

***VERONA AREA CORE KNOWLEDGE®
CHARTER SCHOOL
MIDDLE SCHOOL***



**CURRICULUM HANDBOOK
Seventh GRADE
2017 – 2018**

Verona Area Core Knowledge® Charter School

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Rick Kisting – Director

Dear Parents and Students:

Verona Area Core Knowledge® Charter School (CKCS) is proud of the Middle School choice we provide to students in the Verona Area School District. This handbook is designed to convey basic information about the core classes available at CKCS, as well as the Encore classes.

The CKCS Middle School curriculum is built around the Core Knowledge® Sequence. This curriculum does an excellent job of preparing your child for high school and educational endeavors beyond. Our Middle School provides a seamless transition for students from our elementary program. It also provides a well-balanced academic choice for students new to CKCS. The positive and supportive staff at CKCS provides high quality instruction in nurturing classroom environments.

Please review the materials and contact us with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,



Mr. Rick Kisting
Director
608 845-4133



Ms. Tamara Gunwall
Curriculum Coordinator
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SEVENTH GRADE

Required Classes

English Literature/Language Arts

Math

Science

Social Studies

Physical Education

Exploratory Classes:

❖ Art

❖ Family and Consumer Education

❖ Information and Technology Literacy

❖ World Language: Spanish, Introduction to Spanish
Language Arts, or German

Elective Classes:

Band

Orchestra

Choir

REQUIRED CORE CLASSES

English Literature/ Language Arts

The CKCS seventh grade language arts curriculum includes writing and grammar skills, vocabulary development and selected literature. Students currently use *Vocabulary Workshop* and literature from a variety of sources. Students will study classic literature in the forms of short stories and poems by authors including Tennyson, Frost, Cullen, Eliot, Poe, Thurber, and Hughes. Novels studied in seventh grade include *Call of the Wild*, *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, and *The Giver*. Each fall the students read a Shakespeare play and attend a performance at American Players Theatre as a way to expose them to live Shakespearean theater. Students write a variety of pieces including poetry, short stories, and expository essays that describe, narrate, persuade, and compare/contrast. Students also have ample opportunities for public speaking, both individually and in small groups.

Mathematics

Students are tested and placed into a math course according to their instructional level, teacher recommendations, CKCS math guidelines, and test scores. Students who demonstrate advanced math skills may be placed into accelerated math classes and are provided coursework at their instructional level. Remedial and enrichment activities are provided within the classroom, as appropriate. Students study many math subject areas including numbers and number sense, fractions and decimals, ratio, percent and proportion, computation skills, problem solving skills, pre-algebra, measurement, geometry, and probability and statistics. Throughout the year, students develop their mathematical thinking skills within the content.

Science

Seventh grade science curriculum explores the topics of Atomic Structure, Chemistry, Cell Reproduction, Evolution, and the History of Earth and Life Forms through multiple hands-on labs and activities. Students will expand upon scientific content and lab skills learned in previous years while continuing to develop their use of the scientific method. Key components of the curriculum are formulating hypotheses, developing inquiry skills, research and documentation through written reports. All seventh graders participate in the science fair second semester.

Social Studies

The CKCS social studies program continues to blend its world history and US history strands. The time frame for seventh grade starts in the early 1900's and continues through WWII. The central themes of study are growth and change in American democracy and the interactions with world forces. This study includes the Russian Revolution, the rise of totalitarianism in Europe, and the effects of the two great wars in Europe and at home in the U.S. The study of geography aims at understanding the spatial relationship between nature and human culture, along with the processes that change environments. The areas of Europe, Russia (and its former republics), Japan and the United States will be studied as students explore the interactions of world forces during this time period. A variety of learning strategies are utilized including drama, simulations, and technological applications.

Physical Education

The main emphasis of the middle school physical education program is developing healthy bodies and healthy minds. Cardiovascular fitness and the development of life long fitness skills are a main focus at all grade levels. Instructors constantly strive to boost student self-image through positive reinforcement.

Activities include: Soccer, fitness testing, team sports, individual sports, flag football, racquet sports, adventure education, creative dance, and cooperative games.

EXPLORATORY CLASSES

Each seventh grader takes art, a world language, family and consumer education, and information and technology literacy for a nine-week period. A brief description of each class is listed below:

Art

The art course in seventh grade continues to promote an understanding of art through hands on learning experiences. This course encourages the student to be an artist and explore art materials, art mediums and techniques. This class offers a balance of directed instruction, focused on the elements and principles of design along with offering student choice. Students develop a portfolio of their work and continue to grow in artistic vocabulary and their ability to reflect and discuss art.

Family and Consumer Education

In seventh grade **FAMILY AND CONSUMER EDUCATION**, students look more in-depth at the following topics: Nutrition, Human Growth & Development, Personal Financial Literacy, Bullying Prevention and Community Service (Quilt Sewing Project). In addition, students will practice their decision-making skills and learn how to respond proactively to life situations, both as individual and with others.

Information and Technology Literacy

Information and Technology Processing (Info Tech) provides students with the opportunity to work on expanding their understanding of the following broad topics: programming, website design, network basics, keyboarding, internet safety, internet searching, word processing, graphic organizers, visual literacy/multi-media presentations, digital video, spreadsheets, databases, and e-mail.

WORLD LANGUAGE

In seventh grade, students are required to take either German or Spanish as a quarter-long course. If a student chooses to continue studying a world language in eighth grade, he or she must continue with the same language chosen in seventh grade. The eighth grade course is an advanced yearlong class.

Spanish

In seventh grade Spanish, students will build upon the Spanish vocabulary learned in sixth grade and continue learning concepts including telling time, body parts, classroom objects, singular and plural nouns and articles. Students will continue learning in more depth about the culture in the Spanish speaking countries. Students will develop Spanish skills through interactive lessons involving reading, writing, speaking and listening.

Introduction to Spanish Language Arts

The goal of Spanish Language Arts is to introduce the study of grammar and literature in Spanish. The prerequisites for this class include that the student speaks Spanish fluently and is comfortable with the language. In this class, students will practice and improve their listening, speaking, reading and writing skills in Spanish.

German

Seventh grade German students begin developing skills in all four areas of language: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Topics include numbers, days of the week, classroom vocabulary, family, and simple conversations. Students will also learn about the characteristics and cultures of the German-speaking countries. In addition to targeting the four main areas of communication, lessons incorporate a variety of activities such as educational apps, videos, and interactive games.

MUSIC

Music changes may be made only during the first three days of the semester and only with the recommendation of the student's counselor.

Why take a music class in middle school?

There are many compelling reasons to study music in middle school. Many research studies have linked music instruction to higher achievement in math, reading, and general cognition scores. Music is academic, and the study of music in the ensemble setting combines these academic pursuits with the skills of teamwork, perseverance, and focus.

Music educators around the world argue for the inclusion of music in every child's education, not because they expect all students to become professional musicians, but because they believe that the skills gained in the music classroom are beneficial to all learners no matter what field of study they eventually pursue.

The Music Department feels that these academic and social skills are an important part of learning, but offers one additional reason to study music in middle school. Over the years, we have met many students who had little experience singing or on an instrument when they entered sixth grade, but discovered a true passion for music once given the opportunity. This is not something that we take lightly. Regardless of whether it becomes a student's career choice, we strongly believe that students should take every opportunity to learn more about a subject which they are, or could become, passionate about.

Band

Band class for seventh grade musicians is a continuation of the sixth grade experience. Performance and personal skills are further developed and reinforced. These musicians may also be involved in Jazz Ensemble, and solo and ensemble festival. Band class meets daily and is designed to be challenging, fast-paced and fun!

Students must have previously taken summer band **or** have prior playing experience to be in seventh grade band.

Orchestra

Seventh grade orchestra meets every day during the school year. Musicians in this ensemble develop intermediate skills in music reading, bowing technique, and left hand accuracy. The music performed by this ensemble will be at a higher level but the year begins with music that is accessible to all seventh graders. Seventh grade orchestra gives three to four evening concerts each year. Students in the seventh grade are eligible to participate in the Wisconsin School Music Association (WSMA) Solo/Ensemble Festival. Students must have at least one year of playing experience to be scheduled for this orchestra class.

Choir

Seventh grade choir is the intermediate choir. Students continue learning about singing and music in a large group. A student is welcome even if singing is new to him/her. Singers learn and review the basic skills of singing while digging deep into the meaning and overall understanding of each piece of music. Students explore and listen to everything from classical to jazz. Introduction of A cappella music is also an important part of this class with the goal of independent singing. In addition to a music education, students will continue to learn the skills of cooperation, dedication, and self-discipline. Concerts, participation in festivals, solo and ensemble and tours are all part of the experience.

A separate class period for a boy's seventh/eighth choir will be held. In addition to the skills stated above, boys will explore how to use their voice while experiencing a voice change. This is an environment where boys will be singing with others with similar voices.

SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

The middle school offers programs that meet the needs of all our students. Special education services address the individual needs of any student who meets state eligibility criteria for special education. Our special education program follows a cross-categorical service delivery model which includes planning with regular education teachers. This model provides specially designed services for students with learning, speech, behavioral, physical, health, hearing, visual, developmental and/or intellectual disabilities. Each student identified as having special education needs has an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) as determined by an IEP team. Students may receive services on an individual basis, in small groups, and/or in the classroom.

RESOURCE AREAS

We believe strongly in providing additional resources beyond the classroom materials to facilitate the learning of our students. One key resource area is the Library Media Center (LMC) which includes our technology staff. The LMC is a functional and integral part of our classroom instruction and is used on a regular basis by all students. This resource area is facilitated by a certified Library Media Specialist and Information Technology coordinators. Additional resource areas are three grade level Learning Labs staffed by certified resource staff. Learning labs are available for small group instruction, collaborative projects, and homework assistance.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

School Counselors

The counseling program is designed to help develop decision making skills, coping skills, communication skills, and study skills in school. Counselors address these issues in classrooms, small groups, individual meetings, and parent conferences.

Counseling groups are offered to all students. Those who express interest may be invited to join a group related to one of the following topics:

- Family Issues: How to live with parents and siblings
- Stress Management: How to relax and reduce stress
- Family Change: Separation, divorce and remarriage issues
- Concerned Persons: Caring about someone's abuse of drugs or alcohol.
- Grief/Loss: How to cope with the death or loss of a family member

Parents/guardians are encouraged to contact the counseling staff at any time with questions or concerns.

Social Worker

The primary function of the school social worker is to promote the emotional, social and mental wellbeing and adjustment of students. The school social worker provides direct and indirect services to students, parents and school staff. Services may include counseling and family intervention, groups, consultation with staff or parents, liaison with community agencies, classroom instruction, and coordination and implementation of district programs. The social worker role includes advocacy for children and families in the school system and community programs.

School Psychologist

The school psychologist at the middle school is an integral team member in helping to determine the educational needs of students who are experiencing difficulty finding success at school. The psychologist conducts formal evaluations of students to determine placement in special education programs and informal evaluations of students to determine learning and/or behavioral difficulties. Other services provided by the school psychologist include teacher consultation, parent consultation, and individual counseling sessions with students, and small groups focused on social/emotional/academic development.

Curriculum Coordinator

The purpose of the Curriculum Coordinator position is to ensure that students receive instruction based on their individual needs, strengths and weaknesses. Some of the tasks associated with this position include, but are not limited to:

- Collecting and disseminating information about students who demonstrate programmatic needs associated with at-risk characteristics
- Collecting and disseminating information about students who demonstrate programmatic needs associated with gifted and talented characteristics
- Consulting with teams to develop strategies to meet individual student needs
- Facilitating curriculum implementation, development, revision, and articulation
- Providing staff development in the form of workshops and in-service
- Serving as a conduit for information related to sound educational practice

The curriculum coordinator is also involved in the development and evolution of long range goals which foster ways in which staff can work together to promote student learning.

Resource Teacher

Our regular education resource teacher works with students in small groups. Focus is on reading and math. The resource teacher also meets with students during tutorial time daily or every other day to work on deficit skills students may have as well as to teach some organizational skills to help students meet with success in middle school.

Programs for English Language Learners

We welcome students from all cultures and backgrounds. In addition to learning science, math, social studies, language arts, and other academic content, English language learners (ELLs) must also become proficient in English (speaking, listening, reading, and writing). To meet students' needs and follow federal and state laws, Badger Ridge provides the following programs which allow ELL students to learn grade level content and English.

English Language Development

A certified ESL teacher teaches English Language Development as a daily scheduled class. This class supplements the curriculum of the grade level language arts class, but also places an additional emphasis on learning the structure of the English language, as well as various forms of writing, listening and speaking. Additional topics may include content area vocabulary in math, science, and social studies.

English as a Second Language (ESL)

A certified ESL teacher teaches ESL as a daily scheduled class. Topics may include survival vocabulary, basic conversation, as well as listening and pronunciation of the English language. Emphasis is placed on practical everyday English and communication skills.

ESL and Bilingual in-class support

An ESL or bilingual teacher works in collaboration with the classroom teacher in general education classes. The teacher works with ELL students within the classroom, supporting individuals or small groups. Content area classes may include writing, reading, math, science or social studies vocabulary development. Content area classes may include vocabulary development in writing, reading, math, science or social studies.

Accommodations made by the Grade Level and Encore Teachers

Grade level teachers modify the way they teach to make the content more understandable. They use visuals, regalia (objects from real life used in the classroom), pacing (slower, explain difficult vocabulary), provide more individual help, repeat directions, use visual representations, post content and language objectives, etc. These accommodations are designed to ensure that ELL students receive the same content as native speakers.