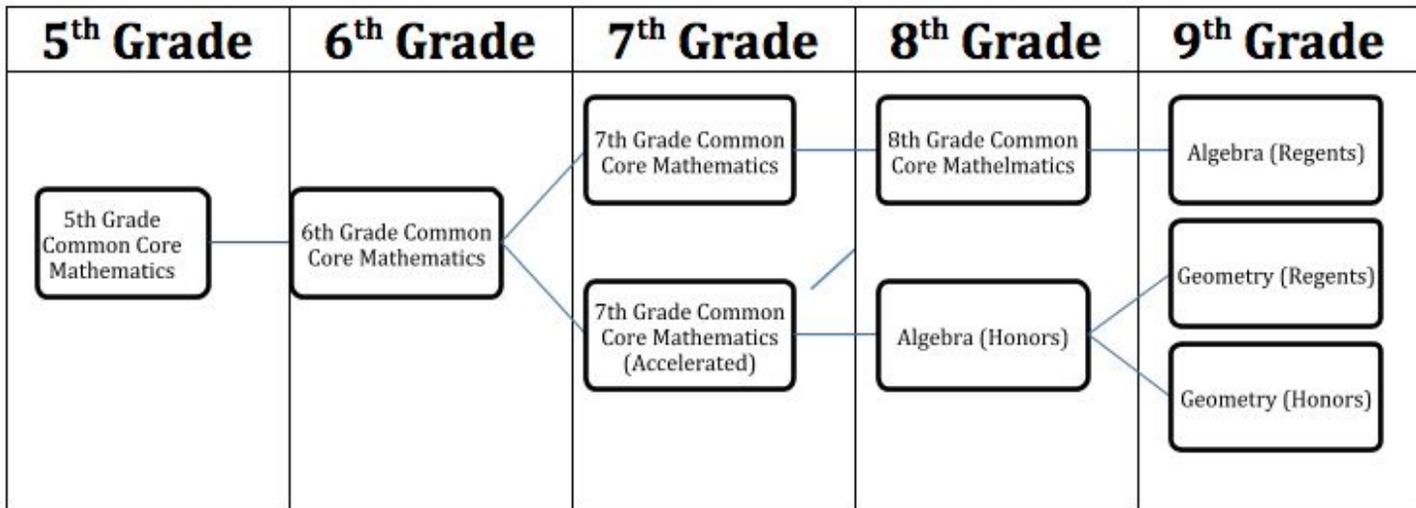
# The Academic Core: English Language Arts



**Grade 8 English Language Arts:** The grade 8 English Language Arts curriculum is designed to further students' competence and independence as readers, writers, speakers, listeners, researchers, and critical thinkers. Students build on and expand the knowledge and skills acquired in earlier grades and apply them to increasingly sophisticated fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and non-print texts. Students engage with these texts as both readers and writers, strengthening their comprehension and refining their written expression.

The writing curriculum includes, but is not limited to, the creation of narrative, expository, and persuasive texts, as well as poetry and formal and informal responses to texts. Students work both independently and in groups. Throughout the year, instruction on topics such as literacy elements and techniques, grade-level grammar and mechanics, and vocabulary acquisition is integrated into students' reading and writing experiences. English Language Arts class meet twice each day.

# The Academic Core: Mathematics



The goal of the mathematics program at Jamesville-DeWitt is to provide a rigorous mathematics experience for all students, in accordance with NYS Common Core Standards, National Standards for Mathematics Education, and best practices in the teaching of mathematics. Students will learn to persevere as problem solvers and thinkers throughout their mathematics coursework at JDMS.

**Grade 8 Common Core Mathematics:** This course is rigorous in its curriculum and expectations. Students will learn 8<sup>th</sup> grade mathematics as defined by New York State including topics such as: solving equations in one and two variables, solving systems of linear equations, functions, transformational geometry, angles, volume, statistics, number systems, and the Pythagorean theorem. Students in this course will be expected to think critically about mathematics, and use mathematics to model real world problems. Upon successful completion of this course, students will take Algebra (Regents) in 9<sup>th</sup> grade. **Prerequisites: Successful completion of 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Common Core Mathematics.**

**Algebra Honors:** Students in this course will learn NYS Common Core Algebra at an honors level. This course is highly rigorous and fast-paced, designed for students who have superior command of middle school math and a passion for solving challenging problems. Students in this course are encouraged to think critically about how math can be used to solve real-world problems. Algebra honors students must take the NYS Algebra Common Core Regents Exam in June. Both the course grade and the Regents exam will appear on a student’s high school transcript. Upon successful completion of the course, students will earn their first high school math credit. **Prerequisites: Successful completion of 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Common Core Mathematics (Accelerated).**



# Wellness: Physical Education



**Grade 8 Physical Education:** The Jamesville-DeWitt Physical Education program is based upon the acquisition of knowledge and skills that are the foundation for engaging in physical activity. Our mission is to empower all students to sustain regular, lifelong physical activity as a foundation for a healthy, productive and fulfilling life.

The Physical Education curriculum is a sequential educational program. It is based on physical activities undertaken in an active, caring, supportive and nonthreatening atmosphere in which every student is challenged and successful. We aim to provide every student with a wide variety of physical activities and challenges that will contribute to the development and maintenance of their physical, cognitive, and affective well being. Ultimately, students will be provided with the foundation for making informed decisions that will empower them to achieve and maintain a healthy lifestyle.

# Wellness: Physical Education

<b>Unit Themes</b>		
Fitness	Aquatics	Striking/Fielding Sports
Project Adventure	Team Passing Sports	Personal Performance
Net & Wall Activities	Target Activities	Dance/Aesthetic Movement

<b>Physical Education Participation Proficiencies/Student Targets</b>
Develop and consistently demonstrate appropriate dress and participation.
Develop and demonstrate at a novice skill level, basic skills in as many kinds of activities as possible.
Develop and consistently demonstrate good sportsmanship.
Continually develop good safety habits while playing sports and partaking in physical activity.
Develop physical fitness by partaking in activities, which enhance their endurance, coordination, strength, agility, and speed.
Develop and consistently demonstrate appropriate decision making ability and accepting responsibility.
Perform and develop the areas of flexibility, abdominal, upper body strength, agility, and endurance.
Demonstrate the ability to work cooperatively with peers and teachers through a variety of physical activities.

\*Students will need to bring a change of clothes and wear sneakers to Physical Education. There are no Physical Education locker or locks. Students will need to bring their clothes to and from Physical Education.

# Wellness: Health



**Grade 8 Health:** This class is designed to have students achieve independence in retrieval of health related materials and skills to use throughout their lives. Topics that will be covered include: 1<sup>st</sup> aid, disease prevention, mental health challenges, a continuation of the puberty unit (STI/HIV, teenage pregnancy,) as well as social media safety. During class time, we will have a guest speaker from the Vera House presenting four lessons about healthy and dangerous relationships.

# Home and Careers



**Home and career** skills is a course designed to help middle school students live in a society of constant change and to improve their quality of life preparing them to meet their present and future responsibilities as family members, consumers, **homemanagers**, and wage earners.

**Grade 8 Home & Careers:** Students in eighth grade Home & Careers will use various assessment tools to explore potential career options. Students will research careers that match their personalities, values, and goals. Students will learn about and practice job seeking skills such as properly filling out applications and participating in job interviews. We will discuss the importance of setting goals, demonstrate good goal setting procedures, become aware of what employers are look for when hiring, and will be able to describe the skills needed to be a good employee. Students will also study basic interior design using scale, proportion and color to create functional and pleasing spaces, stressing the importance of good design in overall well being. Students will learn the importance of budgeting. They will set priorities, create a workable budget to furnish a home and work toward being a smart and informed consumer. In addition, students will be introduced to both hand and machine sewing. They will practice basic skills such as sewing a hem and securing a button, and will be creating a project using the sewing machine.



# Fine Arts: Art & Advanced Art



**Grade 8 Art:** Eighth grade Art is a 10 week class that meets every day. This class is built upon and is an extension of the previous seventh grade basic skills. Students will focus on 2D and 3D Art concepts of drawing, painting, graphics, printmaking, ceramics, and sculpture. Composition is reinforced as the core and substance of all Art production. Students develop and refine basic skills as well as develop concepts and subject matter that answer the questions “Who Am I” and “What Do I Want To Say?” Career awareness is introduced as students learn to take their ideas to the next creative level by problem solving and arriving at original, unique solutions. Students learn the importance of exhibition through community Art shows including the CNY Scholastic Arts Show. Students are also able to participate in the Theatre Arts set production

**Grade 8 Advanced Art:** Eighth grade Advanced Art is a 40 week course that meets every other day. The class in addition and an extension to Eighth Grade Art. Students are expected to demonstrate a desire, motivation, and interest that is far above and beyond the regular eighth grade interest. Students will experience an ever changing developmental level of Art with a focus on the improvement of their drawing ability. Students will explore all 2D and 3D mediums and will be able to match idea with medium and technique. Students will also be introduced to Art history, career development and aesthetics. Aptitude and talent is an important criteria for selections, but more importantly, students should demonstrate an exceptional drive and interest in improving their own Art and becoming part of a community. Students should be at a level that allows more creativity and self-expression to be layered on top of excellent skills. Outside classwork is necessary and inevitable. Sketchbooks are required.

# Technology



*Technology education uses concepts of science, math, social studies, and language arts in a hands-on, systems-based approach to problem solving. It guides students in the understanding, design, and development of systems, devices, and products to serve human needs and wants. Students will learn the fundamentals of design and materials processing through the use of hands-on activities. Learning the safe use of hand and power tools will enable our students to construct their designs. They will learn to use the computer as a tool by completing activities that include laser cutting, 3D printing, and robotics. Students that develop their problem solving skills in technology education will be better prepared for their future in any area of study. Hands on activities will focus on increasing student's technical literacy and encourage them to pursue careers in the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics fields.*

## **Technology Grade 8:**

By applying the principles of design students have learned throughout their technology classes they will be able to create specialized vehicles to compete in classroom competition. With the students more advanced skill set they will have the opportunity to safely use power tools to process a wide variety of materials. Through the use of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics the students will discover what makes their designs effective.

# Languages Other Than English: World Languages



**Grade 8 World Languages (level 1):** During this course, students will move further toward the goal of proficiency and/or fluency in Spanish, French, or Chinese cultures and languages. The complexity of the vocabulary and grammar will continue to increase, as will tasks related to reading, writing, listening, speaking, and culture. Students will be expected to communicate and interact more in the target language. An honors distinction is offered to students who challenge themselves with more rigorous expectations within the curriculum. Students may also participate in national-level language contests. Language classes meet daily for 38 minutes.



# World Languages



By the end of 8<sup>th</sup> grade, students are expected to achieve proficiency at the level of NYS Standard Checkpoint A. This means that a student can express basic personal needs and compose short messages on very familiar topics based on personal experience. Writing consists mostly of mastered vocabulary and structures in simple sentences and phrases. Errors in spelling and grammar may be frequent but writing can be understood by native speakers used to dealing with foreigners.

Over their three years of study at JDMS, students are taught many topics, and the curriculum is created so that we construct a foundation in the language and “spiral” back to review what we’ve learned and continue to build on it.

In 8<sup>th</sup> grade, the themes and grammatical aspects covered are as follows:

## French

*Topics:* Clothing, shopping, leisure activities including travel, meal-taking, food and drink, health and welfare

*Grammar:* irregular adjectives, adverbs, stem changing verbs, making comparisons, IR verbs, RE verbs, more irregular verbs, command forms, past tense (passé composé), direct object pronouns

## Mandarin Chinese

*Topics:* Professions, time, directions, furniture, rooms in a house, numbers, weekdays, school subjects, animals and insects, activities, food and meal taking, body parts

*Grammar:* prepositions of location, extending invitations, polite requests, past tense, future tense

## Spanish

*Topics:* Places in a city, directions, transportation, shopping, food, daily chores, rooms in a house, celebrations, professions, environment, ordinal numbers

*Grammar:* past tense, commands, prepositions of location, stem-changing verbs, direct object pronouns, indirect object pronouns, reflexive verbs, adverbs

Toward the end of the school year, all classes will review for the cumulative final exam in each language. If students are in a class with the Honors designation, they will cover the same curriculum. It is not an accelerated class but it will be enriched and move at a faster pace with expectations that students maintain an 85 average. All 8<sup>th</sup> grade students taking a level 1 foreign language class will receive a high school credit if they pass the course and the final exam.

## Electives: Band, Orchestra, Chorus



**Grade 8 Band:** Band is an elective, full-year course. The bands at Jamesville-DeWitt Middle School are performing ensembles consisting of members of the woodwind, brass, and percussion families of instruments. Band meets every other day (in addition to weekly group lessons) and all band students are expected to perform in their respective ensemble's concerts. In addition, musical growth and achievement are encouraged through participation in NYSSMA Solo Festival, All County Band, Jazz Ensemble, and Pit Band.

**Grade 8 Orchestra:** The Jamesville-DeWitt Eighth grade Orchestra of students that have 3-4 years of experience in addition to having played in the seventh grade Orchestra. Orchestra meets every other day during fifth period. Students in the Orchestra will work on techniques and develop skills to perform in the ensemble. Concerts are a mandatory part of the Orchestra program. Some extracurricular opportunities are also available to students.

**Grade 8 Chorus:** Eighth Grade Chorus is an extension of the General Music classroom, with a focus on developing musicality and music literacy through singing and performing as an ensemble. Throughout the year, students sing four-part music from a variety of historical periods and cultures, while developing an understanding of personal responsibility and what it means to make music with others. Eighth Grade Chorus rehearses every other day and offers three concerts throughout the school year.

# Student Services: Academic Intervention Services



**Grade 8 Academic Intervention Services:** To increase student learning in all curricular areas, staff engage in ongoing analysis of multiple sources of student data resulting in modification of instruction and instructional resources. Instruction will be differentiated for students where a gap exists between their performance and the performance of the total population. Success will be evaluated based upon positive trends in student data. Academic Support Services are used to strengthen students' skills and well as build confidence with academics. Students attend Academic Intervention Services every other day in a small group setting. We use this time to reinforce basic skills, re-teach concepts, and help students grasp new material when introduced in the classroom.

**Jamesville-DeWitt Middle School Goal:** We will continue to use STAR reading and grade book to create academic intervention priorities. We will use STAR Mathematics data to create intervention priorities within the classroom. We will continue to use the academic data from individual students to improve remediation and pre-teaching opportunities.

# Counseling Services

**OUR MISSION:** The mission of the counseling staff at Jamesville-DeWitt Middle School is to provide high quality, comprehensive, school counseling services to all students. Our programs are designed to help all students develop and enhance their academic, social and personal strengths in order to become responsible and successful students.

The middle school years are characterized by the term "transition." During these years, students experience more physical and emotional changes than in any other year other than infancy. The middle school counselors assist students, parents, and staff in dealing with this transitional phase. Programs in the middle school assist students in:

- Making choices and dealing with changes
- Setting goals
- Organizing information
- Learning about themselves and dealing with personal relationships
- Developing skills related to decision making and problem solving

The middle school counselor's role encompasses coordination, consulting, and counseling. Coordination involves managing various aspects of services that help students succeed. Consultation is a key vehicle used to address the needs of the emerging adolescent student. The middle school counselor consults with parents, teachers, other educational professionals on personal, social, and academic matters. The school counselor delivers services through a variety of methods such as individual counseling, small group counseling, and classroom activities and lessons. In any counseling situation the particular topics presented or discussed are based upon the needs of the students.

Parents are encouraged to contact their child's counselor if they have concerns about their progress or well being. By working closely together, parents, counselors, and teachers can help students achieve success.