Maury River Middle School
Program of Studies

Introduction

The Program of Studies at Maury River Middle School is designed to help parents and students work together with our teachers to plan instruction best suited for each student. Teams consisting of teachers, school counselors, and administrators use an individualized approach to provide the optimal learning experience for each student. The faculty and staff examine student assessment data to evaluate and make informed decisions about the specific learning and developmental needs of our students.

The curriculum is based upon the requirements including the Virginia Standards of Learning, as well as individual needs and preferences. Every student has five daily periods of required “core” courses: English, math, science, social studies and physical education/health. Students have two daily exploratory, elective, or supplemental classes which allow students to extend their learning through various experiences.

Students have an opportunity to take up to four semester courses, one of which will be Keyboarding Secondary. Upon successful completion of this course, the student will earn one half (.5) of a high school credit. Semester courses may be selected from the following areas of study: agriculture, art, family and consumer sciences, music, technology education, and theatre. In addition to these options, students may take band and/or Latin I, Part A or Spanish I, Part A, which are year-long courses. Latin I, Part A and Spanish I, Part A require a teacher recommendation. In some cases, students may be assigned to a math or reading lab if they fail the reading or math SOL test the previous school year.

Scheduling Process

Students should select courses which best suit their abilities and interests. Students register for courses during individual program planning sessions with their school counselor, during which they review their choices and discuss future plans. All students must schedule seven courses, one for each period of the day, and request two alternate courses. Every effort will be made to place students in the elective courses they have requested, but this may not be possible due to schedule conflicts, state mandated caps, and/or insufficient enrollment.
High School Credit-Bearing Courses

Certain courses taken during middle school allow students to obtain high school credits. If a student passes a credit-bearing course (grade of 60 or higher), he/she will receive the credit on the high school transcript. If there is a corresponding SOL test, and the student passes that test, the student will earn a “verified credit” which will be used in completing graduation requirements. Courses resulting in high school credits include:

- Algebra I (1 credit)
- Agriculture I (1 credit)
- Computer Applications (½ credit)
- Earth Science (1 credit)
- Individual Development (½ credit)
- Introduction to Drafting and Technology (1 credit)
- Introduction to Trades (½ credit)
- Keyboarding Secondary (½ credit)
- Latin I (1 credit)
- Spanish I (1 credit)
- Spanish II (1 credit)
- World History/Geography I (1 credit).

Latin and Spanish taken in parts require the student to complete both Part A and Part B to receive one high school credit for Latin I or Spanish I.

The numerical grade will be included in the student’s high school grade point average (GPA). If the student and parents choose, they may have the grade expunged from the student’s high school transcript. If a course is expunged from the record, the student will not receive the high school credit for the course or the SOL verified credit (if applicable). If, however, the student passes the end-of-course SOL test in eighth grade and repeats and passes the course in ninth grade, the verified credit will be awarded retroactively. If the student and the parent(s) wish to expunge the high school credit course from the student’s transcript, they must notify the Rockbridge County High School Counseling Department in writing before the student enters ninth grade. The “Request to Exclude Credit-Bearing Course(s)” form is available in both the MRMS and RCHS counseling offices.

Academic and Career Plan

Each seventh and eighth grade student will have a completed Academic and Career Plan on file in the Counseling Office, according to Virginia Department of Education regulations. Students will begin exploring career interests in sixth grade. They will use what they have learned to begin developing their Academic and Career Plan (ACP) in seventh grade. As students’ goals change and new interests develop, they will make revisions in eighth grade and again in tenth grade. Seventh and eighth grade students will map out their high school and career plans with their school counselors during classroom sessions and individual sessions. Parent signatures are required on the ACP forms.
English as a Second Language Services

The Rockbridge County Public School English as a Second Language (ESL) program offers a variety of services to students with limited English proficiency as defined in Public Law 107-110 of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the Code of Virginia. The services described below are available to students who are English language learners.

- **Regular Classroom Instructional Support**: Instruction in English speaking, listening, reading, and writing and/or instructional support in academic content areas occurs individually or in a small group within the classroom. This method of service provides the student with a greater opportunity to practice the English language and/or receive assistance in acquiring academic content. The ESL teacher collaborates with the classroom teacher to modify lessons to meet the students’ language needs and provides appropriate curriculum resources for learning the English language.

- **Resource Class**: Resource classes provide students with instruction and support in English language and academic content learning. The ESL teacher collaborates with the classroom teacher to modify academic lessons and add supports so students can learn English and academic information more easily.

- **Tutoring**: Before, during and after school tutoring provides students with individualized support in English language and/or in academic content areas.
6th Grade Core Courses

**English 6**

Required Year-Long Course

English 6 is an essential core discipline that reinforces and develops the skills of vocabulary, reading, and writing. Vocabulary is explored through word origins and various combinations of root words, prefixes and suffixes. Vocabulary instruction includes words derived from an array of fiction and nonfiction texts. Reading instruction includes strategies of literary devices such as theme, summary, character traits, conflict, point of view, and inference. Reading selections explore the various genres of short stories, autobiographies, folk tales, poetry and other literary forms. Writing skills are practiced weekly incorporating the use of journaling and 4-square writing. Students also read and write narrative, descriptive and expository essays. Writing drafts, grammar, mechanics, usage, proofreading and editing are used in the development of the writing piece. The writing process is thoroughly practiced to transform the students’ writing from a rough draft to a finished product.

**Advanced English 6**

Year-Long Course

Prerequisite: Must meet academic requirements determined by administration which may include final grade in previous class, teacher recommendation, and SOL scores.

This course is designed to teach the required Virginia curriculum objectives at a faster pace. Students are assigned in-depth projects using various forms of literary genre such as folk tales, biographies, and short stories. Projects are used as a way for students to analyze and support their ideas using literary devices of figurative language, connotations, organizational text patterns, graphic organizers and more. Vocabulary is explored using word origins and combinations of root words, prefixes, and suffixes. Students will write using a variety of modes including research projects, essays, and summaries. Students will gather information and produce written responses with eloquence and style incorporating knowledge of grammar, spelling, and the writing process. Independent study is exercised in a literary genre of the student’s choice. This will involve research and the use of reference materials appropriate to the topic.

**Reading Lab 6**

Prerequisite: assigned by school personnel

Students who qualify for this class take their regular English class as well as a period of Reading Lab. This small group setting provides individualized attention in both English and reading. Placement in Reading Lab is based on the student’s performance on previous English assessments including SOL tests. Students who are enrolled in this course work with a reading specialist to master the literacy diet: comprehension, fluency, word study, and writing. Students will use a variety of hands-on activities to help aid individual progress.
**Mathematics 6**  
*Required Year-long Course*

Math 6 is a continuation of general studies in the areas of computation, number sense, probability and statistics, measurement, geometry and algebra but with more emphasis on applying these skills to solve multi-step consumer problems. The goal of this course is to promote the development of higher-level critical thinking skills. Students will reach a deeper understanding of concepts using consistent processes and concrete, representational and abstract paradigms. Performance in this class and on the Math 6 SOL and other math assessments determine math placement in seventh grade.

**Advanced Math 6**  
*Year-long Course*

*Prerequisite: Must meet academic requirements determined by administration which may include final grade in previous class, teacher recommendation and SOL scores*

Advanced Math 6 consists of deeper study in the areas of computation, number sense, probability and statistics, geometry and algebra. Focus areas include proper use of prior knowledge, logic and generalization in routine classroom assignments and project-based activities. Emphasis is placed on student independence in applying skills to solve increasingly more rigorous multi-step practical problems. This course promotes the development of higher-level critical thinking skills through consistent processes and concrete, representational and abstract paradigms. Performance in this class and on the Math 6 SOL and other math assessments determine math placement in seventh grade.

**Math Lab 6**  
*Prerequisite: assigned by school personnel*

Math Lab is available to students in need of additional math support. Students who qualify take this course in addition to their regular math class. Placement in Math Lab depends on a student’s overall performance which includes previous grades, SOL scores, the Algebra Readiness Diagnostic Test (ARDT) score, benchmarks and teacher recommendations. Math Lab provides more individualized attention due to small class size and offers students additional strategies including hands-on activities. Classroom teachers and lab teachers communicate often in order to accommodate student needs.

**Science 6**  
*Required Year-long Course*

From soaring through the solar system to investigating our county’s waters, 6th grade science is a hands-on, diverse course. The year begins with conducting scientific investigations and making inquiries. Then students discover atoms, the building blocks of all matter. Those blocks build compounds such as water with many adhesive and cohesive properties. The study is continued with intensive water quality/watershed investigations. Students master forms of energy and energy transformations. Alternative forms of energy are introduced and analyzed. Precipitation, temperature, air pressure, wind speed and direction, and humidity are investigated and recorded daily during the weather unit. Finally, seasons, moon phases, and planets are discovered during the solar system unit. Student achievement is monitored on a daily basis using an interactive notebook.
**Advanced Science 6**

*Year-long Course*

*Prerequisite: Must meet academic requirements determined by administration which may include final grade in previous class, teacher recommendation and SOL scores*

In addition to the Science 6 course description, students in this course will engage in laboratory work focusing on dependent and independent variables with repeated trials, valid predictions, collection and analysis of data using scientific measurements and calculations, and making conclusions. Students will create and interpret graphs and data tables using information gathered or provided. They will analyze information and determine the appropriate graphic representation. Students will also write about science using research and correct citations and present projects or assignments to the whole group effectively while incorporating a variety of technology. Participation in problem solving activities using higher level thinking, writing, and technical skills, working out multi-step problems or activities independently, demonstrating the ability to follow written directions, and completing ongoing projects will be the student’s responsibility.

**U.S. History: 1865 to the Present**

*Required Year-long Course*

This course is the study of American history and is a continuation of fifth grade history. In this course, topics include reconstruction, immigration, industrialization, the Spanish-American War, the Roaring Twenties, World War I, The Great Depression, World War II, the Cold War, the Civil Rights movement, and key international and domestic issues in the middle to late 21st century. Students create their own textbooks and participate in various activities which will help them better understand and appreciate their nation.

**Advanced U.S. History: 1865 to the Present**

*Year-long Course*

*Prerequisite: Must meet academic requirements determined by administration which will include final grade in fifth grade English and History and teacher recommendation*

This course focuses on American history beginning with reconstruction to present time. It is designed to guide students through the human, technological, physical, and historical aspects that molded our democracy and shaped our nation. This course provides an enriching and challenging curriculum. As an advanced course, this class distin buishes itself through rigor, pace and depth of content. Subject matter in this course requires good organizational skills, self-monitoring, and the ability to work independently or with a team. Higher-level assessments include a large percentage of questions that require higher-level thinking skills such as evaluation, categorization, generalization and synthesis. Students develop their reading comprehension skills with a variety of guided reading assignments and they improve their ability to analyze primary sources.

**Health/Physical Education 6**

*Required Year-long Course*

This course is designed to educate students how to be physically active for a lifetime. Students develop knowledge and skills to be proficient in team and individual sports, group and individual activities, as well as the Fitness Gram Tests. The tests include push-ups, curl-ups, trunk lift, sit and reach, and Pacer. The tests measure upper body strength, abdominal strength, lower back strength, flexibility, and cardiovascular
fitness. Health classes consist of personal health; body structures and function; personal choice; family life education; and tobacco, alcohol, and drug use and abuse prevention.

6th Grade Electives
Semester Courses

**Art 6**

*Semester Elective Course*

This beginning art class is designed for students who do not have a strong background in art, but enjoy art and wish to explore and increase their art skills and knowledge. Using the elements of art (color, form, line, shape, space, texture, value) and the principles of design (balance, contrast, emphasis, movement, pattern, proportion, rhythm, unity, variety) as a framework, students investigate a variety of ideas for creating art. Through critical analysis and evaluation, students determine how artists convey meaning through the use of forms, media, and symbols.

**Chorus**

*Semester Elective Course*

Chorus is open to all students who are interested in being part of a musical and singing group that will represent MRMS’ best voices. Students cover all styles and types of music including, but not limited to, pop, folk, jazz, spiritual and sacred. Students will also learn about musical literature, history and theory that will help them understand the vocal styles that are applied to singing. Opportunities for learning and performing include activities such as show choir using the whole stage and choreography to perform a musical, and concert choir which will allow students to participate in choral festivals, district, regional and state competitions. Students’ participation in after school concerts are part of the students’ grades.

**General Music**

*Semester Elective Course*

In this course, students will explore music theory by learning to read and write music notation that will help them continue to grow in their music knowledge and skills. Activities will include singing, playing instruments, performing rhythms, moving to music, composing and improvising. Students will learn about various musical styles, performers, and cultures. No previous musical experience is necessary.

**Family and Consumer Science 6**

*Semester Elective Course*

In this course, students explore four thematic units: Family, Foods and Nutrition, Sewing, and Personal Finance. Students should leave the course with the ability to contribute to their families in a positive way; the ability to cook simple, healthy meals at home, the ability to machine sew a straight stitch, and a basic understanding of credit and interest. Students apply problem solving and leadership skills as they progress through the course. Mathematics, Science, English, Social Sciences, Fine Arts, and Technology are integrated throughout the course.
Introduction to Agriculture
Semester Elective Course

Students develop an awareness of the relationships between agriculture and science. Major concepts covered in the course include awareness of agriculture, the world of work, agribusiness careers, human relations, and scientific principles applied in agriculture.

Introduction to Technology
Semester Elective Course

Students study the resources of all technology, including tools, energy, materials, people, time, information, and capital. This also includes the problem-solving process and various hands-on activities. Students explore up to six systems of technology, including medical, agricultural, and related biotechnologies, energy and power, information and communication, transportation, manufacturing, and construction. Students relate the impact of technology on society, environment, and culture to future consequences and decisions.

Keyboarding Secondary
Semester Elective Course
½ high school credit

This course is designed for students to develop and enhance touch skills for entering alphabetic, numeric, and symbol information on a keyboard. Students compose and produce personal, educational, and professional documents. Upon successful completion of this course, students are awarded ½ credit toward their high school graduation requirements.

Theatre Arts 6
Semester Elective Course

Students learn about theatre and performing arts in this course. They are exposed to various aspects of theatrical performance, including reading and watching plays and movies. Students learn basic stage movement and begin working on voice: volume, diction, pitch, and enunciation through scenes and monologues. Students also learn the beginnings of pantomime and about focus and concentration through games and exercises. In addition, students learn about the parts of the stage and how stage work differs from movies and television.

World Cultures 6
Semester Elective Course

This course is designed to give students brief exposure to different cultures around the world. The course will explore the peoples, geography, history, government and cultures of different world regions, including the United States. The purpose of this course is to give students a better understanding of the world’s diverse cultures.
Year-long Courses

**Beginning Band**

No previous musical experience necessary! Students learn to assemble, hold, and produce a characteristic sound on a band instrument. Music reading is taught as well as a wide variety of musical styles. Every student learns to work together to create a final product and has the opportunity to perform for each other, their peers, and their families.

**Latin I, Part A**

1 high school credit upon completion of Latin I, Part B

Prerequisite: Final English grade of 85% or higher; English teacher recommendation

Latin I, Part A is a year-long course that covers the first semester curriculum of high school Latin I. The purpose of this course is to offer the middle school student the opportunity to begin his or her study of foreign language at an age-appropriate pace. Students are introduced to basic Latin grammar and vocabulary. They read Latin stories about Roman history, daily life, and Greek and Roman mythology. Class activities develop reading skills, expand Latin and English grammatical facility, and enlarge English vocabulary. Assignments in English allow small groups and individuals a chance to investigate cultural topics from the ancient world. Consistent study habits and active daily participation will foster a positive experience in this course, and will result in a comfortable transition to Latin I, Part B. **Students are expected to spend roughly 30 minutes daily on class preparation.**

**Spanish I, Part A**

1 high school credit upon completion of Spanish I, Part B

Prerequisite: Final English grade of 85% or higher; English teacher recommendation

Spanish I, Part A is designed for the highly motivated 6th grade student that has demonstrated age appropriate mastery of mechanics and grammar in the English language. This course, followed by seventh grade Spanish I, Part B, and eighth grade Spanish II will prepare students for the more advanced Spanish courses at Rockbridge County High School. The first semester curriculum of high school level Spanish I will be covered in this course, as well as a more in-depth study of the language structure, oral communication skills, and culture. **Students are expected to spend roughly 30 minutes daily on class preparation.**
7th Grade Core Courses

**English 7**

*Required Year-long Course*

The student continues to develop oral communication skills and becomes more knowledgeable about the effects of verbal and nonverbal behaviors in oral communication. The student continues to read a wide variety of fiction and nonfiction texts, including poetry, while becoming more independent and analytical. Composition skills continue to be refined with special attention to word choice, organization, style, and grammar. Written explanations utilize information writing skills, and persuasive writing will be introduced. The student continues vocabulary development through figurative language study and ongoing study of roots and affixes. The student understands the elements of media literacy. Increased proficiency in the use of print and electronic information is practiced as the student researches and cites sources. Throughout the course of the year, the student demonstrates correct use of language, spelling, and mechanics by applying grammatical conventions in writing and speaking.

**Advanced English 7**

*Year-long Course*

*Prerequisite: Must meet academic requirements determined by administration which may include final grade in previous class, teacher recommendation and SOL scores.*

This course is designed to teach the required Virginia curriculum objectives at a faster pace and with more rigor. At the advanced level the activities require students to increase their use of critical thinking skills to include analysis, synthesis, and creative problem solving. Students build an extensive vocabulary and become more comfortable with its application in both written and oral work. Research skills are integrated throughout, requiring students to apply the content they are learning. Advanced opportunities for participation in projects, activities, and community events build student capacity to be lifelong readers and leaders.

**Reading Lab 7**

*Prerequisite: assigned by school personnel*

Students who qualify for this class take their regular English class as well as a period of Reading Lab. This small group setting provides individualized attention in both English and reading. Placement in Reading Lab is based on the student’s performance on previous English assessments including SOL tests. Students who are enrolled in this course work with a reading specialist to master the literacy diet: comprehension, fluency, word study, and writing. Students will use a variety of hands-on activities to help aid individual progress.
Mathematics 7  
**Required Year-long Course**

The seventh grade standards continue to emphasize the foundations of algebra. The math 7 curriculum is divided into five categories: numbers and number sense, computation and estimation, measurement and geometry, probability and statistics, and patterns, functions and algebra. Evaluating with integers is a primary focus within many of the objectives. Operations of integers can be found in order of operations, solving equations and inequalities, sequences, relations and graphing equations, and word problems. Ratios and proportions are also a focus within many of the objectives. Using proportions can be used to determine sales tax, discounts and tips, finding the missing side of two similar figures, solving for probability events, and word problems involving real-life situations. The content taught in each of these strands supports four goals for all students as they reach for excellence: reasoning mathematically, communicating mathematically, becoming mathematical problem solvers, and making mathematical connections.

Advanced Math 7  
**Year-long Course**

*Prerequisite: Must meet academic requirements determined by administration which may include final grade in previous class, teacher recommendation and SOL scores.*

This course goes beyond the standards of the Math 7 curriculum and consists of the Math 7 and Math 8 Standards of Learning. This is an advanced class with a rigorous pace and academic workload throughout the year. The class focuses on applying higher-order thinking strategies and skills to solve multi-step problems. The student uses critical thinking skills to analyze mathematical concepts and situations, and then applies these skills to real-life situations. Students maintain high benchmark scores throughout the course in order to remain in the class. The student needs to earn a minimum of an 87 yearly average and a minimum score of a 480 on the Math 7 SOL test to be considered for Algebra I.

Math Lab 7  
**Prerequisite: assigned by school personnel**

Math Lab is available to students in need of additional math support. Students who qualify take this course in addition to their regular math class. Placement in Math Lab depends on a student’s overall performance which includes previous grades, SOL scores, the Algebra Readiness Diagnostic Test (ARDT) score, benchmarks and teacher recommendations. Math Lab provides more individualized attention due to small class size and offers students additional strategies including hands-on activities. Classroom teachers and lab teachers communicate often in order to accommodate student needs.

Life Science 7  
**Required Year-long Course**

Life Science is the study of living things. This course includes instruction on the environment and the interactions of living things, cells and their processes, genetics and evolution, classification of organisms into six kingdoms, the organization of living things into systems, and the effects of man upon the environment. Students use an interactive textbook.
**Advanced Life Science 7**

*Year-long Course*

*Prerequisite: Must meet academic requirements determined by administration which may include final grade in previous class, teacher recommendation and SOL scores.*

Students participating in this course go beyond the standard science curriculum. Advanced science students are challenged to master the required curriculum at a faster pace, leaving time at the end of the year to study a curriculum designed by the Center of Gifted Education at the College of William and Mary. Students delve into problem-solving activities using higher level thinking, writing and technological skills. Independent experiments, both in and out of class are required. Students begin to develop a mastery of scientific writing. Students are encouraged to research careers in the science field.

**Civics and Economics 7**

*Required Year-long Course*

Civics instruction helps students understand how their government originated, operates, and drives the nation’s economy. Topics include citizenship, the Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution, the political process and the makeup of the United States government. Economics instruction exposes students to concepts that drive American and international business.

**Advanced Civics and Economics 7**

*Year-long Course*

*Prerequisite: Must meet academic requirements determined by administration which may include final grade in previous class, teacher recommendation and SOL scores.*

This course extends beyond the standard curriculum by covering the material in greater complexity, acceleration and pacing. Students acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to become more responsible and effective citizens in an interdependent world. Advanced civics students will:

- develop technical writing skills by writing essays based on current events, research and the interpretation of primary source documents
- respond to open-ended exercises which measure skills through analysis, evaluation, categorization and synthesis
- have the opportunity to participate in events that involve public-speaking, speech writing, and constructive debate.

**Health/Physical Education 7**

*Required Year-long Course*

Physical Education is designed to educate students how to be physically active for a lifetime. Students develop knowledge and skills to be proficient in team and individual sports, group and individual activities, as well as the Fitness Gram Tests. The tests include push-up, curl-ups, trunk lift, sit and reach, and Pacer. The tests measure upper body strength, abdominal strength, lower back strength, flexibility, and cardiovascular fitness. Health classes consist of personal safety and wellness, nutrition, body systems and diseases, family life education, and tobacco, alcohol, and drug use and abuse prevention.
7th Grade Electives
Semester Courses

Agriscience Exploration  
Semester Elective Course

Students explore science as it relates to agriculture and develop an understanding of human relations, communication, the importance of agriculture to the economy, and key scientific terms related to the field of agriculture.

Art 7  
Semester Elective Course

This beginning art class is designed for students who do not have a strong background in art, but enjoy art and wish to explore and increase their art skills and knowledge. Using the elements of art (color, form, line, shape, space, texture, value) and the principles of design (balance, contrast, emphasis, movement, pattern, proportion, rhythm, unity, variety) as a framework, students investigate a variety of ideas for creating art. Through critical analysis and evaluation, students determine how artists convey meaning through the use of forms, media, and symbols.

Art 7: Intermediate  
Prerequisite: Art 6  
Semester Elective Course

This course continues the exploration, analysis, and investigation of the creative process. Students apply the elements of art (color, form, line, shape, space, texture, value) and the principles of design (balance, contrast, emphasis, movement, pattern, proportion, rhythm, unity, variety) to solve design problems, using traditional and contemporary art media. They develop critical inquiry skills and expand their vocabulary as they explore the meaning of works of art through the evaluation of subject matter, themes, and symbols. Students develop an increased awareness of the nature of art and of their relationship to it as they explore the meaning and value of works of art.

Chorus  
Semester Elective Course

Chorus is open to all students who are interested in being part of a musical and singing group that will represent MRMS’ best voices. Students cover all styles and types of music including, but not limited to, pop, folk, jazz, spiritual and sacred. Students will also learn about musical literature, history and theory that will help them understand the vocal styles that are applied to singing. Opportunities for learning and performing include activities such as show choir using the whole stage and choreography to perform a musical, and concert choir which will allow students to participate in choral festivals, district, regional and state competitions. Students’ participation in after school concerts are part of the students’ grades.
General Music

In this course, students will explore music theory by learning to read and write music notation that will help them continue to grow in their music knowledge and skills. Activities will include singing, playing instruments, performing rhythms, moving to music, composing and improvising. Students will learn about various musical styles, performers, and cultures. No previous musical experience is necessary.

Family & Consumer Sciences 7

In FACS II, students build on skills taught in FACS I, although it is not a prerequisite for the course. Students will be expected to demonstrate competency in the four units of study: Family, Foods and Nutrition, Sewing, and Personal Finance. A more in-depth and age appropriate exploration of these topics will be conducted.

Inventions and Innovations 7

Students make models of significant inventions that have advanced society. After studying these developments, they explore contemporary technological problems facing them, their community, or the world and apply systematic procedures to invent new products or innovations as solutions. This course includes a six-week session in robotics.

Keyboarding Secondary

This course is designed for students to develop and enhance touch skills for entering alphabetic, numeric, and symbol information on a keyboard. Students compose and produce personal, educational, and professional documents. Upon successful completion of this course, students are awarded ½ credit toward their high school graduation requirements.

Computer Applications

Prerequisite: Keyboarding Secondary

Students develop or review correct keyboarding techniques and gain a basic knowledge of word processing, spreadsheet, database, and graphics, and telecommunications application. Students will also demonstrate an understanding of computer concepts through application of knowledge. Students learn to use software packages and local and worldwide network communications systems. Upon successful completion of this course students are awarded ½ credit toward their high school graduation requirement.

Computer Solutions

Students are introduced to the world of business using the computer as a problem-solving tool. Emphasis is placed on using basic touch keyboarding skills to complete a variety of projects incorporating word processing, database, presentation, and spreadsheet software. Basic Internet safety and computer maintenance issues are important components of this course.
Theatre Arts 7 & 8  

This course is designed to give students an opportunity to build on their vocal skills learned in sixth grade theatre. Students will delve more deeply into characterization. Students begin to work on the basics of video-making. They will write scripts for videos that will be produced in this class. Students learn skills to use public speaking or in making presentations at other events. They will learn about components that are important to theatre productions such as scenery and art skills.

Year-long Courses

Beginning Band

No previous musical experience necessary! Students learn to assemble, hold, and produce a characteristic sound on a band instrument. Music reading is taught as well as a wide variety of music styles. Every student learns to work together to create a final product and has the opportunity to perform for each other, their peers, and their families.

Band 7  
Prerequisite: Beginning Band

Students expand their knowledge of performing with an instrument. This includes learning new rhythms, new musical styles, new scales, and lots of new music! Students learn more about group intonation, as well as characteristic intonation tendencies on their instrument. Band 7 also provides many chances for individuals to excel personally through honor band auditions and the opportunity to become a member of the MRMS Eagle Jazz Band.

Latin I, Part A  

1 high school credit upon completion of Latin I, Part B

Prerequisite: Final English grade of 85% or higher; English teacher recommendation

Latin I, Part A is a year-long course that covers the first semester curriculum of high school Latin I. The purpose of this course is to offer the middle school student the opportunity to begin his or her study of foreign language at an age-appropriate pace. Students are introduced to basic Latin grammar and vocabulary. They read Latin stories about Roman history, daily life, and Greek and Roman mythology. Class activities develop reading skills, expand Latin and English grammatical facility, and enlarge English vocabulary. Assignments in English allow small groups and individuals a chance to investigate cultural topics from the ancient world. Consistent study habits and active daily participation will foster a positive experience in this course, and will result in a comfortable transition to Latin I, Part B. Students are expected to spend roughly 30 minutes daily on class preparation.
**Latin I, Part B**

*Year-long Elective Course*

*1 high school credit*

*Prerequisite: Latin I, Part A*

Latin I, Part B is a year-long course that covers the second semester curriculum of high school Latin I. The purpose of this course is to offer the middle school student the opportunity to continue his or her study of foreign language at an age-appropriate pace. Students delve deeper into the foundations of Latin grammar and vocabulary. They read more Latin stories about Roman history, daily life, and Greek and Roman mythology. Class activities further develop reading skills, expand Latin and English grammatical facility, and enlarge English vocabulary. Consistent study habits and active daily participation will foster a positive experience in both Latin I, Part A and Latin I, Part B and will result in a comfortable transition into a challenging second year of Latin. *Students are expected to spend roughly 30 minutes daily on class preparation.*

**Spanish I, Part A**

*Year-long Elective Course*

*1 high school credit upon completion of Spanish I, Part B*

*Prerequisite: Final English grade of 85% or higher; English teacher recommendation*

Spanish I, Part A is designed for the highly motivated 6th grade student that has demonstrated age appropriate mastery of mechanics and grammar in the English language. This course, followed by seventh grade Spanish I, Part B, and eighth grade Spanish II will prepare students for the more advanced Spanish courses at Rockbridge County High School. The first semester curriculum of high school level Spanish I will be covered in this course, as well as a more in-depth study of the language structure, oral communication skills, and culture. *Students are expected to spend roughly 30 minutes daily on class preparation.*

**Spanish I, Part B**

*Year-long Elective Course*

*1 high school credit upon completion of Spanish I, Part B*

*Prerequisite: Spanish I, Part A*

Spanish I, Part B is a continuation of Spanish I, Part A and covers the second semester curriculum of high school Spanish I. This course requires higher level thinking skills and a firm foundation in the mechanics and grammar of the English language. The goal of Spanish I, Part B, followed by 8th grade Spanish II, is to prepare the student for the more advanced Spanish courses at Rockbridge County High School. The curriculum concentrates on listening, reading and writing in the target language in addition to interactive communication, receptive communication and productive communication. *Students receive one high school credit upon successful completion of this course.*
8th Grade Core Courses

*English 8*  
**Required Year-long Course**

English 8 focuses on the development of students’ communication skills, especially through writing, with emphasis on refining strategies in reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Students read from a variety of literary genres and informational texts to further develop their abilities to analyze and interpret text. Word study emphasizes etymology, including knowledge of prefixes, suffixes, and roots. Exposure to periodicals and other contemporary publishing offers worldly exposure. Out of class writing projects including research papers using MLA guidelines are also assigned. This course enhances the students’ use and knowledge of language skills focused on reading, reasoning, writing, and comprehension skills.

*Advanced English 8*  
**Year-long Course**

*Prerequisite: Must meet academic requirements determined by administration which may include final grade in previous class, teacher recommendation and SOL scores.*

This course is designed for highly motivated students who have mastered the general curriculum. Therefore, Advanced English 8 provides students with a rigorous curriculum requiring students to increase their use of critical thinking skills to include analysis, synthesis, and creative problem solving. The course moves at an accelerated pace with a more concentrated focus on developing analytical and interpretive skills in literature using materials beyond the prescribed curriculum. Students will write in a variety of modes, informal and formal, with maturity and sophistication by exploring and emulating the language and style used by authors. Additionally, students are required to compose original poems, essays, and critical analysis of literature. Students will build an extended vocabulary through etymological study of Greek and Latin word origins and will be prepared in facets of the language arts spectrum for the 21st century through the variety of technologies. Research skills are integrated into the curriculum providing students with opportunities to write cross-curricula papers according to the MLA guidelines. Furthermore, this course provides an in-depth study of grammar, composition, and literature to prepare students for further advancement.

*Reading Lab 8*  
**Prerequisite: assigned by school personnel**

Students who qualify for this class take their regular English class as well as a period of Reading Lab. This small group setting provides individualized attention in both English and reading. Placement in Reading Lab is based on the student’s performance on previous English assessments including SOL tests. Students who are enrolled in this course work with a reading specialist to master the literacy diet: comprehension, fluency, word study, and writing. Students will use a variety of hands-on activities to help aid individual progress.
Mathematics 8

Required Year-long Course unless taking Algebra I CP

The objective of this course is to help students gain a better appreciation for mathematics and to prepare students for the rigor of Algebra I. Emphasis is placed on mastery of operations with rational numbers, solving real world problems, solving multi-step equations and inequalities, using percents and proportions and understanding probability and statistics. Students use geometry through the application of formulas. Graphing of linear equations and inequalities is included. Students need to have access to a four-function calculator for home use. Note: Rockbridge County High School currently requires a pass advanced on the Math 8 SOL and/or teacher recommendation for enrolling in Algebra I CP.

Algebra I CP

Year-long Course
1 high school credit

Prerequisite: Must meet academic requirements determined by administration which may include final grade in previous class, teacher recommendation and SOL scores.

For this course, students must be highly motivated and possess strong mathematical skills. This advanced class offers a challenging and accelerated study of algebraic concepts. Emphasis is placed on mastery of rational numbers, linear relations and function, analyzing and solving linear equations and inequalities, factoring, performing operations with polynomials, solving quadratic equations, solving systems of equations, and simple data analysis. This course focuses on the Algebra I SOL standards with an extensive emphasis on the use of graphing calculators. Students receive one high school credit upon successful completion of the course. Students who pass the Algebra I SOL test earn one verified credit. Please note: Rockbridge County High School currently requires a pass advanced score on the Algebra I SOL test, teacher recommendation, and/or placement testing for participation in the Geometry Honors course.

Math Lab 8

Prerequisite: assigned by school personnel

Math Lab is available to students in need of additional math support. Students who qualify take this course in addition to their regular math class. Placement in Math Lab depends on a student’s overall performance which includes previous grades, SOL scores, the Algebra Readiness Diagnostic Test (ARDT) score, benchmarks and teacher recommendations. Math Lab provides more individualized attention due to small class size and offers students additional strategies including hands-on activities. Classroom teachers and lab teachers communicate often in order to accommodate student needs.

Physical Science 8

Required Year-long Course unless taking Earth Science

This course focuses on an in-depth understanding of the nature and structure of matter, the characteristics of energy, and the relationship between matter and energy. A wide variety of scientific topics including chemistry, physics, subatomic particles, the organization and use of the periodic table; physical and chemical changes; nuclear reactions; temperature and thermal energy; sound; electromagnetic energy; electricity and magnetism; and work, force, motion, and gravity are covered. Laboratory and hands-on activities are used to facilitate learning in these content areas. Students learn how physical science relates
to the world around them, in addition to an understanding of the nature of science, scientific investigation, the progression of scientific discoveries, and the technological applications of these discoveries.

**Earth Science**

*Year-long Course*

1 high school credit

*Prerequisite: Teacher recommendation based on previous strong math and science performances*

Earth Science provides the foundation for most of the science courses offered. This course examines Earth’s features and processes and its placement in the universe. Emphasis is placed on the constant changes that Earth undergoes, and how those changes affect landforms, rock structures, and life itself. The class provides instruction in the areas of astronomy, meteorology, geology, ecology, and oceanography through laboratory experiences, group activities, projects, and writing assignments. *Upon successful completion of this course, students receive one high school credit. Students who pass the Earth Science SOL earn one verified credit.*

**World History/Geography I**

*Required Year-long Course*

1 high school credit

Students examine the historical development of people, places, and patterns of life from ancient times until 1500 A.D. in terms of the impact on western civilization. The study of history rests on knowledge of dates, places, events, and ideas. Historical understanding, however, requires students to engage in historical thinking to raise questions and to show evidence in support of their answers. Skills developed include chronological thinking, historical comprehension, historical analysis, and historical research. *Upon successful completion of this course students receive one high school credit. Students who pass the World History I SOL earn one verified credit.*

**Advanced World History/Geography I**

*Year-long Course*

1 high school credit

*Prerequisite: Must meet academic requirements determined by administration which may include final grade in previous class, teacher recommendation and SOL scores.*

Students examine the historical development of people, places, and patterns of life from ancient times until 1500 A.D. in terms of the impact on western civilization. The study of history rests on knowledge of dates, places, events, and ideas. Historical understanding, however, requires students to engage in historical thinking to raise questions and to show evidence in support of their answers. Skills developed include chronological thinking, historical comprehension, historical analysis, and historical research. Advanced students are expected to show initiative in the classroom through response and discussion of curriculum material. Advanced students are also expected to demonstrate academic maturity through the completion of work to a high school standard. *Upon successful completion of this course students receive one high school credit. Students who pass the World History I SOL earn one verified credit.*
Health/Physical Education 8  

Physical Education is designed to educate students how to be physically active for a lifetime. Students develop knowledge and skills to be proficient in team and individual sports, group and individual activities, as well as the Fitness Gram Tests. The tests include push-up, curl-ups, trunk lift, sit and reach, and Pacer. The tests measure upper body strength, abdominal strength, lower back strength, flexibility, and cardiovascular fitness. Health classes teach environmental health, body systems, safety with first aid and CPR, nutrition and the toxic food environment, family life education, and tobacco, alcohol, and drug use and abuse prevention.

8th Grade Electives  

Semester Courses

Chorus  

Semester Elective Course

Chorus is open to all students who are interested in being part of a musical and singing group that will represent MRMS’ best voices. Students cover all styles and types of music including, but not limited to, pop, folk, jazz, spiritual and sacred. Students will also learn about musical literature, history and theory that will help them understand the vocal styles that are applied to singing. Opportunities for learning and performing include activities such as show choir using the whole stage and choreography to perform a musical, and concert choir which will allow students to participate in choral festivals, district, regional and state competitions. Students’ participation in after school concerts are part of the students’ grades.

General Music  

Semester Elective Course

In this course, students will explore music theory by learning to read and write music notation that will help them continue to grow in their music knowledge and skills. Activities will include singing, playing instruments, performing rhythms, moving to music, composing and improvising. Students will learn about various musical styles, performers, and cultures. No previous musical experience is necessary.

Individual Development  

Semester Elective Course

½ high school credit

Students enrolled in this course focus on encouraging personal potential of self and others throughout the lifespan; enhancing positive views of self and others; managing stressful situations; formulating a plan to achieve career goals; forming healthy, caring relationships with family members and peers; managing conflict; choosing responsible ways to express oneself; and developing leadership skills and understanding its importance to individuals, families, and society. Critical thinking, practical problem solving, and entrepreneurship opportunities within the area of individual mental, emotional, and physical health are emphasized. Please note that cooking and sewing are NOT areas of study in this class. Upon successful completion of this course, students earn ½ high school credit.
Introduction to Trades  Semester Elective Course  
½ high school credit

This course is designed to give students an opportunity to learn various skills in the three areas of Trade and Industrial Technology: Auto Body Repair, Automotive Technology, and Building Trades. Students discover how safety and their attitudes are very important when working in any type of shop environment. The course includes learning how to read rules, micrometers/calipers and learning different hand tool sizes. Students are taught about different power tools that are used on each of the trades and how to safely work with those tools and power equipment. Students also learn the different parts and their locations on an automobile. They will begin to learn what is involved in the repair of the body of the automobile and the changing of tires. Upon successful completion of this course, students earn ½ high school credit.

Keyboarding Secondary  Semester Elective Course  
½ high school credit

This course is designed for students to develop and enhance touch skills for entering alphabetic, numeric, and symbol information on a keyboard. Students compose and produce personal, educational, and professional documents. Upon successful completion of this course, students are awarded ½ credit toward their high school graduation requirements.

Computer Applications  Semester Elective Course  
½ high school credit

Prerequisite: Keyboarding Secondary

Students develop or review correct keyboarding techniques and gain a basic knowledge of word processing, spreadsheet, database, and graphics, and telecommunications application. Students will also demonstrate an understanding of computer concepts through application of knowledge. Students learn to use software packages and local and worldwide network communications systems. Upon successful completion of this course students are awarded ½ credit toward their high school graduation requirement.

Computer Solutions  Semester Elective Course

Students are introduced to the world of business using the computer as a problem-solving tool. Emphasis is placed on using basic touch keyboarding skills to complete a variety of projects incorporating word processing, database, presentation, and spreadsheet software. Basic Internet safety and computer maintenance issues are important components of this course.

Theatre Arts 7 & 8  Semester Elective Course

This course is designed to give students an opportunity to build on their vocal skills learned in sixth grade theatre. Students will delve more deeply into characterization. Students begin to work on the basics of video-making. They will write scripts for videos that will be produced in this class. Students learn skills to use public speaking or in making presentations at other events. They will learn about components that are important to theatre productions such as scenery and art skills.
Year-long Courses

**Agriculture 1**

This course is designed to develop competencies in each of the career pathways as they pertain to agriculture education, including the areas of Virginia’s agriculture industry; the global scope of agriculture; scientific research concepts in plant, animal and food science; principles of leadership and opportunities within student organizations; agribusiness and supervised agricultural experience program opportunities; agricultural skills and safety in power, structural and technical systems; and natural resources and environmental systems. **Upon successful completion of this course, students earn one high school credit.**

**Art 8: Foundations**

*Prerequisite: Art 7 or Art 7: Intermediate*

This course focuses on the application and synthesis of previously learned concepts and more complex technical skills as students manipulate the elements of art (color, form, line, shape, space, texture, value) and the principles of design (balance, contrast, emphasis, movement, pattern, proportion, rhythm, unity, variety) in the art-making process. Students make conscious choices of media, processes, and techniques for expressive purposes in the creation of original works of art. They debate the purposes of art, formulate reasoned responses to meaningful art questions, develop their own criteria for making art judgments, and develop a personal philosophy of art. Students make connections between their prior art experiences and other fields of knowledge.

**Band 8**

*Prerequisite: Band 7*

Students continue expanding their musicianship and instrumental skills. More individual home practicing is expected as students are performing more challenging music. Students learn music theory, explore music through technology, and develop critical thinking skills. A goal for this year is to prepare students for the transition to high school band.

**Introduction to Drafting and Technology**

*Year-long Elective Course*

1 high school credit

This course is a prerequisite for all other drafting and electronics technology education courses. The concepts of accurate measurement, reading a rule, geometric constructions, and drawing to scale are introduced as the students construct 2-D multi-view and 3-D pictorial drawings. This course has a heavy emphasis on the basic skills and concepts of manual drafting. In the second semester, students begin using AutoCAD to produce engineering and architecturally based drawings. Also in the second semester, students are introduced to basic electronic circuit concepts, circuit building, and soldering. Students draw basic electronics circuit schematics, build basic circuits on an experiment board and use their soldering skills to assemble a printed circuit board. Future engineers, architects, and technicians should strongly consider this course. **Upon successful completion of this course, students earn one high school credit.**
**Latin I, Part B**

*Year-long Elective Course*

1 high school credit upon completion

*Prerequisite: Latin I, Part A*

Latin I, Part B is a year-long course that covers the second semester curriculum of high school Latin I. The purpose of this course is to offer the middle school student the opportunity to continue his or her study of foreign language at an age-appropriate pace. Students delve deeper into the foundations of Latin grammar and vocabulary. They read more Latin stories about Roman history, daily life, and Greek and Roman mythology. Class activities further develop reading skills, expand Latin and English grammatical facility, and enlarge English vocabulary. Consistent study habits and active daily participation will foster a positive experience in both Latin I, Part A and Latin I, Part B and will result in a comfortable transition into a challenging second year of Latin. *Students are expected to spend roughly 30 minutes daily on class preparation. Students receive one high school credit upon successful completion of this course.*

**Latin I**

*Year-long Elective Course*

1 high school credit

*Prerequisite: Final English 7 grade of 85% or higher; English teacher recommendation*

Students are introduced to basic Latin grammar and vocabulary and read Latin stories about Roman history, daily life, and Greek and Roman mythology. Class activities develop Latin reading skills, expand Latin and English grammatical facility, and enlarge the student’s English vocabulary. Regular assignments in English give small groups and individuals a chance to investigate cultural topics from the ancient world. *Students are expected to spend roughly 30 minutes daily on class preparation. Students receive one high school credit upon successful completion of this course.*

**Latin II**

*Year-long Elective Course*

1 high school credit

*Prerequisite: Latin I, Part B*

Students conclude their basic introduction to vocabulary, grammar, and reading skills and begin study of advanced grammar. Cultural emphasis is on daily life, the historical background of the Roman nation and government and on the topography and monuments of Rome in light of the Latin readings under study. *Students should expect to spend 30-45 minutes on homework each night. Students receive one high school credit upon successful completion of this course.*

**Spanish I, Part B**

*Year-long Elective Course*

1 high school credit upon completion of Spanish I, Part B

*Prerequisite: Spanish I, Part A*

Spanish I, Part B is a continuation of Spanish I, Part A and covers the second semester curriculum of high school Spanish I. This course requires higher level thinking skills and a firm foundation in the mechanics and grammar of the English language. The curriculum concentrates on listening, reading and writing in the target language in addition to interactive communication, receptive communication and productive communication. *Students receive one high school credit upon successful completion of this course.*
**Spanish I**  
*Year-long Elective Course*  
1 high school credit

*Prerequisite: Final English 7 grade of 85% or higher; English teacher recommendation*

This course develops the four skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing with a concentration on the first three. The core of the course is grammar study and its use in conversational skills. Included in the cultural study is an overview of Hispanic countries and historical characters. Classwork and projects promote communicative skills, cultural awareness and connections with other disciplines. *Students are expected to spend 30 minutes daily on class preparation. Upon completion of the course, students receive one high school credit.*

**Spanish II**  
*Year-long Elective Course*  
1 high school credit

*Prerequisite: Spanish I, Part B; teacher recommendation*

This course includes a brief review of the basic grammar and vocabulary of Spanish I. Grammar study is continued with emphasis upon more complicated points. The majority of class time is utilized to speak and hear the language. Most written work, including drills and compositions, is completed outside of class. Classroom instruction, except some cultural and grammatical explanations, is in Spanish, and students are expected to speak in Spanish. *Students are expected to spend 30 to 45 minutes daily on class preparation. Students receive one high school credit upon successful completion of the course.*