

VENADO MIDDLE SCHOOL

7th/8th Grade Course Descriptions

2009/2010

Required Classes

Advisement
 Language Arts
 7th Grade Math
 8th Grade Math
 Physical Education
 Science 8
 Science 7/Health
 U.S. History (8th)
 World History (7th)

Elective—Year-long

Aide-Classroom/Library/Office (8th)
 Chorus
 Concert Band
 Concert Orchestra
 Creative Art (8th)
 Drama
 Jazz Ensemble
 Leadership
 Spanish 1 (8th)
 Study Partners (8th)
 Symphonic Band
 Symphonic Orchestra
 Vocal Ensemble (Show Choir)
 Yearbook

Elective—Trimester

Art 1
 Art 2
 Ceramics 1
 Ceramics 2
 Computer
 Applications
 Intro to Spanish
 Sign Language
 Wood 1
 Wood 2

REQUIRED CLASSES

ADVISEMENT is a two-year program designed to help students better understand themselves in the middle school setting. Students and advisors engage in activities to teach the Venado HONOR Code and the IUSD Board approved ethical values, career exploration, community building activities, and prepare and evaluate educational goals. Students also participate in Right to Read, a silent reading program.

LANGUAGE ARTS is a literature-based program focusing on reading, writing, speaking, spelling, language mechanics, vocabulary, grammar, research skills, and critical thinking skills. The curriculum is not only aligned to state standards, but also integrated into units of study relating to the student's history class, thus providing an interdisciplinary approach to learning. Some students will be placed into special Language Arts and World History classes based on test scores and teacher recommendations. These include GATE, sheltered English Learning or the Reading/Language Arts class (for students whose reading comprehension scores are basic or below basic as measured by the California Standards Tests). The reading class is taught as a double block and is in lieu of the elective class.

7th Grade Math (Intro to Pre-Algebra, Pre-Algebra and Algebra) classes cover skill levels including operations with fractions, decimals, percentages, ratios, integers, equalities/inequalities, problem solving, and algebra. The majority of seventh grade students enroll in one of our Pre-Algebra level courses. Sixth grade teachers will be assessing each student in late April/early May to determine middle school math placement. Students who test above grade level, and are recommended by their 6th grade math teacher, may be placed in a higher level math class. You will be notified of math placement by the 6th grade teacher.

8th Grade Math (Transitional Algebra, Algebra and Honors Geometry) classes cover concepts including integers, patterns, geometry, logic, problem solving, number theory, discrete mathematics, and algebra. Based on the algebra placement test and current performance in math, students may be placed in Algebra. Those who have completed Algebra 1 and earned a B or better in the 7th grade will take Geometry at Irvine High School.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION is a co-educational class with a combination of required and elective activities. Students are introduced to the basic knowledge and skills, of a wide range of team, individual, and leisure time activities. The program emphasizes the development of physical fitness and promotes the development of healthy life styles, sportsmanship, teamwork, and positive interaction with their peers.

SCIENCE 8 is a year-long course that focuses on the physical sciences. Major units of study include: motion, forces, structure of matter, earth in the solar system, reactions, chemistry of living systems, Periodic Table, density and buoyancy, and investigation and experimentation.

SCIENCE 7 / HEALTH is a hands-on curriculum with a multi-sensory approach. Two trimesters address the seven California Science Standards of investigation and experimentation, light, cell biology, genetics, evolution, earth history and the structure and function of living things. The third trimester of health science emphasizes the California Health Science Expectations for the content areas of personal health, injury prevention and safety, alcohol, tobacco and other drugs, nutrition, family life education, and diseases. This course is designed to assist students in obtaining accurate information, developing lifelong positive attitudes and behaviors, and making wise decisions related to their personal health.

UNITED STATES HISTORY 8 covers the time period from colonization to the second industrial revolution (1914), and includes geography, economics, famous historical figures, cultural and regional differences, as well as how historical events relate to the present.

WORLD HISTORY 7 emphasizes geography and social, cultural, and technological changes during the historical period from 500 to 1789 A.D. The primary focus of study involves the fall of the Roman Empire, Islam, Africa, the rise of the Aztecs, Incas, and Mayans, and a comparison of the civilizations of China, Japan, and Europe during the Middle Ages, Renaissance, Reformation, Scientific Revolution, and the Age of Exploration and Enlightenment.

7th PERIOD (IPSF) PE is the regular physical education class described above, but it is offered by IPSF after regular school hours, from 2:27 - 3:18. This option allows students to free up a period during the day to take an extra class as needed. **This is a fee-based course and requires a fee of \$525 which may be paid by cash, check, or credit card. Return the attached IPSF registration form, with check or cash attached or with your credit card information, along with the other registration materials.** Make checks payable to IPSF-ZPPE (Irvine Public Schools Foundation). There is a payment plan for those who need it. Please call 936-6804 to make arrangements.

ELECTIVE CLASSES

Elective courses are offered in two formats, year-long and trimester. Year-long is one class that meets every day for the year. The trimester exploratory classes meet for a trimester, so students have the ability to explore three different elective areas. Most students have the space for one elective, unless they enroll in 7th period (IPSF) PE, which creates additional space for electives or are in the reading program.

On your enrollment card, please prioritize your year-long selections only if you want a year-long elective.

Please note that elective course offerings are limited due to enrollment, staffing, and funding.

Eighth grade students who have taken exploratory electives in the 7th grade should *not* retake the class as the content will be the same. Instead, 8th grade students could choose Art 2, Ceramics 2, or Wood 2. Exploratory electives not taken in 7th grade can be selected and taken in sequence. For example: Wood 1 and Wood 2 can be chosen.

TRIMESTER EXPLORATORY ELECTIVES allow students to experience a variety of exploratory offerings by rotating through classes in art, ceramics, computer applications, Intro to Spanish, sign language, or wood.

ART 1 provides students the chance to explore art techniques and learn about artists. No previous experience is necessary! Students will be introduced to various materials and techniques which include a variety of crafts, design, drawing, illustration, painting, and sculpture. This class is a hands-on course and will expand the imagination while developing art skills. (This will be included in all 7th grade trimester exploratory choices).

ART 2 will continue to expand students' art skills and imagination, while working on more advanced art techniques.

CERAMICS 1 introduces students to the basic hand-building techniques of pinch, coil and slab construction. Students are guided to create original designs, quality construction and creative glazing. Once basic skills are mastered, students are encouraged to apply them to optional projects of their own choice. Students will construct projects to take home and enjoy!

CERAMICS 2 will continue to expand student skills and imaginative production of quality ceramic ware.

COMPUTER APPLICATIONS introduces the use of tabs, tables, hyperlinks, and mail merge in Microsoft Word, as well as reviewing basic word processing skills. Using Excel, students learn to set up databases and spreadsheets, format cells, enter simple formulas, and create charts and graphs. Students produce PowerPoint presentations, incorporating slide transitions, automatic timings, animation, and sound. Students are also introduced to Web page design.

INTRODUCTION TO SPANISH is a 12 week long class designed to familiarize students with basic Spanish and prepare them for Spanish 1. One thematic vocabulary is introduced weekly. Each week students learn basic conversational phrases. Students are also familiarized with the history, geography, and culture of all 21 Spanish-speaking countries through movies, informational Power Points and by doing arts and crafts typical of these countries. Students will participate in oral presentations and do projects such as developing calendars and/or creating travel brochures.

SIGN LANGUAGE introduces basic conversational sign language, as well as provides some insight into Deaf Culture. Students will learn basic signs and finger spelling which would be useful in daily conversations with our deaf students on campus. Through teacher modeling, sign videos, sign games, and structured dialogues, students will develop both receptive and expressive sign language skills.

WOOD 1 introduces basic wood techniques including planning, order of operation, safety and quality workmanship. This class helps develop the practical use of various academic areas such as math, reading and science. Skills learned may be used in future vocations and avocations.

WOOD 2 students will build on skills developed in Wood 1. During the Wood 2 class, students will have an opportunity to build projects of their own choice with teacher input. This class develops independence and problem solving skills.

YEAR-LONG ELECTIVES

JAZZ ENSEMBLE is for students demonstrating an interest in jazz, swing, Latin and rock music, and have had at least two years experience on their instrument. Students learn to play in all the various styles associated with big band jazz, as well as explore musical improvisation. This class meets Monday through Friday from 7:05-7:55 AM and is available only to students who are also enrolled in either of the bands or orchestras. During the year there will be four concert performances. Instrumentation includes alto sax, tenor sax, baritone sax, trombone, trumpet, piano, bass, guitar and drums. Any student wishing to participate in this class who does not play one of these instruments will be able to learn one (except piano, bass and guitar) with the help of students and the instructor.

CONCERT BAND is designed for second-year band students interested in improving their skills. Students may enroll in this class to begin a wind or percussion instrument, if they can read music. Piano players are also welcome. Students learn scales, rhythm reading, instrument tuning, music history, and theory. During the year, there are four concert performances of music that include symphonic and pop selections. At the director's recommendation, the student could be promoted to Symphonic Band. Students may use their own instrument, rent, or borrow one from the school, if available.

SYMPHONIC BAND * is for students demonstrating a serious interest in symphonic and pop music who have had at least two years experience on their instrument. Students learn advanced skills in tuning, sight-reading, performance, music theory, and theory. During the year, there are five concert performances. Students may use their own instrument, rent, or borrow one from the school, if available. **This band requires the 6th grade music teacher's signature on the registration card, or an audition with the middle school director prior to June 20th. Call for an audition time at (949) 936-6853. Eighth graders – please see Mr. McBrien in room 101 at lunch or before school.**

CONCERT ORCHESTRA is for students demonstrating an interest in symphonic and pop music and who have had at least one year of experience on a string instrument. Emphasis is on proper care and use of the string instrument, scales, tuning, music history, and theory. During the year, there are four concert performances. At the director's recommendation, the student could be promoted to the Symphonic Orchestra. Students may use their own instrument, rent, or borrow one from the school if one is available.

SYMPHONIC ORCHESTRA * is for students demonstrating a serious interest in symphonic and pop music who have had at least three years experience on a string instrument. Students learn skills in timing, performance, and music history, and theory. Over the year, there are seven concert performances. Students may use their own instrument, rent, or borrow one from the school, if available. **This orchestra requires the 6th grade music teacher's signature on the registration card, or an audition with the middle school director prior to June 20th. Call for an audition time at (949) 936-6853. Eighth graders – please see Mr. McBrien in room 101 at lunch or before school.**

CHORUS is designed for the students who love to perform all kinds of music such as: Pop, Jazz, and Broadway. Students will have opportunities to perform in large and small ensembles and solos if desired. Three evening performances and several daytime performances are given throughout the school year. Previous singing experience is desired, **but not required**. This elective is open to boys and girls and **no audition is needed**.

VOCAL ENSEMBLE * (Show Choir) is designed for students who love to perform Pop, Broadway, Jazz and other styles of music through signing and movement/choreography. The group also showcases the talent of large ensemble, small ensembles and soloists. The vocal ensemble will perform in at least three evening performances, several daytime performances, and a choral festival during the school year. **This is an auditioned group that is open to boys and girls.**

DRAMA This year-long Drama elective is designed for beginning, intermediate, and advanced skill level performers in either 7th or 8th grade. Class expectations for intermediate and advanced students are differentiated based on the performer's previous acting experience. Skills include solo and paired improvisation, pantomime, and characterization, as well as script-writing, stage blocking, costuming, makeup, humorous and dramatic interpretive readings. This is a great learning opportunity for the child who does not feel comfortable in front of people, as we will eliminate that apprehension. This is also the perfect outlet for the energetic or highly kinesthetic student who needs an opportunity to move around or get the spotlight (appropriately) during the school day. Performers earn their grade by getting their "Skill Card" signed off for activities, and no child has to perform anything before he/she is ready to. Students will be involved in several formal performances of their design for student audiences during the school day and evening performances for families.

LEADERSHIP * is a year-long class designed to help students develop leadership skills. Emphasis is on the development of activities, which enhances self-esteem and school spirit within our total school environment. Students learn about leadership styles and techniques, parliamentary procedures, budget planning, and organizational skills. Leadership students work together to develop, plan, and implement a variety of student activities. **Please complete application found on www.vendoms.org/registration.**

CREATIVE ART is a year-long course which provides students the opportunity to experience working with a variety of art materials and techniques. Students will explore the fields of ceramics, digital design, drawing, graphic arts, illustration, painting, and sculpture. This class is a hands-on course and will expand the imagination while developing art skills. Note: the University of California and Cal State Universities require visual or performing arts courses at the high school level. This course will give students a foundation of art experiences which will enhance further pursuits in visual arts.

YEARBOOK * students work collaboratively to create the school yearbook. Students use a PC computer to design the yearbook, including layouts, photos, captions, and more. They also use digital cameras to take pictures at school events. Students enrolled in this class must be self motivated, work well with others, and be responsible. Academic grades should be in the B range with citizenship marks at or above satisfactory.

SPANISH 1 is a first year, high school honors level course that introduces conversational Spanish and its grammatical structure. **Criteria include:** strong English language/grammar skills, excellent work habits, and A/B grades. In making this choice, it may be helpful to think about other information regarding high school graduation and college entrance foreign language requirements. Students must maintain a B average in order to advance to Spanish 2 in high school. A minimum of two years of foreign language is generally required for four-year college entrance and three years is highly recommended.

STUDY PARTNERS * are assigned to teachers at our neighboring Deerfield Elementary School. Students may work with small groups of elementary age students tutoring them in reading, math, spelling, or other areas and may also assist the elementary teacher with clerical duties. **Written permission from the school counselor is required.**

AIDE POSITION: CLASSROOM / LIBRARY / OFFICE AIDE * positions are limited and are available only for students who are independent, responsible, and want to help. **Classroom aides** work for a specific teacher and assist with clerical and classroom preparation duties. **Library aides** assist in the operation of the library, including clerical tasks, shelving of books, assisting with the computerized checkout system, and delivery and retrieval of audio/visual equipment. **Office aides** assist the office secretaries and administrators in the operation of the front office, including clerical tasks, assisting with the phone and office reception duties. **Signature of teacher/person you will aide for is required for enrollment in this class.**