



BLUE VALLEY SCHOOLS  
Middle School  
Programming  
Guide

**2024-25**

## Blue Valley Middle Schools

### **Aubry Bend**

#### **Middle School**

913/624-2300

12501 West 175<sup>th</sup> Street

Overland Park, KS 66221

Counseling Department

913/624-2316

[www.bluevalleyk12.org/abms](http://www.bluevalleyk12.org/abms)

### **Blue Valley**

#### **Middle School**

913/239-5100

5001 West 163<sup>rd</sup> Terrace

Stilwell, KS 66085

Counseling Department

913/239-5116

[www.bluevalleyk12.org/bvm](http://www.bluevalleyk12.org/bvm)

### **Harmony**

#### **Middle School**

913/239-5200

10101 West 141<sup>st</sup> Street

Overland Park, KS 66221

Counseling Department

913/239-5216

[www.bluevalleyk12.org/hms](http://www.bluevalleyk12.org/hms)

### **Lakewood**

#### **Middle School**

913/239-5800

6601 Edgewater Drive

Overland Park, KS 66223

Counseling Department

913/239-5816

[www.bluevalleyk12.org/lkm](http://www.bluevalleyk12.org/lkm)

### **Leawood**

#### **Middle School**

913/239-5300

2410 West 123<sup>rd</sup> Street

Leawood, KS 66209

Counseling Department

913/239-5316

[www.bluevalleyk12.org/lms](http://www.bluevalleyk12.org/lms)

### **Overland Trail**

**Middle School**

913/239-5400  
6201 West 133<sup>rd</sup> Street  
Overland Park, KS 66209  
Counseling Department  
913/239-5416  
[www.bluevalleyk12.org/otms](http://www.bluevalleyk12.org/otms)

**Oxford****Middle School**

913/239-5500  
12500 Switzer  
Overland Park, KS 66213  
Counseling Department  
913/239-5516  
[www.bluevalleyk12.org/oms](http://www.bluevalleyk12.org/oms)

**Pleasant Ridge****Middle School**

913/239-5700  
9000 West 165<sup>th</sup> Street  
Overland Park, KS 66085  
Counseling Department  
913/239-5716  
[www.bluevalleyk12.org/prm](http://www.bluevalleyk12.org/prm)

**Prairie Star****Middle School**

913/239-5600  
14201 Mission Road  
Leawood, KS 66224  
Counseling Department  
913/239-5616  
[www.bluevalleyk12.org/psm](http://www.bluevalleyk12.org/psm)

Blue Valley School District  
15020 Metcalf, P.O. Box 23901  
Overland Park, Kansas 66283-0901  
(913) 239-4000

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## **Blue Valley Middle Schools**

Blue Valley middle schools are designed to meet the needs of a special group of students: young adolescents. We look forward to working with families to help students move successfully through these transitional years. The middle school level focuses on two primary goals – improving the academic performance and encouraging the personal growth of each student. The comprehensive curriculum and structures ensure excellence around college and career readiness, personal and social responsibility, and technology literacy.

Blue Valley middle schools incorporate the following educational principles that are identified in the context of the early adolescence stage of human development:

- Curriculum is grounded in rigorous, academic standards.
- The focus will be on what students should know and be able to do.
- The school is a safe and healthy environment that provides purposeful and meaningful relationships among students and staff.
- Families and the community are involved in supporting student learning and personal growth.
- Instruction is congruent with best educational practices.

Families are invited to become involved as active partners in their child's school experiences. The experience will be enriching for families and children and helpful to the middle school community.

The Blue Valley middle school program is responsive to the unique developmental needs of young adolescents, including physical, intellectual, emotional, ethical and social domains.

## **The Middle School Experience**

The Blue Valley middle school program is responsive to the unique developmental needs of young adolescents, including physical, intellectual, emotional, ethical, and social domains. Middle school students in Blue Valley are provided an elective program for the purpose of expanding their base of experiences. These elective classes concentrate on introducing practical lifetime skills as well as broadening student interest and self-knowledge.

Students will have many opportunities to be involved in learning experiences that explore connections among ideas and fields of knowledge. These experiences make learning more meaningful. Students learn to solve problems using skills and knowledge from many disciplines and do not spend large amounts of time learning skills in isolation. Applications of skills in real-life situations are extremely important.

## **COURSE SELECTION**

Students have the choice to select electives. Elective offerings vary by grade level. The length of the course also varies based on grade level and content area. For more information about a specific course, consult the information in this document. **Students at each grade level will select 2.50 units of electives each year in addition to a semester (0.50 units) of physical education.**

### **Sixth Grade Core Classes**

Students will take four core classes daily for the full year.

#### **English Language Arts 6 - 1.0**

The English Language Arts program provides an integrated balance of reading narrative and informational texts, along with writing and speaking tasks. As readers, students will increase stamina, complexity, and skill through a variety of reading structures: independent choice, book clubs, and whole class novels. As writers, students will become adept at gathering information, evaluating sources and citing material accurately, reporting findings from their research and analysis of sources in a clear manner. Students will also engage in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, teacher-led) on grade 6 curricular topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

#### **Integrated Mathematics 6 - 1.0**

Students focus on five critical areas in sixth grade math: rates and ratios, the number system, expressions and equations, geometry, and statistics. Students connect ratio and rate to whole number multiplication and division and using concepts of ratios and rates to solve problems. Students also work to complete their understanding of division of fractions and extending the number system to rational numbers, which includes negative numbers. In sixth grade, students also write, interpret, and use expressions and equations. Students also develop an understanding of volume and surface area of prisms as well as statistical thinking.

#### **Advanced Integrated Mathematics 6 - 1.0**

Students focus on five critical areas in sixth grade math: rates and ratios, the number system, expressions and equations, geometry, and statistics. In this course, students take the learning deeper and apply and extend their thinking. Students connect ratio and rate to whole number multiplication and division and using concepts of ratios and rates to solve problems. Students also work to complete their understanding of division of fractions and extending the number system to rational numbers, which includes negative numbers. In sixth grade, students also write, interpret, and use expressions and equations. Students also develop an understanding of volume and surface area of prisms as well as statistical thinking.

### **Science 6 - 1.0**

Students in 6th grade science develop understanding of key concepts to help them make sense of earth and space sciences. Students will learn to explain Earth's place in the Universe, what makes up our solar system, how the motion of Earth explains seasons and eclipses, and how people figure out that the Earth and life on Earth have changed through time. Students will make sense of Earth's systems, the factors that interact and influence weather, and how human activities affect Earth systems. Coursework promotes student engagement and application of scientific and engineering practices and crosscutting concepts to support students in developing usable knowledge and skills across the science disciplines.

### **Social Studies 6 - 1.0**

The history of the Ancient World, from Early River Civilizations to the Early Americas, is investigated in 6th grade social studies. Student historians examine and analyze elements of civilizations such as Religions and Beliefs, the Environment, Class Systems, Innovations, Political Systems, and Economic Systems. Students explore how they are connected to the past and how studying the past makes it possible for us to understand the human story across time. Historical thinking skills and the inquiry process shape learning experiences as students ask and answer compelling questions, apply disciplinary concepts and tools, evaluate sources and evidence, and communicate conclusions.

### **Sixth Grade Elective Classes**

Students will take 0.50 units of Physical Education and choose 2.50 units of additional electives to complete their schedule for the year.

### **Physical Education 6 (REQUIRED) - 0.5**

Physical Education meets every day for a semester. The student will participate in a variety of fundamental skills for team sports and lifetime activities. Wellness, fitness, and physical activity concepts are daily components of class.

### **Beginning Band 6 - 1.0**

The student will learn to play one of the following band instruments: flute, clarinet, saxophone, oboe, bassoon, french horn, trumpet, trombone, baritone, tuba, or percussion (bells, snare, timpani, etc.) The middle school band director assists with instrument selection prior to enrollment. Beginning Band includes a range of instruction including individual and group playing techniques, music reading development, and concert music preparation. Band is a co-curricular class in which students are assessed on skills that are demonstrated in class and during performances outside of the school day. Students are expected to provide their own method book and instrument (with the exception of a few select instruments.) If a student's family is in need of financial assistance, contact the middle school counselor or

band director to inquire about accessing one of a limited number of instruments available. **No previous playing experience is needed.**

### **Beginning Strings 6 - 1.0**

The student will learn to play one of the following string instruments: violin, viola, cello or double bass. Middle school strings director assists with instrument selection prior to enrollment. Beginning Strings includes a range of instruction including individual and group playing techniques, music reading development, and concert music preparation. Strings is a co-curricular class in which students are assessed on skills that are demonstrated in class and during performances outside of the school day. Students are expected to provide their own method book and instrument (with the exception of a few select instruments.) If a student's family is in need of financial assistance, contact the middle school counselor or band director to inquire about accessing one of a limited number of instruments available. Beginning Strings 6 is designed for students who have no previous experience playing a string instrument. **No previous playing experience is needed.**

### **Strings 6 - 1.0**

Strings 6 is designed for students who completed Strings 5 in elementary school. Instruments include violin, viola, cello or double bass. Students should sign up to play the same instrument they played in elementary school unless otherwise specified by the strings teacher. Students will advance previously learned skills in the areas of individual and group playing technique and music reading development and will prepare more advanced music for performance. Strings 6 is a co-curricular class in which students are assessed on skills that are demonstrated in class and during performances outside of the school day. Students are expected to provide their own method book and instrument (with the exception of a few select instruments.) If a student's family is in need of financial assistance, contact the middle school counselor or strings teacher to inquire about accessing one of a limited number of instruments available. Completion of Strings 5 required.

### **Vocal Music 6 - 1.0 or 0.5**

Vocal music focuses on singing in a choir. This includes a range of instruction including individual and group vocal techniques, music reading development, and concert music preparation. In addition, enjoyment and appreciation of music is emphasized. Students electing to continue with vocal music in 7th and 8th grade will explore the changing voice, refine choral skills previously taught, and develop skills in sight reading, theory, harmonic progressions, and rehearsal techniques. Vocal Music is a co-curricular class in which students are assessed on skills that are demonstrated in class and during performances outside of the school day.

### **Technology Explorations 6 - 0.25**

Students will explore the world of technology through interactive and engaging projects.

Students will learn about technology and digital productivity tools. Projects include multimedia and digital imaging, computer essentials, organization of digital life and safe and ethical use, introductory coding, and mobile applications.

### **Exploring Foods 6 - 0.25**

Students will prepare and taste test a variety of foods, interpret food guidelines and nutrition labels, and how to make wise consumer choices. Students will participate in introductory projects related to food preparation. As well as explore personal preferences for healthy food choices.

### **My Style 6 - 0.25**

Students will explore the art of sewing and handwork and express their creativity as they construct clothing, accessories, and home projects. Students will use a sewing machine and construction tools to complete sewing projects for personalized designs and accessories. They will also learn how to make informed consumer decisions about clothing selection and care.

### **Visual Arts 6 0.25**

This class will engage students in critical thinking and imaginative problem-solving by introducing developmental art skills and experiences that increase the understanding and appreciation of art. Students will explore two- and three-dimensional art, such as drawing, painting, mixing color, 1-point perspective, ceramic hand-building, mixed media, and printmaking through sketching, brainstorming and research. Students who complete Visual Arts 6, Visual Arts 7 and Visual Arts 8 will not be required to take Design Fundamentals in high school as a prerequisite for more advanced art classes.

### **Pre-Engineering 6 - 0.25**

Pre-engineering 6 offers students an introduction to the engineering design process. Through projects in the computer and wood production labs, students will gain an understanding of how technology impacts our lives. Students will use the design process to solve challenges with air rockets, towers, gliders, architectural drawings, and interior design.

### **Modern Communications 6 - 0.25**

This course introduces students to public speaking and elements of verbal/non-verbal communication. Through fun, confidence-building activities, students will discover various styles of communication, develop skills in public speaking, and gain confidence in presenting to an audience. Students will learn how to organize and present information using innovative styles and modern technology. Students will leave this class with the confidence, knowledge, and skills required to deliver effective and innovative presentations in school, college and career.



**Theatre 6 - 0.25**

This course introduces students to Theatre, including acting, theatrical terminology, and production responsibilities. Students participate in a variety of Theatre activities, exercises, and scene work, including improvised and scripted scenes. Collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking skills are emphasized and developed. Students will leave this class with improved listening skills, stronger self-confidence, and ability to creatively express ideas, as well as an appreciation for Theatre.

**Spanish 1a - 0.25**

This class at the Novice Mid proficiency level is for students who have had little or no experience learning Spanish as a second language. Students learn to introduce themselves and speak and write about leisure activities. Students read for main ideas and details in authentic Spanish passages. Students also study basic grammar and vocabulary and learn about Hispanic practices, products and perspectives associated with the topics of the course. Performance tasks are essential components of unit assessments. In order to promote proficiency, most of this class is taught in Spanish. Level 1 is divided between 1 semester in 6th grade and 2 semesters in 7th grade. This course is the first part of level 1.

**French 1a (Leawood & Prairie Star Middle Schools Only) - 0.5**

This class at the Novice Mid proficiency level is for students who have had little or no experience learning French as a second language. Students learn to introduce themselves and speak and write about leisure activities. Students read for main ideas and details in authentic French passages. Students also study basic grammar and vocabulary and learn about Francophone practices, products and perspectives associated with the topics of the course. Performance tasks are essential components of unit assessments. In order to promote proficiency, most of this class is taught in French. Level 1 is divided between 1 semester in 6th grade and 2 semesters in 7th grade. This course is the first part of level 1.

**Chinese 1a (Aubry Bend & Overland Trail Middle Schools Only) - 0.5**

This class at the Novice Mid proficiency level is for students who have had little or no experience learning Chinese as a second language. Students learn to introduce themselves and speak and write about leisure activities. Students read for main ideas and details in authentic Chinese passages. Students also study basic grammar and vocabulary and learn about Chinese practices, products and perspectives associated with the topics of the course. Performance tasks are essential components of unit assessments. In order to promote proficiency, most of this class is taught in Chinese. Level 1 is divided between 1 semester in 6th grade and 2 semesters in 7th grade. This course is the first part of level 1.

**Study Hall 6 - 1.0 or 0.5 or 0.25**

Students can enroll in a daily study hall as an elective option. There is an option to have a study hall for a quarter (0.25), semester (0.50) or full-year (1.0). During study hall, students

will have supervised time to complete work independently as part of their day. Students typically would not have access to their teachers for additional support during this time.

### **Seventh Grade Core Classes**

Students will take four core classes daily for the full year.

#### **English Language Arts 7 - 1.0**

The English Language Arts program provides an integrated balance of reading narrative and informational texts, along with writing and speaking tasks. As readers, students will increase stamina, complexity, and skill through a variety of reading structures: independent choice, book clubs, and whole class novels. As writers, students will become adept at gathering information, evaluating sources and citing material accurately, reporting findings from their research and analysis of sources in a clear manner. Students will also engage in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, teacher-led) on grade 7 curricular topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

#### **Integrated Mathematics 7 - 1.0**

Seventh grade math focuses on five critical areas: proportions, rational number operations, expressions and equations, geometry, and statistics. Students develop an understanding of and apply their knowledge of proportional relationships to problems. In seventh grade, students also apply operations to rational numbers, including negatives, and extend their knowledge to work with expressions and linear equations. In geometry, students solve problems involving scale drawings and work with two- and three-dimensional shapes to solve problems involving area, surface area, and volume. Students also draw inferences about populations based on samples in seventh grade.

#### **Advanced Integrated Mathematics 7 - 1.0**

Seventh grade math focuses on five critical areas: proportions, rational number operations, expressions and equations, geometry, and statistics. Students develop an understanding of and apply their knowledge of proportional relationships to problems. In seventh grade, students also apply operations to rational numbers, including negatives, and extend their knowledge to work with expressions and linear equations. In geometry, students solve problems involving scale drawings and work with two- and three-dimensional shapes to solve problems involving area, surface area, and volume. Students also draw inferences about populations based on samples in seventh grade. In addition, students cover 8th grade standards relating to the Pythagorean Theorem and roots.

#### **Science 7 - 1.0**

Students in 7th grade science develop understanding of key concepts to help them make sense of life science. Students will learn to explain the ways cells contribute to the function of living organisms and how a system of living and non-living things operate to meet the needs

of the organisms in an ecosystem. Students will make sense of how living organisms pass traits from one generation to the next and how organisms change over time in response to changes in the environment. Coursework promotes student engagement and application of scientific and engineering practices and crosscutting concepts to support students in developing usable knowledge and skills across the science disciplines.

### **Social Studies 7 - 1.0**

Students study World Geography (1st Semester) and Kansas History (2nd Semester) in 7th grade social studies. Following the National Geography Standards, student geographers explore the Earth in spatial terms, places and regions, human systems, and the uses of geography to better understand the world and its challenges and opportunities. Through the lens of Kansas, student historians investigate major events, individuals, groups, innovations, and movements relevant to the state's past, present and future. Historical thinking skills and the inquiry process shape learning experiences as students ask and answer compelling questions, apply disciplinary concepts and tools, evaluate sources and evidence, and communicate conclusions.

### **Seventh Grade Elective Classes**

Students will take 0.50 units of Physical Education and choose 2.50 units of additional electives to complete their schedule for the year.

### **Physical Education 7 (REQUIRED) - 0.5**

Physical Education meets every day for a semester. The student will participate in a variety of fundamental skills for team sports and lifetime activities. Wellness, fitness, and physical activity concepts are daily components of class.

### **Band 7 - 1.0**

Students in Band 7 will continue to focus on the development of musicianship skills through performance experience in a concert band. An emphasis is placed on enjoying making music together in an ensemble and building a strong foundation of fundamental skills. Band is a co-curricular class in which students are assessed on skills that are demonstrated in class and during performances outside of the school day. Students are expected to provide their own method book and instrument (with the exception of a few select instruments.) If a student's family is in need of financial assistance, contact the middle school counselor or band director to inquire about accessing one of a limited number of instruments available. Completion of Band 6 or equivalent experience required.

### **Strings 7 - 1.0**

Students in Strings 7 will continue to focus on the development of musicianship skills through

performance experience in an orchestra. An emphasis is placed on enjoying making music together in an ensemble and building a strong foundation of fundamental skills. Strings is a co-curricular class in which students are assessed on skills that are demonstrated in class and during performances outside of the school day. Students are expected to provide their own method book and instrument (with the exception of a few select instruments.) If a student's family is in need of financial assistance, contact the middle school counselor or band director to inquire about accessing one of a limited number of instruments available. Completion of Strings 6 or equivalent experience required.

### **Vocal Music 7 - 0.5 or 1.0**

Students in Vocal Music 7 will continue to focus on the development of musicianship skills through performance experience singing in a choir. An emphasis is placed on enjoying making music together in an ensemble and building a strong foundation of fundamental skills. Students will explore the changing voice, refine choral skills previously taught, and develop skills in music reading, theory, harmonic progressions, and rehearsal techniques. Vocal Music is a co-curricular class in which students are assessed on skills that are demonstrated in class and during performances outside of the school day.

### **Technology Innovations 7 - 0.5**

Students will use individual and team projects to solve problems and utilize software and web tools that inspire creativity and innovation. Students will gain experience with computer and graphics applications, digital photography, digital multimedia productions, coding, and computer essentials (word processing, spreadsheets, presentations.)

### **Creating with Foods & Textiles 7 - 0.5**

Students will put their creativity into action in the kitchen and sewing lab as they explore the topics of food, nutrition, clothing, and consumerism. Students will explore foods from local farms and discover the connections between food, health, and the environment. Students apply problem-solving skills, collaboration, and creativity as they complete sewing projects and learn about consumerism.

### **Visual Arts 7 - 0.5**

This class will engage students in critical thinking and imaginative problem-solving by identifying and demonstrating the Elements of Art. Students will focus on two-dimensional and three-dimensional media, such as drawing, painting, printmaking, clay, plaster, and paper. Students will select original ideas through inspiration while evaluating various artists, histories, and cultures that influence artwork. Students who complete Visual Arts 6, Visual Arts 7 and Visual Arts 8 will not be required to take Design Fundamentals in high school as a prerequisite for more advanced art classes.

### **Pre-Engineering & Robotics 7 - 0.5**

Innovation, critical thinking, and teamwork are encouraged as students work in the wood production and computer labs. Students will design, build models, and test solutions to challenges in home design, bridges, dragsters, and robots. Students will develop skills in computer-aided drawing, technical math, shop safety, and the use of tools and equipment.

### **Theatre & Modern Communications 7 - 0.5**

This course helps students strengthen their effectiveness in presenting and performing for an audience while developing critical thinking and listening skills. During the Theatre units, students study acting styles, develop performance and directing skills, and increase their understanding and appreciation of Theatre. During the Modern Communication units, students learn techniques for effective public speaking and presentations and develop skills in persuasion and argumentation which are critical for success in college and career. Students gain confidence, learn how to overcome stage fright, and become effective communicators.

### **Spanish 1b - 1.0**

This class is at the Novice Mid proficiency level and is a continuation of Spanish 1a. Students learn to speak and write about school life, family, food and celebrations. Students read for main ideas and details in authentic Spanish passages. Students also study basic grammar and vocabulary and learn about Hispanic practices, products and perspectives associated with the topics of the course. Performance tasks are essential components of unit assessments. In order to promote proficiency, most of this class is taught in Spanish. Level 1 is divided between 1 semester in 6th grade and 2 semesters in 7th grade. This course is the second part of level 1.

### **French 1b (Leawood & Prairie Star Middle Schools Only) - 1.0**

This class is at the Novice Mid proficiency level and is a continuation of French 1a. Students learn to speak and write about school life, family, food and celebrations. Students read for main ideas and details in authentic French passages. Students also study basic grammar and vocabulary and learn about Francophone practices, products and perspectives associated with the topics of the course. Performance tasks are essential components of unit assessments. In order to promote proficiency, most of this class is taught in French. Level 1 is divided between 1 semester in 6th grade and 2 semesters in 7th grade. This course is the second part of level 1.

### **Chinese 1b (Aubry Bend & Overland Trail Middle Schools Only) - 1.0**

This class is at the Novice Mid proficiency level and is a continuation of Chinese 1b. Students learn to speak and write about school life, family, food and celebrations. Students read for main ideas and details in authentic Chinese passages. Students also study basic grammar and vocabulary and learn about Chinese practices, products and perspectives associated with the topics of the course. Performance tasks are essential components of unit

assessments. In order to promote proficiency, most of this class is taught in Chinese. Level 1 is divided between 1 semester in 6th grade and 2 semesters in 7th grade. This course is the second part of level 1.

### **Study Hall 7 - 1.0 or 0.5**

Students can enroll in a daily study hall as an elective option. There is an option to have a study hall for a semester (0.50) or full-year (1.0). During study hall, students will have supervised time to complete work independently as part of their day. Students typically would not have access to their teachers for additional support during this time.

### **Eighth Grade Core Classes**

Students will take four core classes daily for the full year.

#### **English Language Arts 8 - 1.0**

The English Language Arts program provides an integrated balance of reading narrative and informational texts, along with writing and speaking tasks. As readers, students will increase stamina, complexity, and skill through a variety of reading structures: independent choice, book clubs, and whole class novels. As writers, students will become adept at gathering information, evaluating sources and citing material accurately, reporting findings from their research and analysis of sources in a clear manner. Students will also engage in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, teacher-led) on grade 8 curricular topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

#### **Integrated Mathematics 8 - 1.0**

In eighth grade math, students focus on three critical areas: expressions, equations, and inequalities; functions; and geometry. Students formulate and reason about expressions, equations, and inequalities including modeling an association in bivariate data with a linear equation, and solving linear equations and inequalities. They also work to grasp the concept of a function and use functions to describe quantitative relationships. In this course, students analyze two- and three-dimensional space and figures using distance, angle, similarity, and congruence, and understand and apply the Pythagorean Theorem

#### **Algebra I - 1.0**

The fundamental purpose of the Algebra I course is to formalize and extend the mathematics that students learned in the earlier grades. Students learn to solve linear equations in one variable and apply graphical and algebraic methods to analyze and solve systems of linear equations in two variables. This course also focuses on applying the laws of exponents to integer exponents and exploring characteristics of quadratic functions in contrast to linear functions. Building upon their prior experiences with data, students explore a more formal means of assessing how a model fits data.

**Science 8 - 1.0**

Students in 8th grade science develop understanding of key concepts to help them make sense of physical science. Students will learn how atomic and molecular interactions explain the properties of matter that we see and feel, while also learning to describe physical interactions between objects and within systems of objects and how energy is transferred from one object or system to another. Students also learn the characteristic properties of waves and how they can be used for information transfer. Coursework promotes student engagement and application of scientific and engineering practices and crosscutting concepts to support students in developing usable knowledge and skills across the science disciplines.

**Social Studies 8 - 1.0**

Student historians study United States history beginning with a review of Constitutional principles and the nation's founding through World War I. As seminal events and time periods in American history are explored, students analyze and evaluate America's pursuit of the five founding ideals - Democracy, Rights, Liberty, Opportunity, and Equality. Historical thinking skills and the inquiry process shape learning experiences as students ask and answer compelling questions, apply disciplinary concepts and tools, evaluate sources and evidence, and communicate conclusion

**EIGHTH Grade Elective Classes**

Students will take 0.50 units of Physical Education and choose 2.50 units of additional electives to complete their schedule for the year.

**Physical Education 8 (REQUIRED) - 0.5**

Physical Education meets every day for a semester. The student will participate in a variety of fundamental skills for team sports and lifetime activities. Wellness, fitness, and physical activity concepts are daily components of class.

**Band 8 - 1.0**

Students in Band 8 will continue to focus on the refinement of musicianship skills through performance experience in a concert band. An emphasis is placed on enjoying making music together in an ensemble and advancing technical and expressive skills in an ensemble focused setting. Band is a co-curricular class in which students are assessed on skills that are demonstrated in class and during performances outside of the school day. Students are expected to provide their own method book and instrument (with the exception of a few select instruments.) If a student's family is in need of financial assistance, contact the middle school counselor or band director to inquire about accessing one of a limited number of instruments available. Completion of Band 7 or equivalent experience required.

### **Strings 8 - 1.0**

Students in Strings 8 will continue to focus on the refinement of musicianship skills through performance experience in an orchestra. An emphasis is placed on enjoying making music together in an ensemble and advancing technical and expressive skills in an ensemble focused setting. Strings is a co-curricular class in which students are assessed on skills that are demonstrated in class and during performances outside of the school day. Students are expected to provide their own method book and instrument (with the exception of a few select instruments.) If a student's family is in need of financial assistance, contact the middle school counselor or band director to inquire about accessing one of a limited number of instruments available. Completion of Strings 7 or equivalent experience required.

### **Vocal Music 8 - 0.5 or 1.0**

Students in Vocal Music 8 will continue to focus on the refinement of musicianship skills through performance experience singing in a choir. An emphasis is placed on enjoying making music together in an ensemble and advancing technical and expressive skills in an ensemble focused setting. Students will explore the changing voice, refine choral skills previously taught, and develop skills in music reading, theory, harmonic progressions, and rehearsal techniques. Vocal Music is a co-curricular class in which students are assessed on skills that are demonstrated in class and during performances outside of the school day.

### **Digital Media & Design 8 - 0.5**

Design and create electronic media utilizing a variety of computer and mobile platforms. Students will solve problems, complete projects, and extend their abilities in software and web tools to enhance communication and inspire creativity. Through individual and team projects, students will expand their skills in utilizing: computer and graphics applications, digital photography, and digital multimedia productions.

### **Code Studio 8 - 0.5**

Discover how coding inspires innovation and is changing our world. Students will expand their creativity as they collaboratively design and develop solutions to engaging real-world challenges by creating web pages, games, and apps. Students will explore computer science as a vehicle for problem-solving, communication, and personal expression.

### **My Style 8 - 0.5**

Students will explore their style in clothing and accessories. Projects allow students to express creativity by using fabric and the art of sewing. Students apply problem-solving skills and creativity to real-life challenges related to consumer decisions, community citizenship, and environmental responsibility. Students will also explore career interests and high school and college options.

### **Exploring Foods 8 - 0.5**



Students complete food labs and projects while gaining skills in decision making, goal setting, and time management. Students will take the role of a junior chef, preparing and tasting their culinary creations. They apply problem-solving skills, collaboration, and creativity to real-life challenges. Students will also explore career interests and high school and college options.

### **Visual Arts 8 - 0.5**

Using the Design Elements and Principles, students will interpret ideas by sketching, brainstorming, and researching. Students will use drawing, painting, color mixing, sculpture or ceramics, printmaking, and mixed media to create, understand, and appreciate two-dimensional and three-dimensional art forms. Students who complete Visual Arts 6, Visual Arts 7 and Visual Arts 8 will not be required to take Design Fundamentals in high school as a prerequisite for more advanced art classes.

### **Pre-Engineering 8 - 0.5**

Working in the wood production and computer labs, students apply the engineering design process to solve challenges that encourage innovation, critical thinking, and teamwork. Students will test and compare solutions in both hands-on and virtual environments. They will design, build, and test prototype solutions to challenges in such areas as architectural structures, solid-fuel rockets, cars, and boats. Students will also explore various careers and opportunities in high school and college.

### **Design & Robotics 8 - 0.5**

Design and Robotics 8 provides an opportunity for students to apply the engineering design process and programming software to invent and innovate. Students will design, build, and program a robot to meet challenges. They will gain an understanding of beginning programming and sequential logic. Students will learn how technology, creative thinking, and problem-solving can change our world.

### **Theatrical Production 8 - 0.5**

This hands-on course will guide students in planning, preparing, and presenting a theatrical work for an audience. Students will use various creative drama techniques to stimulate imagination and create characters and scenes. Students will learn to utilize technical theater and design elements in class productions. In addition, students will learn to evaluate performances and provide constructive criticism. An emphasis will be placed on developing a stage presence and realistic acting skills. This course will help students gain confidence speaking in front of others and learn to collaborate and problem-solve with a group.

### **Modern Communications 8 - 0.5**

This course helps students improve skills in public speaking, argumentation, and critical thinking, using the most up-to-date technology. Students will organize, create, and deliver a variety of individual and group presentations with attention to format and audience. They will

construct arguments using relevant evidence to support ideas and claims, determine reliability of various source materials, listen critically and respond in a debate. Positive and effective group communication elements will be emphasized. Students will gain more poise and confidence and develop advanced presentation skills that will prepare them for communicating effectively in future college and career settings.

### **Spanish 2 - 1.0**

This class at the Novice High proficiency level is for students with basic Spanish language skills, vocabulary and grammar. Students learn to speak and write about happiness, city life, celebrations, their childhoods and stories from the target culture. Students read for main ideas and details and guess meaning from context in authentic Spanish passages, including legends. Students study grammar and vocabulary and learn about Hispanic culture and customs, with special focus on Hispanic food dishes. Performance tasks are essential components of unit assessments. This class is taught in Spanish.

### **French 2 (Leawood & Prairie Star Middle Schools Only) - 1.0**

This class at the Novice High proficiency level is for students with basic French language skills, vocabulary and grammar. Students learn to speak and write about happiness, city life, celebrations, their childhoods and stories from the target culture. Students read for main ideas and details and guess meaning from context in authentic French passages. Students also study grammar and vocabulary and learn about Francophone culture and customs, with special focus on Paris, French art and influences of North Africa on French music. Performance tasks are essential components of unit assessments. This class is taught in French.

### **Chinese 2 (Aubry Bend & Overland Trail Middle Schools Only) - 1.0**

This class at the Novice Mid/high proficiency level is for students with basic communication and literacy skills in Mandarin Chinese. Students learn to speak and write about life at school, celebrations, childhood, city life and health and happiness. The focus of this class is on communicative skills of listening and speaking, however students will learn to read and write simplified Chinese characters, words and phrases. Culture includes celebrations, education and cultural traditions. Performance tasks are essential components of unit assessments. This class is taught in Mandarin Chinese.

### **Study Hall 8 - 1.0**

Students can enroll in a daily study hall as an elective option. There is an option to have a study hall for a semester (0.50) or full-year (1.0). During study hall, students will have supervised time to complete work independently as part of their day. Students typically would not have access to their teachers for additional support during this time.

### **Additional Information**

## **ONLINE PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

Students in 7th and 8th grade have the option of taking Physical Education online. Students who typically enroll in online Physical Education to make space in their schedule to take another elective during the school day. Additionally, students who receive support services or are enrolled in an intervention course during an elective can take Physical Education online to have the opportunity to take an additional elective during the day. If your student is interested in this option, please consult with your student's counselor. There is a \$90 fee for this course.

## **HIGH SCHOOL CREDIT FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL WORLD LANGUAGE**

Blue Valley's Board of Education Policy 4340 states that students who successfully complete the full three-course world language program in a Blue Valley middle school are eligible to receive two (2) high school credits for their middle school course work.

- Students must be enrolled in a Blue Valley middle school for all three years.
- Students must complete levels 1a, 1b and 2 for one language.
- Both semester grades from the 7th and 8th grade years will be transcribed to the high school transcript and be factored into the student's high school GPA. Transcribed grades do not include plus (+) or minus (-).
- Transcribed grades cannot be removed once they are on the high school transcript.
- Students have the choice to have two (2) credits transcribed or none.
- The process is completed online in the first semester of high school.
- Information about the process is typically available the spring of a student's eighth grade year.

## **ENROLLMENT**

Middle school students will enroll at their home middle school. Look for important information from your home school in the third quarter. Questions can be directed to the counseling department.

## **Special Education & Support Services**

### **ENGLISH FOR SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES (ESOL)**

#### **QUALIFIED STUDENTS ONLY**

After being tested, students who lack proficiency in the English language may enroll in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) coursework. The primary purpose of the class is for students to achieve proficiency in English. The course is also designed to provide instruction in American culture and to aid students in adjusting to school and life in the community. Depending on proficiency level, students may take up to two scheduled ESOL courses. Currently there are four middle school centers to serve our English language learners (ELLs). ESOL middle school centers, listed with their feeder schools, are:

Lakewood Middle (ABMS and PRMS), Overland Trail Middle (LMS), Oxford Middle (HMS) and Blue Valley Middle (PSMS). If a student needs ESOL services and the home school does not have a program, transportation to the ESOL Center middle school is provided by the district free of charge.

### **LEARNING CENTER/RESOURCE ROOM**

#### **IEP REQUIRED**

The Learning Center/Resource Room serves students who have an Individualized Education Program (IEP). Multidisciplinary teams of educational professionals work with students and their families to determine which services best meet the students' needs. The resource teachers, along with other staff members, provide instruction on learning strategies and individual skill development. Services may include individual or small group instruction and consultation with general education teachers. Special education staff members also provide support within the general education classes when the need is determined in the student's IEP.

### **GUIDED DISCOVERY (GIFTED EDUCATION SERVICES)**

#### **IEP REQUIRED**

The Guided Discovery class provides special education services for students who have been identified as gifted via the district's gifted education eligibility process. This process identifies students who demonstrate the characteristics of giftedness and a need for specially designed instruction that is not provided in the general education program. Services within gifted education and Guided Discovery are defined by an Individualized Education Program (IEP). Learning experiences are designed for small group activities based on the gifted education curriculum and personalized experiences based on each student's IEP.

### **LIBRARY MEDIA**

The library media specialist and classroom teacher collaboratively design lessons that engage students in using print, multi-media and electronic resources to build knowledge, solve problems, and share findings. Through a multi-step problem-solving model, students learn skills needed for high school and beyond. Students examine multiple resources; analyzing, synthesizing, evaluating and selecting the information that is most accurate and relevant to the completion of their work. Focus is placed on integrating technology into all phases of the research process. Copyright, plagiarism and proper citation of resources are addressed as part of each research project. Appreciation and enjoyment of literature remain an important part of the middle school library program and are promoted through vibrant library collections, book talks and literature-related activities.

### **READING STRATEGIES**

#### **INVITATION ONLY**

The Reading Strategies Course is designed to meet the needs of students whose reading comprehension is below grade-level proficiency. The Reading Strategies course provides students with small group instruction, independent reading time, and online programming to support students with reading comprehension, fluency, and/or phonetic awareness. Students identified for this class will be personally contacted by school personnel to discuss screening and enrollment.

## **MATH STRATEGIES**

### **INVITATION ONLY**

The Math Strategies Course is designed to meet the needs of students who have demonstrated need in the area of math. Taken concurrently with the student's math class, instruction will focus on foundational skills and additional support. Students identified for this class will be personally contacted by school personnel to discuss enrollment.