

8th Grade Academics

The Academy provides a venue in which all students can be educated and assessed in both traditional and non-traditional ways, thereby helping children to thrive in all learning environment. The middle school curriculum is challenging, differentiated, project driven and real-world connected both in and through the arts. At WMAAA, your child will become a confident and excited learner.

Language Arts:

Our eighth grade English Language Arts program continues to develop strength in reading, writing, speaking, listening and responding skills. Your child will increase his/her ability to analyze and synthesize information and thoughts, and become a self-aware, confident reader, writer and speaker that uses various communicating skills and mediums to gain or share knowledge for learning in preparation for high school. The eighth grade English Language Arts student will do the following:

- Use more sophisticated word decoding skills and strategies to increase fluency and comprehension
- Continue to analyze elements and style of an expanding list of narrative genres and study how authors use various tools to develop credible narrators, rising and falling action and minor characters
- Increase knowledge of style and elements of information genre and use this knowledge to improve comprehension strategies
- Refine and strengthen strategies and knowledge of organization tools to self monitor comprehension and to take initiative to recognize and correct comprehension challenges
- Continue to strengthen use and knowledge of various literary devices, prewriting skills, editing and revising tools and writing strategies across an increasing number of writing genres
- Strengthen process writing skills while focusing on the development of personal style, grammar usage and spelling skills
- Respond thoughtfully, both orally and in writing, to a speaker's point of view while separating fact from opinion.

Science:

Eighth grade students combine open ended project learning and informational learning skills to study specific units within the earth, biological and physical science fields. Science processes of inquiry, reflection, and constructing new knowledge that have been initiated in previous grades are strengthened and broadened. Specific units of study include the following:

- Metric measurement and working with data
- Space
- Heredity and evolution
- Chemistry
- Working with laboratory equipment
- Electricity and magnetism
- Plant and animal reproduction.

Mathematics:

The focus of eighth grade math is a more detailed study of functions and their applications to the real world. Functions are explored through their symbolic, graphical, tabular, and written forms. Students understand and build connections between the forms and can apply them in real-world situations. Students continue to develop skills in the following areas:

- Foundations for algebra
- Equations
- Inequalities
- Functions (linear, exponential, and quadratic)
- Systems of equations and inequalities
- Exponents and polynomials
- Factoring polynomials
- Data analysis and probability
- Rational functions.

*Opportunities for accelerated math growth exist for identified students in sixth grade through eighth grade.

Social Studies:

Eighth Grade Social studies is a return to American History which was started in fifth grade. Beginning with the pre-revolutionary war era and culminating at the beginning of the 1900's, topics are explored through simulations, dramatizations, and research through primary and secondary sources. The historical eras studied are as follows:

- Foundations of government
- Westward expansion
- Early foreign policy
- Reform era
- Civil War and reconstruction
- Revolutionary War.



Every Child Successful, Everyday !

Middle School Arts

Great schools require the arts! Our arts programs engage all students in the acts of creating, performing, analyzing, and responding. The arts provide unique avenues for communicating ideas, stimulating creativity and enriching the academic curriculum. By providing arts opportunities to a child, that child is exposed to a variety of new ways to view and experience the world. It is our belief that the powerful combination of academics and arts addresses the needs for multiple learning styles and provides the foundation for students to transition successfully to tomorrow's world of opportunities.

Our middle school program supports our integration structure, while adding a locally unique arts focus requirement similar to a college major. Beginning in sixth grade, students must commit nine out of twenty-four of their middle school electives to a specific arts focus area. This provides students with a more thorough knowledge base of a particular art discipline while allowing them to continue exploration in other arts and other enrichment areas. Listed below are the opportunities available to our middle school students in their three years at the Academy.



Art Focus Areas:

- Band
- Piano
- Vocal music
- Tap dance
- Ballet/jazz dance
- Theatre
- Musical theatre
- Visual art

Theatre:

- Voice and Movement for Actors
- Improvisation
- Theatre History I & II
- Drama and Social Issues
- Musical Theatre

Visual Arts:

- Multi-Media Art
- Sculpture and Advanced Sculpture
- Art History I & II
- Drawing
- Painting
- Human Connections through art

Instrumental Music:

- Piano
- Intermediate and Advanced Band
- Percussion Team



Vocal Music:

- Cantilena Chorale (fifth and sixth grade choir)
- Bel Canto Singers (seventh and eighth grade choir)
- Musical Theatre

Technology:

- Technology Tools
- World Cultures and Languages (Rosetta Stone)
- CAD Drawing



Other Elective Opportunities:

- Creative Writing I & II
- Rocket Science
- Bridges and More
- Hollywood Films: Fact or Fiction
- Intro to Film/Documentary



* Specific course descriptions available upon request

