

Charlotte Middle School

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CURRICULUM GUIDE

2023-24

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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, providing opportunities for creativity, and offering a high quality, well rounded educational experience.

CMS Vision:

By focusing on the whole child, fostering an inclusive environment, and ensuring equitable opportunities, Charlotte Middle School will develop empathetic, independent problem solvers.

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.

See our [CMS Scale Scores Explained](#) document for additional information regarding what your child's letter grade communicates in regards to progress in class curriculum.

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.

What will each of the letter grades on the CMS Grading Scale represent?

Charlotte Middle School is a Standards Based Learning (SBL) and Standards Based Grading (SBG) school. In each class, students will complete individual assignments and activities to display learning and progress based on the individual state-recognized standards. As students display progress within individual standards, their grades will be averaged into one overall class grade, which will be reported at the end of each semester and can be viewed through Skyward by both parents and students.

Student grades will be communicated using an A/B/C/D/E scale with the explanations as stated below:

| CMS Grade | Explanation |
|-----------|---|
| A+ | Complex Content (Exceeding Standard) At the A+ level, students are able to independently <i>extend</i> their knowledge through transference of learning to more complex content and thinking, including deeper conceptual understanding and application |
| A | Mastery of Content (Mastery of Standard) Building on A- level work, but the student is also able to demonstrate the " <u>why</u> ", as directly expressed with the language of the standard. The student has mastered A- level criteria and demonstrates progress toward exceeding the standard. |
| A- | Target Content (Meeting Standard) Students who meet the standard are able to <i>independently</i> use the content, details, concepts, academic vocabulary, processes, procedures, and skills that relate to the standards. At the A- level, students not only understand the "what" but can correctly explain or demonstrate the " <u>how</u> ", as directly expressed with the language of the standard. |
| B | Building on C level work, students understand the " <u>what</u> " as it relates to a given standard. Students display an increased understanding as they work toward meeting the standard. |
| C | Simple Content (Approaching Standard) Students have the foundational understanding of the content and concepts. At the C level, students <i>understand</i> and can use the foundational concepts, academic vocabulary, skills, procedures, and details. |
| D | Attempting Content (Attempting Standard) Students consistently require help and support to understand foundational content. At the D level, students are beginning to understand simple concepts, academic vocabulary, skills, procedures, and details. |
| D- | With help, the student is beginning to show signs of understanding content, primarily focusing on simple concepts and skills. |
| E | Very Limited to No Success At the E level, even with help, the student does not experience success within the standard. |
| E | No Attempt |

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 an A+ on his/her report card?

By definition, A+ 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 an A+, students who are taught above grade level have consistently shown mastery of a subject at their current grade level. Achieving an A+ does not preclude a teacher from suggesting areas for improvement in the comment section of the report card. Receiving an A+ does not guarantee that a student's performance would remain at that level across all reporting periods or for all course standards.

If a student receives various "E" grades all year, does that mean the student will be retained?

If a student is consistently earning an "E" in one or multiple classes, it means that student's work is not meeting grade level standards. However, an "E" may also mean that the student is not putting forth their best effort throughout the learning process and, thus, their grade is reflecting that lack of effort. 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 "C", "D", or "E" 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 as 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 that will factor into their overall grade in a given class.

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

Expectations to participate in athletics are outlined in our [CMS Student-Athlete Code of Conduct](#). Per the Code of Conduct, the CMS student-athlete must be passing (D or higher) in all 6 of their classes, plus Enrichment, while participating on their athletic team. Please reference the Code of Conduct regarding student-athlete eligibility as it pertains to grades, behavior, and attendance.

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) (replaces Math 8)
- Band 7/8
- Cadet Band (Departmental Approval Requirement)
- Choir 7/8
- Physical Education

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)
- Physical Education 1
- Physical Education 2
- Physical Education 3
- Spanish I (Required before high school)
- Spanish II (Prerequisite: Spanish I & Departmental Approval Requirement)
- STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math)
- 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 (9th Grade Math)

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 (Algebra Concepts 1)

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, equations, and inequalities. Students will also solve problems involving rates, ratios, proportions, and percent of increase/decrease.

Math 8 (Algebra Concepts 2)

Full Year Required: 8th grade

Homework: 3

Prerequisite: None

Description: In Math 8, students will explore similarities and differences of proportional and nonproportional relationships. Students will learn how to write and solve linear equations along with learning the characteristics of functions and identifying a function. Students will also be solving systems of linear equations using multiple methods. The equations and functions in this course are represented in equations, graphs, tables, and written descriptions.

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

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. This elective class is required per the Charlotte Public Schools Board of Education.

Physical Education 1

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 will strengthen and/or master basic skills developed at the elementary level. There will be an emphasis 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.

Physical Education 2

Semester Elective: 7th/8th grade

Homework: 3

Prerequisite: Physical Education 1

Description: Building on the skills and knowledge taught in Physical Education 1, this course is designed to allow additional opportunities for students to engage in a variety of physical activities. Students will strengthen and/or master basic skills that began to be developed in Physical Education 1. Activities will center around modified games along with fitness and wellness activities. Content areas include wellness related testing, fitness planning, and application of skills in selected games and sports.

Physical Education 3

Semester Elective: 8th grade

Homework: 3

Prerequisite: Physical Education 1 & 2

Description: Building on the skills and knowledge taught in Physical Education 1 and 2, this course is designed to engage students in physical activities at a more advanced level of independence and competition. Students will use skills that were developed in Physical Education 1 and 2 to engage in a variety of games and activities, including fitness and wellness activities. Content areas include wellness related testing, fitness planning, and application of skills in selected games and sports.

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 and we will accommodate this option whenever it is possible. 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.