

East Windsor Middle School Course Descriptions: 2018-2019

UA COURSES for ALL

Organizational Skills- A yearlong graded course available for all students in grade 5. The first half quarter of the year will focus on necessary study skills and organizational techniques. The remainder of the year will include access to a keyboarding program, so as to provide students with the foundational skills that will help them be prepared as middle schoolers. This class meets once every 3 days for 47 minutes.

STEM-

A yearlong pass/fail course available to students in grades 5-8. STEM is defined as “an interdisciplinary approach to learning that removes the traditional barriers separating the four disciplines of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics and integrates them into real-world, rigorous, and relevant learning experiences for students” (STEM Lesson Essentials, Jo Anne Vasquez, Heinemann, 2013).

This course will provide students with the following key learning values, which are tied to the Next Generation Science Standards:

- Learn and use engineering design process skills (robotics will be a component within this course)
- Apply knowledge of science concepts, such as speed and power, motion and stability, and forces and interactions
- Understand the core concepts of technology
- Understand the role of troubleshooting, invention and innovation, and experimentation in problem solving
- Demonstrate creative thinking and construct knowledge using technology
- Use digital media and environments to communicate and work collaboratively

This class meets once every 3 days for 47 minutes.

Writing Lab- A yearlong graded course for students in grade 6 and 7; a semester long graded course for grade 8. Students will be taught English Language Arts (ELA) standards through a focus on writing formats not addressed in the core ELA course. Students will receive instruction in: creative writing, published writing, expository writing, and digital writing. This class meets once every 3 days for 47 minutes.

UA COURSES: ELECTIVES

Performance Literacy- A yearlong pass/fail course available for selected students in grades 5-8 who consistently score above benchmark on district and classroom assessments and have been recommended by their Language Arts teachers and literacy coach. Students will study a variety of literary styles, formats, purposes, audiences, and tasks to create their own literacy-based performances. Some examples of student performances may include oral presentations, historical reenactments, speeches, reader's theater, mock trials, and debates. Grades will reflect mastery of the grade level speaking and listening standards. This class meets once every 3 days for 47 minutes.

Math Olympiads- A yearlong pass/fail course available for selected students in grades 5-8 who consistently score above benchmark on district and classroom assessments and have been recommended by their Math teacher and numeracy coach. Math Olympiads is a course designed to teach the major strategies of problem solving, to foster mathematical ingenuity and to kindle enthusiasm for mathematics. During the course, students complete 5 international Math Olympiads contests that require students to apply the various problem-solving strategies they acquire throughout the course.

The goals of the course are for students to:

- develop enthusiasm for problem solving and mathematics,
- deepen the understanding of mathematical concepts and strengthen ability to use these concepts,
- consider concepts that they might not otherwise encounter, and
- build a stronger foundation for assessments and for future mathematics studies.

Grades will reflect student proficiency with the 8 Common Core Mathematical Practices. This class meets once every 3 days for 47 minutes.

INTERVENTIONS

RAMP Math- An ungraded intervention offered quarterly to selected students in grades 5-8 who score below benchmark on the STAR math assessment and demonstrate the need for instructional support in mathematics. This program provides instruction in foundational concepts and skills. Student progress will be closely monitored to ensure skills are increasing. This intervention will meet a minimum of once every 3 days for 47 minutes up to a maximum of 47 minutes daily depending on individual need.

RAMP Reading- An ungraded intervention offered quarterly to selected students in grades 5-8 who score below benchmark on the STAR reading assessment and demonstrate the need for instructional support in reading. This program provides instruction in foundational concepts and skills. Student progress will be closely monitored to ensure skills are increasing. This intervention will meet a minimum of once every 3 days for 47 minutes up to a maximum of 47 minutes daily depending on individual need.

Wildcat Academy- An ungraded intervention offered quarterly to selected students in grades 5-8 based on teacher recommendation. This program provides students opportunities to strengthen their work habits and improve independent learning that will apply within the classroom. Students will receive academic support, enhancement or reinforcement of classroom skills, organizational tips, and/or study techniques. Progress will be based on classroom performance, teacher observation and quarterly grades. This intervention will meet a minimum of once every 3 days for 47 minutes depending on individual need.

ADDITIONAL ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

ACE (Academic Center for Excellence)- An afterschool program offered to selected students in all grades starting after the beginning of the school year. Students are selected by their grade level team of teachers. Students will receive guidance for all subject area homework. This program meets on a weekly basis, as posted, for an hour.

Spanish Language and Culture: This course provides an introduction to the language and culture of the Spanish-speaking world. Focus is placed on familiarity and basic introduction to four skills: reading and listening comprehension and writing and speaking. This class is mainly conducted in English. This class meets daily for 47 minutes.

Spanish 1: This course provides an introduction to the language and culture of the Spanish-speaking world. Focus is placed on development and competence of four skills: reading and listening comprehension and writing and speaking. Much practice is also dedicated to pronunciation, lexicon and syntax through a variety of materials. This class is conducted in Spanish and English. This class meets on a daily basis for 47 minutes.