

Charlotte Middle School

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CHARLOTTE ORIOLES™

CURRICULUM GUIDE

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CMS Mission and Vision

CMS Mission:

We will serve, motivate, inspire, and educate our students and community through building relationships, encouraging innovation, creativity, and offering a high quality, well rounded educational experience.

CMS Vision:

Where all are supported, successful, and responsible members of a model educational institution.

Standards Based Grading

Our CMS Standards-Based report card seeks to provide meaningful feedback so both students and parents can track student progress toward mastery of key academic concepts, reflect on strengths and weaknesses, and identify multiple pathways to deeper learning.

What is standards-based grading?

Standards-based grading communicates how students are performing on a set of clearly defined learning targets called standards. The purpose of standards-based grading is to identify what a student knows, or is able to do, in relation to pre-established learning targets, as opposed to simply averaging grades/scores over the course of a grading period.

How does standards-based grading differ from traditional grading?

Unlike with traditional grading systems, a standards-based grading system measures a student's mastery of grade-level standards by prioritizing the most recent, consistent level of performance. Thus, a student who may have struggled at the beginning of a course, when first encountering new material, may still be able to demonstrate mastery of key content/concepts by the end of a grading period.

In a traditional grading system, a student's performance for an entire semester is averaged together. Early quiz scores that were low would be averaged together with proficient performance later in the course, resulting in a lower overall grade than current performance indicates.

Standards-based report cards separate academic performance from work habits and behavior in order to provide parents a more accurate view of a student's progress in both academic and behavioral areas. Variables such as effort, participation, timeliness, cooperation, attitude, and attendance are reported separately, not as an indicator of a student's academic performance.

How are my child's grades determined?

A student's performance on a series of assessments (both formative and summative) will be used to determine a student's overall grade in a course. Practice assignments (homework) are just that, practice, and thus should primarily serve as a source of feedback and instructional support for both students and teachers. Scores on practice assignments should not be used as a major component of a student's academic grade. Teachers may require students to complete all of their practice work prior to allowing them to take, or retake, an assessment.

Will my student receive teacher comments on their report card?

Yes. Individualized feedback is an essential component of standards-based grading. Effective feedback is a more useful source of information than simply assigning a numeric value or letter grade to student work.

What will each of the numbers in the 4 point scale represent?

A score of (4) would indicate that a student exceeds a standard by consistently demonstrating an advanced level of understanding and/or ability to apply their knowledge at a higher level.

A score of (3) would indicate that a student has independently achieved the standard. The student demonstrates mastery of the standard.

A score of (2) would indicate that a student is developing an understanding of a standard, but still may be in need of additional instruction and/or support.

A score of (1) would indicate minimal understanding of a standard. The student shows limited evidence of understanding the standard.

How should a student /parent view student grades now that the system of A-F has been replaced by a 4 point scale? What is considered to be an A in the new grading system?

You cannot really compare a traditional grading system to a standards based grading system. It is like comparing apples to oranges. Standards-based grading identifies a standard and indicates whether or not a student is meeting the standard at a given point in the school year. A score of (3) is defined as meeting grade level standards and indicates that a student has demonstrated mastery of the skills that were expected to be learned by that point in the grading period.

Is it possible to achieve a grade of 4?

Yes it is. However, a score of (4) indicates performance that is consistently above what is expected for mastery at that point in the school year. Level 4 work would indicate a much deeper understanding of a standard, the ability to apply that knowledge, make connections and extend learning beyond the targeted goal.

If a student is being accelerated in any grade level/subject area with above grade level standards or materials, is that student required to get a 4 on his/her report card?

By definition, 4 level work reflects higher order thinking, application, connection, and extension of targeted goals. While being instructed above grade level is not required in order to achieve a (4), students who are taught above grade level have consistently shown mastery of a subject at their current grade level. Achieving a (4) does not preclude a teacher from suggesting areas for improvement in the comment section of the report card. Receiving a (4) does not guarantee that a students' performance would remain at that level across all reporting periods, or for all course standards.

If a student receives 1's all year, does that mean the student will be retained?

Intervention classes are in place at Charlotte Middle School to support learners who are behind in math and reading. If a student receives 1's or 2's, it means his/her work is not yet meeting grade level standards. A number of academic interventions will be offered to those students who are struggling to meet the established standards. Grade level retention is not a practice that is generally supported by research.

How will I know if my child needs help?

Receiving a 1 or 2 on a progress report/ report card can be a sign that a student is in need of extra support in the areas where they are receiving low marks. This is one benefit of a standards based report card, areas in need of support are clearly evident.

What are Life Skills on the report card?

Life skills, similar to citizenship grades, will indicate a student's ability to meet pre-established behavioral guidelines in the areas of respect, responsibility, and work habits. All students will receive a life skills grade, which is different from their academic grade.

How does a standards-based report card impact determining athletic eligibility?

In the absence of a GPA (which will not be generated with a standards-based report card), athletic directors and school administration will be able to determine co-curricular and extra-curricular eligibility based on grade reports from teachers indicating which students are not performing up to expectations in their academic classes and/or those who consistently struggle to meet established life skills/behavioral expectations. These reports address MHSAA compliance guidelines and help identify students who may be in need of additional support.

Course Offerings

7th Grade Required Courses

- ELA 7
- Math 7
- Science 7
- Social Studies 7

8th Grade Required Courses

- ELA 8
- Math 8
- Science 8
- Social Studies 8
- Health
- Spanish I (If not already completed in 7th grade)

Full Year Electives

- Algebra I (8th grade)
- Band 7/8
- Cadet Band (Departmental Approval Requirement)
- Choir 7/8
- Physical Education 7/8

Semester Electives

- Art I
- Art II (Prerequisite: Art I)
- 3-D Art Design (Prerequisite: Art I & Departmental Approval Requirement)
- Explorations in Agriculture
- LINKS (Departmental Approval Requirement)
- Mentoring
- Spanish I (Required before high school)
- Spanish II (Prerequisite: Spanish I & Departmental Approval Requirement)
- STEM
- Computer Technology 1
- Computer Technology 2 (Prerequisite: Computer Technology 1)

Special Education

- English Language Arts (Functional Independence Program)
- Health (Functional Independence Program)
- Independent Living (Functional Independence Program)
- Math (Functional Independence Program)
- Resource Room (Determined via student's IEP team meeting)

Course Descriptions

Following are all of the courses CMS offers. Each course includes a homework level. It is recommended that students balance high and low homework classes. Designations are approximate, and as follows:

1 = Daily

2 = Several times per week

3 = Occasional

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS (ELA)

ELA 7

Full Year Required: 7th grade

Homework: 3 (Independent reading at home for 30 minutes daily is recommended)

Prerequisite: None

Description: This class will help students continue to build the following ELA skills: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. We will use various readings including articles, stories, poetry, and novels to teach reading skills. There is an emphasis on analysis of texts and using evidence to support ideas. Students will engage in multiple writing assignments throughout the year including narrative, argumentative, and informative covering various topics and lengths. Grammar and vocabulary instruction will also be provided. Students will have opportunities to practice good listening skills as well as public speaking through presentations and sharing in small groups and class discussions. We use the Collections textbook as well as other appropriate grade level texts.

ELA 8

Full Year Required: 8th grade

Homework: 3

Prerequisite: None

Description: Students in 8th ELA will be exposed to a culmination of ELA skills to prepare for High School, such as: Reading, Writing, Listening, and Speaking. We will examine Fiction and Non-Fiction examples of literature while sampling novel formats throughout the year. Reading Skills will focus on examining critical content, cause and effect, theme, style and structure. Writing will include Narrative, Informational and Argumentative writing. The Writing process will be used on formal assignments as well as a continued focus on grammar and domain specific vocabulary. Students will participate in classroom discussions, group instructions, and share group and individual presentations. We will utilize our Collections Text in paper and digital form as well as grade level external materials applicable to our cross-concentrational content strains (i.e..Science, Social Studies, Art, etc.). As a 21st century school, our classes will incorporate the use of Google Classroom and Chromebooks for classroom instruction.

MATHEMATICS

Algebra I

Full Year Elective: 8th grade

Homework: 1

Prerequisite: None (Departmental Approval Required)

Description: This course covers the Algebra 1 curriculum as set forth in the State of Michigan content standards. The topics include writing linear equations and inequalities using 1 or 2 variables, writing and solving systems of 2 or 3 linear equations in 2 or 3 variables, simplifying expressions using laws of exponents, solving and graphing exponential growth and decay functions, and solving quadratic equations by factoring and use of the quadratic formula.

Math 7

Full Year Required: 7th grade

Homework: 3

Prerequisite: None

Description: In Math 7 students will learn basic properties of real numbers and use these properties to solve a variety of problems. There is a large focus on simplifying and solving variable expressions and equations along with problems involving rates, ratios, proportions, and percent of increase and decrease. Students will explore concepts of geometry including similarity of figures, scale factor, circumference, surface area, and volume. This course will also include sampling and comparing data and probability.

Math 8

Full Year Required: 8th grade

Homework: 3

Prerequisite: None

Description: In Math 8 students will explore proportional and nonproportional relationships, linear functions, and linear systems of equations. The functions in this course are represented in equations, graphs, tables and written descriptions. Students will explore concepts of geometry including different types of transformations, angle relationships, Pythagorean Theorem, and volume of 3-dimensional figures. This course also offers students the opportunity to analyze scatter plots and two-way tables to make predictions and determine relative frequency of data.

SCIENCE

Explorations in Agriculture

Semester Elective: 7th/8th Grade

Homework: 3

Prerequisite: None

Description: This class will cover Leadership Development, FFA and Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources and related Industries and Careers. This hands-on course will serve as an introduction to the high school Agriscience program and the FFA.

Science 7

Full Year Required: 7th grade

Homework: 1-2

Prerequisite: None

Description: Students will use the Next Generation Science Standards to learn in a hands-on atmosphere in the classroom to help prepare them for high school science. Through the use of problem solving, team work, reading, writing, and technology students will be learning the following topics. Pre-chemistry, pre-biology, pre-earth science (weather), and pre-physics (Newton's laws).

Science 8

Full Year Required: 8th grade

Homework: 3

Prerequisite: None

Description: The Earth Science curriculum builds on the natural curiosity of students. By connecting them to the beauty of geological history, the amazing landforms around the globe, and the newest discoveries about our universe, it gives students an opportunity to relate to their everyday world. Students will explore topics such as:

- Fundamentals of geology and astronomy
- Earth's minerals and rocks
- Earth's interior
- Plate tectonics, earthquakes, volcanoes, and the movements of continents
- Geology and the fossil record
- The solar system and the universe

STEM (Science; Technology; Engineering; Mathematics)

Semester Elective: 7th/8th Grade

Homework: 3

Prerequisite: None

Description: This course is intended to integrate the STEM fields through project based learning. The STEM acronym stands for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. All of these academic disciplines rely heavily on each other, and are highly integrated in the professional and academic world. Students will be engaged by frequent hands-on activities geared towards combining each of the STEM disciplines. Creativity and collaboration will be encouraged as students solve problems.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Social Studies 7

Full Year Required: 7th grade

Homework: 3

Prerequisite: None

Description: In this course, students review the tools and skills used by historians and geographers through content knowledge, research, and inquiry. Students will develop an understanding of world history and culture from ancient civilizations through classical traditions such as Greece and Rome. Civics/government, economics, and geography are integrated throughout the year.

Social Studies 8

Full Year Required: 8th grade

Homework: 3

Prerequisite: None

Description: The purpose of this course is to increase student understanding of the development of the United States of America as a democratic nation. The course is organized chronologically and students will study the early history of the United States through the Reconstruction Era following the Civil War. Civics/government, economics, and geography are integrated throughout the year.

MUSIC EDUCATION

Band 7/8

Full Year Elective: 7th/8th Grade

Homework: 1

Prerequisite: Beginning Band

Description: Students will continue to develop the musical performance skills for their instrument. Students in Band 7/8 will perform several concerts during the year along with the combined marching performance, Band Bounce, and participate in the MSBOA Band Festival. In addition, students will have a number of optional extension opportunities, including: solo and ensemble, honors bands, private lessons, or summer camps. Students will be placed into an appropriate band class based on musical audition.

Cadet Band

Full Year Elective: 7th/8th Grade

Homework: 1

Prerequisite: Departmental Approval

Description: Students will continue to develop the musical performance skills for their instrument. Cadet Band will perform several concerts during the year along with the combined marching performance, Band Bounce, Memorial Day Parade, and participate in MSBOA Band Festivals. In addition, students will have a number of optional extension opportunities, including: solo and ensemble, honors bands, private lessons, or summer camps. Students will be placed into an appropriate band class based on musical audition.

Choir 7/8

Full Year Elective: 7th/8th Grade

Homework: 2

Prerequisite: None

Description: The 7/8th grade Choir is a beginner mixed-voice performing choir which studies and performs vocal music in two or more parts from many eras, genres, and countries. Instruction includes elements of vocal technique, music theory, choral performance and music history. Participation in four concerts is required for this course.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Health

Semester Required: 8th grade

Homework: 3

Prerequisite: None

Description: This class places a strong emphasis on developing a positive attitude toward total health and wellness. Students will gain knowledge, skills and understanding needed to make healthy lifestyle choices and decisions using the Michigan Model for Health.

Physical Education 7/8

Semester Elective: 7th/8th grade

Homework: 3

Prerequisite: None

Description: This course is designed to allow students to participate in a variety of activities that will elevate the heart rate for an extended period of time. Students strengthen and/or master basic skills developed at the elementary level. Emphasis is on highly organized lead-up activities, modified games, fitness and wellness activities. Content areas include wellness related testing, fitness planning, and application of skills in selected games and sports.

*While this is a semesterized course, students may participate in Physical Education 7/8 for the entire school year. This will be offered and explained during the student's schedule planning process and will be determined by the school counselor and/or principal.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

English Language Arts (Functional Independence Program)

Full Year Required: 7th/8th Grade

Homework: 3

Prerequisite: None (determined via student's IEP team)

Description: Through various units, students will focus on the following major areas of study: reading comprehension, vocabulary usage, and written expression. Activities will be utilized daily to connect content learned in class to English Language Arts skills. Students will also work on further developing skills revolving around learning and improving classroom discussions, critical thinking, and literary elements. This course is an alternative to a general education course as students participate in a learning environment with highly modified curriculum, materials, and learning activities.

Health (Functional Independence Program)

Full Year Required: 7th/8th Grade

Homework: 3

Prerequisite: None (determined via student's IEP team)

Description: This class consists of two components: Foods & Nutrition and Healthy Habits. The Foods & Nutrition component will focus on teaching students nutritional guidelines, cooking skills, and appropriate skills to purchase and prepare healthy meals. It will also focus on teaching students basic routines that need to be performed during independent living situations. The Healthy Habits component will focus on teaching students a variety of health guidelines that include, but are not limited to: responsible decision-making, dealing with stress and other emotions, and the benefits of healthy eating. This course is an alternative to a general education course as students participate in a learning environment with highly modified curriculum, materials, and learning activities.

Career Skills (Functional Independence Program)

Full Year Required: 7th/8th Grade

Homework: 3

Prerequisite: None (determined via student's IEP team)

Description: Job Sites is a course that will help prepare students for post-secondary opportunities. Through this course, students will learn how to follow multiple step directions in a job environment. Students will have the opportunity to practice their job site skills throughout the learning environment. Some of these jobs include, but are not limited to: mail deliveries, recycling, stocking the food pantry, and other independent job tasks. This course is an alternative to a general education course as students participate in a learning environment with highly modified curriculum, materials, and learning activities.

Math (Functional Independence Program)

Full Year Required: 7th/8th Grade

Homework: 3

Prerequisite: None (determined via student's IEP team)

Description: Math is a course that will focus on using math skills that apply to everyday life situations. This course will focus on a variety of areas in mathematics including: place value and the relationship to money; counting and using money; decimals, fractions, and percentages; customary units of measurement; telling time for organizational purposes; reading graphs to obtain data and information; and pre-algebra concepts. This course is an alternative to a general education course as students participate in a learning environment with highly modified curriculum, materials, and learning activities.

Study Skills

Semester Elective: 7th/8th Grade

Homework: 3

Prerequisite: None (determined via student's IEP team)

Description: The Resource Room course allows students with an active Individualized Education Plan (IEP) receive additional support and/or instruction. Students may complete work from core academic subjects and/or prepare for upcoming assessments. Students may also participate in instruction that allows them to work on individualized goals per their IEP. The ability to participate in this course must be discussed at the student's IEP team and reflected in the services that are offered to the student.

TECHNOLOGY

Computer Technology 1

Semester Elective: 7th/8th grade

Prerequisites: None

Homework Level: 3

Description: In this course, students are introduced to the world of technology via Google Apps for Education. Students will practice keyboarding skills in order to assist them with their projects. Projects/Assignments include, but are not limited to: Google Docs, Google Slides, Google Sheets, Google Drawing, Google Forms, and Coding through Google CS First. Students will learn internet safety and digital citizenship. Digital citizenship skills taught in this class include, but are not limited to: privacy/security, digital footprints, cyberbullying/safety, and news/media literacy.

Computer Technology 2

Semester Elective: 7th/8th grade

Prerequisites: Computer Technology 1

Homework Level: 3

Description: In this course, students will learn and develop program coding skills through: Hour of Code and Google CS First; Game Design; Computer-Aided Design (CAD); and 3D Printing. Students will also engage in more advanced uses of Google Education Apps, including Slides, Sheets, Docs, Forms, and Drawing. Students will continue to advance their keyboarding skills with daily practice and be expected to type at a high rate with high accuracy. Students will learn by doing, constructing their understanding in collaboration with their peers. Each project is designed to be accessible for students at various levels and to help prepare them for high school classes.

VISUAL ARTS

Art I

Semester Elective: 7th/8th grade

Homework Level: 3

Prerequisite: None

Description: Art I will allow students to explore a variety of media for the entire term. Mediums used will be: pencil, colored pencil, printmaking, paper mache, clay, watercolor, and acrylic paint. Skills taught will include: one-point perspective, drawing from life, shading, linoleum relief prints, sculpting using armatures, ceramic tiles, watercolor techniques, and color theory.

Art II

Semester Elective: 7th/8th grade

Homework Level: 3

Prerequisite: Art I

Description: Art II will allow students to explore a variety of media for the entire term at an advanced level. Mediums used will be: pencil, colored pencil, printmaking, paper mache, clay, watercolor, and acrylic paint. Skills taught will include: two-point perspective, linoleum relief prints, sculpting using armatures, ceramic containers, collage, acrylic paint techniques, and color theory.

3-D Art Design

Semester Elective: 7th/8th grade

Homework Level: 1

Prerequisite: Art I

Description: 3D Design offers students the opportunity to work with their hands using a variety of art mediums. Art mediums may include but are not limited to: clay, wire, aluminum, leather, and/or foam. 3D design projects will correlate with art history as students will learn from different cultures from around the world. Students will learn about and discuss art from Greece, Rome, Egypt, France, South America, and more. Students will also find inspiration from different artists who also specialize in 3D design such as Kendra Haste, Andy Goldsworthy, Debra Butterfield, Angela Haseltine, or Hari/Deept.

WORLD LANGUAGE

Spanish I

Semester Required: 8th grade

Semester Elective: 7th grade

Homework: 3

Prerequisite: None

Description: Students will learn to carry out a variety of language functions, including socializing, identifying and describing, exchanging information and exchanging opinions. Students will be able to communicate through a variety of modes (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) on topics including themselves, family, friends, home, free time activities, and travel. Major Hispanic celebrations and traditions will also be explored. Students who pass the final exam, the High School Credit Exam, will earn one credit of High School Spanish.

Spanish II

Semester Elective: 7th/8th grade

Homework: 3

Prerequisites: Spanish I (Departmental Approval Required)

Description: Students will continue the study of grammar and vocabulary with a focus on the past tense. Students will learn to use question word (who, what, when, where, why, and how) details to enhance their speaking and writing. Students will study language in the contexts of daily routines, dining in a restaurant, shopping, childhood, and celebrations. Culture is taught as it relates to the topics studied. It is recommended that Spanish I & II be taken in consecutive semesters. Students who pass the final exam (High School Credit Exam) will earn one credit of High School Spanish.

MISCELLANEOUS

LINKS

Full Year or Half Year Elective: 7th/8th Grade

Homework: 2

Prerequisite: None (Departmental Approval Required + Evaluation Process)

Description: LINKS is an elective course that provides students an opportunity to support and model academic and social skills from one non-disabled peer to a peer with a disability. There is a focus on leadership skills, understanding and adapting to individual differences in the school setting, written and verbal communication skills, modeling social experiences, and advocating for others. The curriculum includes, and evaluations are based on: journaling and or blogging; participation through internet disability modules; pre/post assessments; attendance; classroom participation with peer(s); and a final project.

Mentoring

Full Year Elective: 7th/8th Grade

Homework: 3

Prerequisite: Departmental Approval

Description: Students will be placed into specified courses under a supervising teacher. The Mentoring Program is a co-curricular activity where trained student mentors work with students throughout the school day. This may mean working with a whole class of students, or it may mean being assigned as a mentor to a specific student. Students must go through an application and interview process in order to be accepted into the program. Academic history, attendance/tardies, teacher recommendations, discipline history and communications skills are considered in acceptance to the program. Students will learn leadership skills, communication skills, problem solving skills, and patience while working with students struggling behaviorally or academically. Students will be evaluated based on their participation in their assigned class.