

Ridgewood Public Schools



**Middle School
Program of Studies**



Message from the Principals

Dear Students/Parents/Guardians:

The Ridgewood Public Schools Middle School Program of Studies serves as a comprehensive guide to course offerings in our middle schools.

We take great pride in the role our schools play in uniting students educated across multiple elementary schools and preparing them to come together as a single graduating class at Ridgewood High School. To that end, our middle schools assign core academic courses according to the house structure. This results in a team of four teachers who teach all of the same students within the house, and meet weekly to discuss student progress. Though students may be in different houses than some of their closest friends, there are many opportunities for cross-house experiences throughout the school day. These include all non-core classes, as well as grade-level lunches and recess.

Please take time to review the programming provided at each grade level. Our eighth grade students have the privilege of modifying their course of study through individual requests for elective courses. We do our best to fulfill all course requests for electives; however, there are times in which requests cannot be accommodated due to limited space within a course.

Our goal is to provide a positive, inclusive, and rewarding middle school experience. We are here to support all students and parents/guardians throughout this journey. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact your child's guidance counselor.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Stacey Wisniewski
Principal
Benjamin Franklin Middle School

Dr. C. Lauren Schoen
Interim Principal
George Washington Middle School



Table of Contents

Message from the Principals	2
Table of Contents	3
Notice of Non-Discrimination	5
Equal Educational Opportunity Officers	5
Title II ADA/Section 504 Coordinator	5
Title IX (Student Curricular Issues)	5
Guidance Department	6
Benjamin Franklin Middle School	6
George Washington Middle School	6
Grading System	7
Student Schedules and Programming	7
English	9
6th Grade Courses	9
7th Grade Courses	10
8th Grade Courses	11
Social Studies	13
6th Grade Courses	13
7th Grade Courses	14
8th Grade Courses	14
Mathematics	15
6th Grade Courses	16
7th Grade Courses	16
8th Grade Courses	17
Science	20
6th Grade Courses	20
7th Grade Courses	21
8th Grade Courses	21
World Languages	22
6th Grade Courses	22
7th Grade Courses	23
8th Grade Courses	24



Visual and Performing Arts: Art	26
6th Grade Courses	26
7th Grade Courses	27
8th Grade Courses	27
Visual and Performing Arts: Dance	29
Visual and Performing Arts: Music	30
6th Grade Courses	31
7th Grade Courses	32
8th Grade Courses	34
Technology	36
7th Grade Courses	36
8th Grade Courses	37
Wellness:	
Physical Education & Health	38
Interdisciplinary	40
6th Grade Courses	40
7th Grade Courses	42
8th Grade Courses	42
Special Programs	44
English as a Second Language (ESL)	44
Media Center	45



Notice of Non-Discrimination

Ridgewood Public Schools is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action school district and employer. Educational opportunities are offered to all eligible students without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, disability or other status protected under the law.

The following individuals are responsible for coordinating the school district's compliance with state and federal non-discrimination mandates applicable to students and their parents/guardians. They may be contacted directly with questions, concerns or complaints you may have in these areas. The school district's main telephone number is (201) 670-2700. Individual telephone extensions and e-mail addresses are listed below.

Equal Educational Opportunity Officers

Jaime Cangialosi-Murphy
Director of Human Resources
201-670-2700 x10504
jmurphy@ridgewood.k12.nj.us

Title II ADA/Section 504 Coordinator

Title IX (Student Curricular Issues)

Dr. Michelle Fenwick
Director of Special Programs
201-670-2700 x10505
mfenwick@ridgewood.k12.nj.us



Guidance Department

The middle school guidance departments are an integral part of our educational environment. Our school guidance counselors serve as liaisons between students, school, and home, and assist students in making choices that support positive academic and social experiences.

There are three guidance counselors at each middle school, one per grade level. Each incoming class remains assigned to the same guidance counselor for the duration of their middle school experience. Our guidance counselors facilitate the transition from elementary school to middle school, assist students with course selections for each year in middle school, and facilitate the transition from middle school to high school (including course recommendations/selections for 9th grade at Ridgewood High School).

Parents with questions regarding student course schedules and/or academic or social concerns should contact their student's guidance counselor.

Benjamin Franklin Middle School

Ms. Marisa Mahoney
201-670-2780 x30555
mmahoney@ridgewood.k12.nj.us

Ms. Meagan Papapietro
201-670-2780 x30559
mpapapietro@ridgewood.k12.nj.us

Ms. Lara Sheer
201-670-2780 x30556
lsheer@ridgewood.k12.nj.us

George Washington Middle School

Ms. Dana Kneis
201-670-2790 x40558
dkneis@ridgewood.k12.nj.us

Mr. Michael Mullin
201-670-2790 x40557
mmullin@ridgewood.k12.nj.us

Mrs. Lisa Scrudato
201-670-2790 40556
lscrudato@ridgewood.k12.nj.us



Grading System

Middle school courses classify assignments and assessments into two weighted grading categories:

20% Learning Habits (Classwork, Homework)

80% Learning Evidence (Tests, Quizzes, Projects, Formal Assessments)

Extra credit is not permitted.

Parents may monitor their student's academic performance by checking Skyward Parent Access on a regular basis. Classwork, homework, tests, essays, projects, etc. are graded and posted into the Skyward gradebook within one week. Teachers may also post comments in the Skyward gradebook throughout the marking period and/or at the midpoint of the marking period in the form of Progress Reports.



Student Schedules and Programming

Middle School students are scheduled for eight periods of classes. Six of the eight periods meet each day for 57-minute classes. The periods that meet rotate according to a [four day rotation schedule](#). In addition to the six class period meetings, students eat lunch as a grade-level for 25 minutes and attend homeroom for 25 minutes each day.

Grade 6 Courses

- English, Math, Social Studies, Science (Full Year)
- Survey of World Languages: French, Latin or Spanish (1 Quarter Each)
- Wellness: Physical Education (3 Quarters) and Health (1 Quarter)
- Music: Band, Chorus or Orchestra (Full Year)
- Art (1 Quarter)
- Environmental Science (1 Quarter)
- Literary Analysis (1 Quarter)
- Middle School 101 (1 Quarter)
- Word Study (1 Quarter)

Grade 7 Courses

- English, Math, Social Studies, Science (Full Year)
- Music: Band, Chorus, Orchestra, or Soundology (Full Year)
- Wellness: Physical Education (3 Quarters) and Health (1 Quarter)
- World Language: French, Latin or Spanish (Full Year)
- Art (1 Quarter)
- Journalism (1 Quarter)
- Public Speaking (1 Quarter)
- Technology Literacy (1 Quarter)

Grade 8 Courses

- English, Math, Social Studies, Science (Full Year)
- Wellness: Physical Education (3 Quarters) and Health (1 Quarter)
- World Language: French, Latin or Spanish (Full Year)
- Primary Research and Analysis (1 Quarter)
- Math Applications (1 Quarter)
- Student-Selected Electives (6 Quarters)



English

Grade			
	6th	7th	8th
Required	English 6 Literary Analysis* Word Study*	English 7 Journalism* Public Speaking*	English 8 Primary Source Research & Analysis*
Optional			Creative Writing* Dramatic Expressions* Shakespeare* Speech and Debate* Mythology*

*Quarter Course

6th Grade Courses

English 6

Required; Full-Year Course

In English 6, students read and write narrative, fictional, expository, and argumentative works. Through mentor texts, students engage in close reading and apply strategies used by great authors to write sound and coherent essays, poems, and creative pieces. Throughout the year, students differentiate between correct and incorrect grammar and apply this learning to their writing. They also increase reading fluency and improve vocabulary by learning words in context. Each unit is supported by research-based best practice. Students learn to compare and contrast characters, make real world connections, consider themes, and engage in the research process.



Literary Analysis

Required; Quarter Course

Literary Analysis is a required quarter course in which students are introduced to the elements of literature. Students read, analyze, and write about literature as they examine various types of literary devices and genres. The course culminates with guided practice in writing a literary essay.

Word Study

Required; Quarter Course

Word Study 6 is a required quarter course in which students explore and interact with language (conventions, knowledge of language, and vocabulary) in order to communicate effectively. Emphasis is placed on acquiring vocabulary, “solving” unknown words using root words and context, understanding idioms, and enriching 6th grade grammar skills.

7th Grade Courses

English 7

Required; Full-Year Course

English 7 is an inquiry course structured around the guiding essential question: What does it mean to be a part of a community? Throughout the course, students engage in research, examine literature and nonfiction, and craft authentic writing, including, but not limited to: argument, literary analysis, and narrative pieces. The overarching goal is for students to develop critical thinking skills through the evaluation and synthesis of ideas that prepare them to solve real-world problems.

Journalism

Required; Quarter Course

The journalism course helps students become critical readers and viewers of the news. This objective is achieved by providing learners with an understanding of the different kinds of news stories that appear in print and electronic media.



Public Speaking

Required; Quarter Course

This course is designed for students who want to improve their skills in public speaking. Class time is devoted to studying and utilizing effective public speaking techniques, including researching famous historical speeches and preparing brief talks and longer presentations for delivery to classmates. If time permits, students experience formalized public debate.

8th Grade Courses

English 8

Required; Full-Year Course

English 8 is an inquiry course structured around the guiding essential question: What does it mean to be human? Throughout the course, students engage in research, examine literature and nonfiction, and craft authentic writing, including, but not limited to: research, literary analysis, and narrative pieces. The overarching goal is for students to develop critical thinking skills through the evaluation and synthesis of ideas that prepare students to solve realworld problems.

Primary Source Research & Analysis

Required; Quarter Course

The goal of this course is to prepare eighth grade students to become confident researchers and more sophisticated academic writers. Research topics focus on issues related to human rights, and student research is meant to support the themes of human rights reflected in the fiction and non-fiction texts studied in English 8. There is emphasis on academic language, MLA format, and avoiding plagiarism. A wide variety of primary and secondary sources are used. Students learn information literacy skills and develop critical thinking that lead to lifelong problem-solving skills, such as decision making, independent thinking, self-assessment, and public speaking.



Creative Writing

Optional; Quarter Course

In this course, students are given an opportunity to write fiction, non-fiction, poetry, and prose. The class may read some literary references as models, but students spend most of their time working on their individual selections and sharing their writing pieces with classmates. Students can enter writing contests, keep a creative journal, and publish an anthology of class writing pieces.

Dramatic Expressions

Optional; Quarter Course

Dramatic Expressions is an optional performance-based class that introduces students to the basics of improvisation and theater games in order to build their communication skills, as well as enhance their social and emotional competencies.

Mythology

Optional; Quarter Course

Mythology is an optional quarter course in which students learn about the various types of myths and study examples of each. Emphasis is on the development of humans' views of their place in the universe and explanations for various human issues and conditions. Students have the opportunity to author their own myths.

Shakespeare

Optional; Quarter Course

Shakespeare is an optional quarter course in which students analyze various works of William Shakespeare through the lens of setting, structure, characterization, theme, and dramatic irony. Careful examination of each written work takes place, with an emphasis on analysis and critical thinking.

Speech and Debate

Optional; Quarter Course

Speech and Debate is an optional quarter course in which students explore critical issues while learning proper techniques for effective speeches, argument, and debate.



Social Studies

Grade			
	6th Grade	7th Grade	8th Grade
Required	Social Studies 6	Social Studies 7	Social Studies 8

6th Grade Courses

Social Studies 6

Required; Full-Year Course

In support of the NJ State mandate requiring instruction on civics at the middle school level (P.L.1987, c. 425 [July, 2021]), the Social Studies 6 course addresses, among other areas, the values and principles underlying the American system of constitutional democracy; the function and limitations of government; and, the role of a citizen in a democratic society. In support of this endeavor, students draw upon civics lessons from both the post-Revolutionary War through Civil War Reconstruction eras, and other relevant themes and issues, as they arise in more contemporary American settings.



7th Grade Courses

Social Studies 7

Required; Full-Year Course

Seventh-grade students explore the interconnectedness of nations and peoples in an increasingly interdependent world. Students discover these connections through the lens of geography, culture, history, economics, and politics. The students also gain an understanding and appreciation of the responsibilities of national and global citizenship. Learners investigate a number of critical forces shaping the global order today, including economic globalization, cultural exchange, technology, and global conflict. The course also helps students continue to develop skills essential to research, analysis, and problem solving. Each unit is driven by enduring understandings; content mastery is supported by core reference material and extended readings.

8th Grade Courses

Social Studies 8

Required; Full-Year Course

Eighth-grade students explore the social, political, religious, and economic events of world history from prehistory to the beginning of the post-medieval world (1600).

Major areas of study include: the beginnings of civilizations; the emergence of India and China; the growth of the Mediterranean World; the Byzantine Empire; the spread of Islam; the rise of the West African Empires; development of Eurasia; transformation and conflict in Medieval Europe; and interactions of the Atlantic World.

The instructional goals of this course are three-fold. First, this course provides students with the objective facts on which to base their analysis of historical events. Second, this course promotes the understanding of history from various perspectives. Group activities and class simulations, in which



students assume the role of various figures from history, are used to promote the understanding of various perspectives. Third, this course requires students to draw and justify conclusions about the past. Students use Document Based Questions (DBQs) that expose learners to primary sources and other historical evidence. DBQs require students to interpret historical documents and draw on previous knowledge in order to do the work of historians.

Mathematics

Grade			
	6th	7th	8th
Required	Math 6	Pre-Algebra 7	Math 8 Math Applications 8*
Advanced Program	Math 6	Pre-Algebra 7	Geometry Math Applications 8*
Double-Advanced Program	Pre-Algebra 7	Geometry	Algebra 1
Optional			Math Activities*

*Quarter Course



6th Grade Courses

Math 6

Required; Full-Year Course

Math 6 focuses on four critical areas: (1) connecting ratio and rate to whole number multiplication and division and using concepts of ratio and rate to solve problems; (2) completing understanding of division of fractions and extending the notion of number to the system of rational numbers, which includes negative numbers; (3) writing, interpreting, and using expressions and equations; and (4) developing understanding of statistical thinking. The course encourages students to apply critical thinking skills, use multiple strategies for problem solving, and focuses on mathematical practices that support student learning.

Pre-Algebra 7

Double-Advanced Program; Full-Year Course

In Pre-Algebra 7, students extend their understanding of ratios and develop understanding of proportionality to solve single and multi-step problems. Students deepen their understanding of operations with rational numbers and application of these skills when working with expressions and linear equations. Students build on prior knowledge of area to solve problems involving scale drawings and informal geometric constructions and working with two-and three-dimensional shapes to solve problems involving area, surface area, and volume.

7th Grade Courses

Pre-Algebra 7

Required; Full-Year Course

In Pre-Algebra 7, students extend their understanding of ratios and develop an understanding of proportionality to solve single and multi-step problems. Students deepen their understanding of operations with rational numbers and application of these skills when working with expressions and linear equations. Students build on prior knowledge of area to solve problems involving scale drawings and informal geometric constructions and working



with two- and three-dimensional shapes to solve problems involving area, surface area, and volume.

Geometry

Double-Advanced Program; Full-Year Course

This course focuses on the formal study of the principles of logic that forms the basis for the deductive development of geometry as a mathematical system. The core of the geometry program is the traditional Euclidean plane geometry enriched by the addition of space geometry, transformational geometry, and coordinate geometry. Algebraic skills are further developed by the application of geometric principles to the solution of numerical exercises. Problem solving is emphasized. Exploratory hands-on activities are often used, including exposure to explorations of geometric concepts using the computer.

8th Grade Courses

Math 8

Required; Full-Year Course

This course is designed in alignment with the Grade 8 New Jersey Student Learning Standards for mathematics, while preparing students to successfully transition to high school mathematics. Students are able to define math concepts using words and symbols and translate expressions. Emphasis is placed on linear relationships. Topics include operations with integers, graphing and writing linear equations and linear inequalities. Solving linear equations and linear inequalities require the student to choose the sequence of transformations in the proper order. Students who successfully complete this course select Geometry for their ninth-grade mathematics program.

Geometry

Advanced Program; Full-Year Course

This course focuses on the formal study of the principles of logic that forms the basis for the deductive development of geometry as a mathematical system. The core of the geometry program is the traditional Euclidean plane geometry enriched by the addition of space geometry, transformational



geometry, and coordinate geometry. Algebraic skills are further developed by the application of geometric principles to the solution of numerical exercises. Problem solving is emphasized. Exploratory hands-on activities are often used, including exposure to explorations of geometric concepts using the computer.

Algebra 1 **Double-Advanced Program; Full-Year Course**

This course is offered to eighth-grade students who meet the requirements for this rigorous course of study. Through an extension of previously learned concepts and skills, students deepen and solidify their knowledge of Algebra. In addition to teaching students the structures of Algebra, this course concentrates on applications of Algebra in the real world. Students become conversant in using mathematical vocabulary, notation and structure to represent ideas, describe relationships, and model situations. Students learn and practice applying algebraic concepts and skills through multiple representations.

Course topics include the study of functions, linear equations and inequalities, absolute value functions, exponential functions, properties of exponents, polynomials, number sets and radicals, quadratic functions, and statistics with regression modeling. Graphing calculators, test-taking strategies and real-life applications are used throughout the course.

Math Applications 8 **Required Quarter Course**

This course covers geometric mathematical topics of transformations in the coordinate plane, congruence in terms of rigid motions, and application of geometric measurement. The concepts covered in the Geometry 8 course of congruence, similarity, and symmetry can be understood from the perspective of geometric transformation. Fundamental are the rigid motions: translations, rotations, reflections, and combinations of these. These topics are rich in application-based problems that are solved by creating representations, exploring real-world applications, and investigating geometric relationships.



Math Activities **Optional Quarter Course**

In this course, students study in-depth counting, probability, vertex-edge graphs, problem solving, and real-world applications of mathematics.

Secondary Mathematics Pathways

Grade	Double Advanced	Advanced	CP	CP/General Combination
6	Pre-algebra 7	Grade 6 Math	Grade 6 Math	Grade 6 Math
7	Geometry	Pre-algebra 7	Pre-algebra 7	Pre-algebra 7
8	Algebra I	Geometry	Geometry	Math 8
9	Algebra II Honors	Algebra I Advanced	Algebra I CP	Geometry
10	AP Precalculus	Algebra II Honors or Algebra II Advanced	Algebra II Advanced or Algebra II CP	Algebra I
11	AP Calculus	AP Precalculus or Precalculus Honors	Precalculus Honors or Precalculus I CP	Algebra II
12	CD Calculus Honors or AP Statistics	AP Calculus or Honors Calculus	Honors Calculus or Precalculus II	Precalculus or Statistics with Finance

This is a basic set of pathways that a student can follow in mathematics. There is movement permitted, based on teacher recommendations, between these pathways. Please consult your guidance counselor.



Science

Grade			
	6th	7th	8th
Required	Science 6 Environmental Science*	Science 7	Science 8

*Quarter Course

6th Grade Courses

Science 6

Required; Full-Year Course

Science 6 takes an integrated approach to studying science with a combination of Life Science, Physical Science, and Earth Science topics. The primary topics covered throughout the school year are: Properties and Interactions of Matter, Body Systems, and Weather & Climate. Each unit is inquiry-based with a STC Secondary curriculum kit developed by the Smithsonian Science Education Center as the primary resource.

Environmental Science

Required; Quarter Course

This quarter course is an inquiry-based course, with an emphasis on fieldwork and lab work. Issues of social and civic responsibilities are stressed. Students study a variety of global environmental issues, with emphasis on resources and human impact on those resources close to home.



7th Grade Courses

Science 7

Required; Full-Year Course

Science 7 takes an integrated approach to studying science with a combination of Life Science, Physical Science, and Earth Science topics. The primary topics covered throughout the school year are: Chemistry, Forces & Motion, Reproduction, and Ecology. Each unit is inquiry-based with a STC Secondary curriculum kit developed by the Smithsonian Science Education Center as the primary resource.

8th Grade Courses

Science 8

Required; Full-Year Course

Science 8 takes an integrated approach to studying science with a combination of Life Science, Physical Science, and Earth Science topics. The primary topics covered throughout the school year are: Astronomy, Plate Tectonics, Common Ancestry, Waves and Information Transfer. Each unit is inquiry-based with an STC Secondary curriculum kit developed by the Smithsonian Science Education Center as the primary resource.



World Languages

Grade			
	6th	7th	8th
Required	<u>Survey of the Languages:</u> Spanish 6* French 6* Latin 6*	<u>Select 1 of 3 options:</u> Spanish 7 French 7 Latin 7	<u>Select 1 of 3 options:</u> Spanish 8 French 8 Latin 8

*Quarter Course

6th Grade Courses

Students survey our world language offerings (French, Latin, and Spanish) by studying each for one quarter.

French 6, Latin 6 and Spanish 6

6th Grade Students - Required; Quarter Course

Each of the survey courses is a quarter course designed to introduce sixth grade students to the study of world languages. Students receive an introduction to language-learning strategies, providing them with enough background to select a language for future study. The courses also include an overview of geography, history, and culture relative to each language.



7th Grade Courses

Students select one world language to study for the year.

French 7

Required; Full-Year Course

French 7 is the first half of the French I course, a two-year middle school language course. Vocabulary is expanded from the sixth-grade exploratory program, grammar is introduced, and the topics of history, geography, and culture of the French speaking world are explored. The focus of the course is to provide students with the skills they need to create language for communication. All activities and materials have been designed to reinforce and expand the four language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing at the Novice-Low level of proficiency. This course lays a solid foundation to continue learning the language in the years to come.

Latin 7

Required; Full-Year Course

Latin 7 is the first half of the Latin 1 course, a two-year middle school language course. This program provides an introduction to the language and culture of the ancient Romans. Although fluency in reading (i.e., translating) is the primary goal of this course, students are expected to reproduce, listen to, and interpret the sounds of spoken Latin in order to facilitate language learning. Through readings and discussions, students gain an awareness of the important cultural products and practices of the Romans.

Spanish 7

Required; Full-Year Course

Spanish 7 is the first half of the Spanish I course, a two-year middle school language course. Vocabulary is expanded from the sixth-grade exploratory course, grammar is introduced, and the topics of history, geography, and culture of the Spanish speaking world are explored. The focus of the course is to provide students with the skills they need to create language for communication. All activities and materials have been designed to reinforce and expand the four language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing at the Novice-Low level of proficiency. This course lays a solid foundation to continue learning the language in the years to come.



Conversational Spanish 7

Conversational Spanish is designed to develop students' Spanish communication skills and make comparisons and connections to Spanish-speaking cultures, and to encourage understanding and acceptance of differences. The course teaches correct pronunciation, writing, common conversational phrases, and vocabulary using numbers, calendars, weather, and cultural holidays celebrated in Spanish-speaking countries. Students also learn to engage in simple conversations, respond to basic conversational prompts, and analyze and compare cultural practices, products, and perspectives of various Spanish-speaking countries. The class is filled with diverse, multimedia language activities and covers the four key areas of foreign language study: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

8th Grade Courses

Students continue the study of their seventh-grade world language selection.

French 8

Required; Full-Year Course

French 8 is the second half of the French I course, a two-year middle school language program. Students continue an ongoing focus on vocabulary, grammar, and culture in the French speaking world. All activities and materials have been designed to reinforce and expand the four language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing to reach the Novice-Mid level of proficiency. This course lays a solid foundation of French I material to continue onto French II at the high school level.

Latin 8

Required; Full-Year Course

Latin 8 is the second half of the Latin 1 course, a two-year middle school language program. Students build on their foundational knowledge of the language, culture and history of the ancient Romans. While developing their reading, writing, communication and English language skills, they understand the enduring legacy of Rome in today's world. Latin 8 prepares



students to learn other languages, to become better writers, and to appreciate cultures other than their own.

Spanish 8 **Required; Full-Year Course**

Spanish 8 is the second half of the Spanish I course, a two-year middle school language program. Students continue an ongoing focus on vocabulary, grammar, and culture in the Spanish speaking world. All activities and materials have been designed to reinforce and expand the four language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing to reach the Novice-Mid level of proficiency. This course lays a solid foundation of Spanish I material to continue onto Spanish II at the high school level.

Conversational Spanish 8

The second of a two-year program, Conversational Spanish is designed to develop students' Spanish communication skills and make comparisons and connections to Spanish-speaking cultures, and to encourage understanding and acceptance of differences. The course teaches correct pronunciation, writing, common conversational phrases, and vocabulary using numbers, calendars, weather, and cultural holidays celebrated in Spanish-speaking countries. Students also learn to engage in simple conversations, respond to basic conversational prompts, and analyze and compare cultural practices, products, and perspectives of various Spanish-speaking countries. The class is filled with diverse, multimedia language activities and covers the four key areas of foreign language study: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.



Visual and Performing Arts: Art

Grade			
	6th	7th	8th
Required	Art 6*	Art 7*	
Optional			2-D Art* 3-D Art* Public Art I* Public Art II* Creating by Design* Digital Imaging*

*Quarter Course

6th Grade Courses

Art 6

Required; Quarter Course

Art 6 builds on the experience and knowledge gained from the kindergarten through fifth-grade visual art curriculum. Student artists gain experiences in a variety of materials and techniques. It encompasses art history components in combination with drawing, painting, and sculpture projects. Highlighted course topics are the Elements of Art and Principles of Design, positive and negative space, and sculpture. It is a preparatory course for the Art 7 experience.



7th Grade Courses

Art 7

Required; Quarter Course

Art 7 builds on the experience and knowledge gained from Art 6 coursework. This program continues to deliver additional art history components in combination with drawing, painting, and sculpture experiences. Topics highlighted in this course are the deeper exploration of Elements of Art and Principles of Design, landscape, figure drawings, the critique process, and the creation of digital portfolios. It is a preparatory course for choosing any of the eighth-grade art electives the following school year.

8th Grade Courses

2-D Art

Optional; Quarter Course

This class is one of the available art electives at the eighth-grade level. It focuses on the creation of two-dimensional works of art and the concepts and techniques required to execute them. Studio projects may include drawing, painting, printmaking, collage, mixed media, and digital art. This program is recommended for artists who enjoy drawing and painting. It serves as a strong foundation for any student planning to continue their artistic education at the high school level.

3-D Art

Optional; Quarter Course

This class is one of the available art electives at the eighth-grade level. This program focuses on the understanding, designing, and creation of three-dimensional works of art. Students expand their knowledge of art history, learn additive, and subtractive sculpture techniques, explore a variety of mediums, learn to manipulate hand tools, and tackle structural challenges. Materials may include: clay, wire, foam, cardboard, found objects, etc. This elective is recommended for artists who enjoy building and working with their hands. It is recommended for any student planning to continue their artistic education at the high school level.



Public Art I

Optional; Quarter Course

This eighth-grade art program expands the meaning and understanding of creativity and explores methods of visual communication through artistic expression. The studio content of this art program focuses on works of art that are designed to be viewed by or used by public audiences. Projects can be works of art highlighting function or aesthetic compositions to adorn a public space. Aesthetic challenges may be incorporated into many of the assignments. Projects may include wearable art (shirts, hats, jewelry), small scale murals, event advertising compositions, hallway installations, etc. This course is specifically targeted for serious student artists who plan to continue their love of the arts at the high school level. It is the prerequisite course for Public Art II.

Public Art II

Optional; Quarter Course

Prerequisite: Successful completion of Public Art I OR

Approved Portfolio Application and Teacher Recommendation

This eighth-grade elective builds on the artistic foundation laid by the Public Art 1 prerequisite course. The main focus is to compose, plan, and execute more advanced public works of art. Projects are targeted for public appreciation and may adorn public spaces within the school or community. Project concepts are structured to answer the question: How does an artist share a lasting artistic message with their desired audience? Projects may include large scale murals, ceiling tile paintings, classroom or hallway installations, bulletin board displays, etc. This course is specifically targeted for serious student artists who plan to continue their love of the arts at the high school level.

Creating by Design

Optional; Quarter Course

This elective course requires students to apply their understanding of the design thinking process to a challenge in a designated area. Using tools such as Tinkercad, 3D printing, and others, students engage in a series of problem-solving experiences which require collaboration and creativity.



Digital Imaging **Optional; Quarter Course**

Students are introduced to Adobe Photoshop CS3, an image editing software. Students learn how to import and export images, manipulate the workspace, and use essential features of Photoshop. Students learn to use layers and apply layer effects and filters for creating special effects. Additionally, they use painting tools and blending modes to enhance the appearance of their designs.

Visual and Performing Arts: Dance

Grade			
	6th	7th	8th
Optional			Pop Dance Legends*

*Quarter Course

Pop Dance Legends **Optional; Quarter Course**

This is a movement-based course for eighth graders that provides them the opportunity to learn movements and choreography from various popular figures. This quarter-long class provides engaging learning experiences that benefit middle school students of all ability levels and backgrounds. Students learn new skills, develop their physical fitness, and build their confidence all while learning about pop culture and history. Students also connect with their peers and develop a sense of community, thus, furthering their understanding of collaboration and problem-solving skills.



Visual and Performing Arts: Music

Grade			
	6th	7th	8th
Required	<u>Select 1 of the 3 options:</u> Band 6 Orchestra 6 Chorus 6	<u>Select 1 of the 4 options:</u> Band 7 Orchestra 7 Chorus 7 Soundology	
Optional			<u>Select 1 of the 3 options:</u> Band 8 Orchestra 8 Chorus 8

	Instrument Selections
Band	trumpet, French horn, trombone, baritone horn/euphonium, flute, clarinet, bass clarinet, oboe, bassoon, alto saxophone, baritone saxophone, tenor saxophone, tuba, percussion (all percussionists play bells, concert snare drum, bass drum, and timpani)
Orchestra	Violin, Viola, Cello, Bass



6th Grade Courses

Three music choices are provided for sixth-grade students: Band, Chorus, or Orchestra. In addition to regularly scheduled classes, Band and Orchestra students participate in 30-minute, small-group instrumental lessons, scheduled on a rotating basis (approximately once every ten school days).

Band 6

One Music Selection Required; Full Year Course

Prerequisite: Successful completion of 5th Grade Instrumental; Audition if applicable (students requesting to switch ensembles)

This course is open to students possessing beginning to intermediate skills on woodwind, brass and percussion instruments. The Band focuses primarily on executive skills on a primary instrument, basic music literacy, scales, articulation, rhythm, and tone. Students study music through the use of method books (Standards of Excellence Book 1), exercises, and appropriate concert selections. Students experience ensemble group instruction, small group instruction, assessments, and large ensemble performances throughout the school calendar. Performances are culminating experiences without equivalent substitutes. Students accept the performance calendar as a condition of participation and as part of the course requirement.

Chorus 6

One Music Selection Required; Full-Year Course

Prerequisite: Successful completion of 5th Grade Music Program

This course is open to students who possess a desire to sing and learn about Choral Music. Choral Music 6 focuses primarily on learning the foundations of vocal production, technique, breathing, and sight-reading all while instilling confidence within the students. Students sing appropriate director chosen repertoire that covers a wide variety of styles, genres and cultures. Students are divided into appropriate voice parts determined by voice assessments at the beginning of the year. Students participate in small and large group instruction, periodic assessments, and projects that foster musical creativity. All students perform in two concerts during the school year that showcase skills learned throughout the semester. Students accept the performance calendar as a condition of participation and as part of the course requirement.



Orchestra 6

One Music Selection Required; Full-Year Course

**Prerequisite: Successful completion of 5th Grade Instrumental;
Audition if applicable (students requesting to switch ensembles)**

This course is open to students possessing beginning to intermediate skills on string Orchestra instruments. The Orchestra focuses primarily on developing skills in rhythm, pitch, tone, and intonation. Students study music through the use of method books, exercises, and appropriate concert selections. Students experience ensemble group instruction, small group instruction, assessments, and large ensemble performances throughout the school calendar. Performances are culminating experiences without equivalent substitutes. Students accept the performance calendar as a condition of participation and as part of the course requirement.

7th Grade Courses

Seventh-grade students select from one of four music choices: Band, Chorus, Orchestra, or Soundology. In addition to regularly scheduled classes, Band and Orchestra students participate in 30-minute, small-group instrumental lessons.

Band 7

One Music Selection Required; Full-Year Course

**Prerequisite: Successful completion of Band 6;
Audition if applicable (students requesting to switch ensembles)**

This course is open to students possessing beginning to intermediate skills on woodwind, brass, and percussion instruments. The Band reviews concepts from Band 6, further develops those skills, and learns more concepts, including more difficult rhythms, chromaticism, intonation, balance, and blend. Students study music through the use of method books (Standards of Excellence Book 2 midpoint), exercises, and appropriate concert selections. Students experience ensemble group instruction, small group instruction, assessments, and large ensemble performances throughout the school calendar. Performances are culminating experiences without equivalent substitutes. Students accept the performance calendar as a condition of participation and as part of the course requirement.



Chorus 7

One Music Selection Required; Full-Year Course

Prerequisites: Successful completion of Chorus 6; Teacher recommendation; Audition required for instrumental students.

This course is open to students who possess beginning and intermediate vocal skills and a desire to sing and learn about Choral Music. Choral Music 7 develops existing choral skills in vocal production, technique, breathing, and sight-reading all while instilling confidence within the students. Students sing appropriate director chosen repertoire that covers a wide variety of styles, genres, and cultures. Students are divided into appropriate voice parts determined by voice assessments at the beginning of the year. Students participate in small and large group instruction, periodic assessments, and projects that foster musical creativity. All students perform in two concerts during the school year that showcase skills learned throughout the semester. Students accept the performance calendar as a condition of participation and as part of the course requirement.

Orchestra 7

One Music Selection Required; Full-Year Course

Prerequisite: Successful completion of Orchestra 6;

Audition if applicable (students requesting to switch ensembles)

This course is open to students possessing beginning to intermediate skills on string orchestra instruments. The Orchestra focuses primarily on developing skills in rhythm, pitch, tone, and intonation. Students study music through the use of method books, exercises, and appropriate concert selections. Students experience ensemble group instruction, small group instruction, assessments, and large ensemble performances throughout the school calendar. Performances are culminating experiences without equivalent substitutes. Students accept the performance calendar as a condition of participation and as part of the course requirement.



Soundology

One Music Selection Required; Full-Year Course

Soundology is a comprehensive music technology course designed for those interested in the intricacies of sound production, composition, and music editing. This course takes students on an exploration of music, beginning from the foundations of rhythm and sound, advancing to the applications of digital tools, and culminating in a student-produced album reflecting personal and societal contexts. Students delve into the heart of music, dissecting components such as beat, melody, harmony, and texture, while understanding how they blend to create impactful compositions. The course facilitates hands-on experience with Digital Audio Workstations (DAWs) and other modern sound manipulation tools, preparing students for diverse roles in the music industry. In addition, students explore the significance of music in various cultural and historical contexts, shaping their understanding and appreciation of the art form.

8th Grade Courses

Music courses are optional for 8th grade students.

Band 8

Optional; Full-Year Course

Prerequisite: Successful completion of Band 7; Audition if applicable (students requesting to switch ensembles)

This course is open to students possessing advanced beginner to intermediate skills on woodwind, brass, and percussion instruments. The Band focuses on reviewing pitch, articulation, rhythm, and tone concepts from previous years while exploring more advanced concepts such as compound meter, new scales, playing in multiple parts, and leadership in the ensemble. Students study music through the use of method books (Standards of Excellence Book 2), exercises, and appropriate concert selections. Students experience ensemble group instruction, small group instruction, assessments, and large ensemble performances throughout the school calendar. Performances are culminating experiences without equivalent substitutes. Students accept the performance calendar as a condition of participation and as part of the course requirement.



Chorus 8

Optional; Full-Year Course

Prerequisites: Successful completion of Chorus 7; Teacher recommendation; Audition required for instrumental students.

This course is open to students who possess intermediate vocal skills and a desire to sing in an ensemble to continue growing as singers and performers. This course prepares students to continue into the Ridgewood High School Choral Program. Choral Music 8 focuses on developing intermediate to more advanced skills in vocal production, technique, breathing, music theory, and sight-reading all while instilling confidence within the students. The course teaches the elements of performance (style, posture and breath support, tone quality and production, diction, blend, musicianship, and ear training) through appropriate director chosen repertoire that covers a variety of styles, genres, and cultures. Students are divided into appropriate voice parts determined by voice assessments at the beginning of the year. Students participate in small and large group instruction, periodic assessments, and projects that foster musical creativity. All students perform in two concerts during the school year that showcase skills learned throughout the semester. Students accept the performance calendar as a condition of participation and as part of the course requirement.

Orchestra 8

Optional; Full-Year Course

Prerequisite: Successful completion of Orchestra 7;

Audition if applicable (students requesting to switch ensembles)

This course is open to students possessing beginning to intermediate skills on string Orchestra instruments. The Orchestra focuses primarily on developing skills in rhythm, pitch, tone, and intonation. Students study music through the use of method books, exercises, and appropriate concert selections. Students experience ensemble group instruction, small group instruction, assessments, and large ensemble performances throughout the school calendar. Performances are culminating experiences without equivalent substitutes. Students accept the performance calendar as a condition of participation and as part of the course requirement.



Technology

Grade		
	7th	8th
Required	Technology Literacy*	
Optional		Broadcast News (BFBN/GWBN)* Multimedia* Systems Design*

*Quarter Course

7th Grade Courses

Technology Literacy Required; Quarter Course

All seventh-grade students take this course which focuses on developing skills in computational thinking and systems thinking. With a foundation in these mindsets, students develop and analyze spreadsheets to solve a problem, engage in basic coding, and have experiences with computer-aided design.



8th Grade Courses

Broadcast News GWBN/BFBN

Optional; Quarter Course

Broadcast News is a course in which students produce the BFBN/GWBN Reports. They identify and gather data on newsworthy stories that are of interest to them and their peers. In doing so, they are learning about various aspects of television news production, including selecting and writing scripts for their stories, deciding on appropriate visual content to convey their message, and editing material to capture the primary content. This class also covers the essential components of broadcast production, including the use of cameras, HD recorders, switchers, and editing software. This class is designed for students who aren't camera shy and enjoy working in groups and presenting their work.

Multimedia

Optional; Quarter Course

Students gain exposure to different areas of digital media that include text, images, audio, video, and various software programs. Students explore the latest digital media, such as Prezi and Glogster. They develop technological and communication skills while creating presentations, websites, videos, and much more.

Systems Design

Optional; Quarter Course

This elective course requires students to apply their understanding of systems thinking to a series of design challenges. With a focus on projects in electronics, circuits, LEDs, and motors, students engage in a series of problem-solving experiences which require collaboration and creativity.



Wellness: Physical Education & Health

Grade			
	6th	7th	8th
Required	Physical Education 6* (3 Quarters) Health 6* (1 Quarter)	Physical Education 7* (3 Quarters) Health 7* (1 Quarter)	Physical Education 8* (3 Quarters) Health 8* (1 Quarter)

*Quarter Course

Wellness 6, Wellness 7, and Wellness 8 **Three Quarters of Physical Education & One Quarter of Health**

The Wellness Program is a comprehensive curriculum for grades six through eight, designed to integrate the learning experiences inherent in our health education, physical education, and safety education. Further, the primary goal of the Wellness Program is to provide opportunities for students to gain the knowledge and experiences necessary to develop attitudes and practices that allow them to make informed decisions. These skills help them foster positive health practices while living safely in a constantly changing environment.



Health 6	Health 7	Health 8
<p>Nutrition: Digestive system, food groups, nutrients, food labels, calories, portion sizes, meal planning and logging, food allergies.</p> <p><u>Family Life & Relationships</u></p>	<p>Diseases: Immune system, noncommunicable diseases (how they develop, risk factors, prevention methods), communicable diseases (types of pathogens, how they spread, prevention methods)</p> <p>Drugs: Types of drugs, parts of the brain and how they're affected, alcohol, nicotine/vaping, marijuana, opioids, inhalants, addiction and treatment.</p>	<p>Personal and social health/safety: digital footprints, cyberbullying and hate speech, social media and relationships, dangers of sexting, stress.</p> <p><u>Family Life & Relationships</u></p>



Interdisciplinary

Grade			
	6th	7th	8th
Required	Advisory** Middle School 101*	Advisory**	Advisory**
Optional	Academic Skills 6*	Academic Skills 7*	Academic Skills 8* Peer Leadership*

*Quarter Course, **Monthly Meetings

6th Grade Courses

Middle School 101 (MS 101)

Required; Quarter Course

MS 101 is a required quarter-long course designed to help students transition from elementary school to middle school. To this end, MS 101 combines the exploration of a student's digital footprint with the skills needed to build healthy relationships and to become a model citizen. Students use schedules, online applications, and goal-setting strategies to facilitate their integration into a new social and academic environment. They develop an understanding that each student learns differently and that it is important to learn study strategies that align to one's individuality. Students develop positive ways to cope with stress and to effectively deal with daily struggles as they build positive relationships. They learn how to use kindness, caring, and sociability to develop pro-social relationships that support a positive learning environment and their own growth and development.



Advisory **Required; Year-long Monthly Meetings**

During Advisory, small groups of students meet with a teacher to hold discussions and engage in activities revolving around social-emotional learning. Students engage in relationship-building activities and discuss important aspects of relationships such as trust, commitment, friendship, and responsibility. Advisors establish learning environments and experiences that feature trusting and collaborative relationships. Additionally, students take part in activities that promote diversity and inclusivity among students and throughout the school community.

Academic Skills 6 **By Recommendation Only; Quarter Course**

Academic Skills focuses on organization, self-advocacy and communication, study strategies, test-taking strategies, active reading skills, and strategic writing skills. Students enrolled in Academic Skills may also receive basic skills support in the areas of mathematics and English language arts.

Students are enrolled in Academic Skills through a referral to the school's Intervention and Referral Services (I&RS) committee. The committee recommends enrollment in this course based on a review of prior year final grades, prior year NJSLA results, universal benchmark/diagnostic assessments, prior I&RS plans, relevant 504 plans, and for rising 6th grade students, a recommendation from the sending elementary school. Students may be recommended to exit the course at the end of any quarter due to mastery of all goals in their I&RS plan.



7th Grade Courses

Academic Skills 7

By Recommendation Only; Quarter Course

Academic Skills focuses on organization, self-advocacy and communication, study strategies, test-taking strategies, active reading skills, and strategic writing skills. Students enrolled in Academic Skills may also receive basic skills support in the areas of mathematics and English language arts.

Students are enrolled in Academic Skills through a referral to the school's Intervention and Referral Services (I&RS) committee. The committee recommends enrollment in this course based on a review of prior year final grades, prior year NJSLA results, universal benchmark/diagnostic assessments, prior I&RS plans, and relevant 504 plans. Students may be recommended to exit the course at the end of any quarter due to mastery of all goals in their I&RS plan.

Advisory

Required; Year-long Monthly Meetings

During Advisory, small groups of students meet with a teacher to hold discussions and engage in activities revolving around social-emotional learning. Students engage in relationship-building activities and discuss important aspects of relationships such as trust, commitment, friendship, and responsibility. Advisors establish learning environments and experiences that feature trusting and collaborative relationships. Additionally, students take part in activities that promote diversity and inclusivity among students and throughout the school community.

8th Grade Courses

Advisory

Required; Year-long Monthly Meetings

During Advisory, small groups of students meet with a teacher to hold discussions and engage in activities revolving around social-emotional learning. Students engage in relationship-building activities and discuss



important aspects of relationships such as trust, commitment, friendship, and responsibility. Advisors establish learning environments and experiences that feature trusting and collaborative relationships. Additionally, students take part in activities that promote diversity and inclusivity among students and throughout the school community.

Academic Skills 8

By Recommendation Only; Quarter Course

Academic Skills focuses on organization, self-advocacy and communication, study strategies, test-taking strategies, active reading skills, and strategic writing skills. Students enrolled in Academic Skills may also receive basic skills support in the areas of mathematics and English language arts.

Students are enrolled in Academic Skills through referral to the school's Intervention and Referral Services (I&RS) committee. The committee recommends enrollment based on a review of prior year final grades, NJSLA results, universal benchmark/diagnostic assessments, I&RS plans, and relevant 504 plans. Students may be recommended to exit the course at the end of any quarter due to mastery of all goals in their I&RS plan.

Peer Leadership

Optional; Quarter Course

Peer Leadership provides structured opportunities for students to interact with peers to foster effective interpersonal communication and decision-making skills. It provides opportunities for students to develop problem-solving and conflict resolution strategies and group consensus building skills through discussions that examine topics of current interest and activities that instruct and promote effective communication.

Since the course depends on discussion and active participation for students to benefit from the experience, it is essential that students participate honestly and maturely, and that all students show respect for one another in the class.



Special Programs

Special Programs offers a continuum of services to classified students which includes In-Class Resource, Resource Replacement, Language Learning Disabilities Program (LLD), Self-Contained (PREP and PERL), and Consultative Model offerings. A student's Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) is developed collaboratively with the student, parent, general education teacher, special education teacher, and Child Study Team to determine appropriate program placements.

Classified students are included in general education classes to the greatest extent appropriate in meeting individual academic, behavioral, social and emotional needs in order to maximize learning. The following courses are offered exclusively to classified students through the Special Education department and by recommendation of the Child Study Team only: Academic Skills, Social Psychology, Structured Literacy Instruction, and Supplemental courses.

English as a Second Language (ESL)

The English as a Second Language (ESL) Program in the Ridgewood Public Schools prepares students identified as eligible for services due to limited English proficiency for full-time integration into academic classes at each educational level. Its primary goal is to ensure that Multilingual Learners (MLs) develop sufficient competency and fluency in using listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in English to enable their full participation in academic courses and school events. Instruction is delivered daily in support of classroom learning and follows the grade-level curriculum with differentiation for the language proficiency levels of the students.



Media Center

The Library Media Program supports students, teachers, and staff, focusing on supporting literacy, technology, research, and information skills. The Media Center maintains print and online collections and organizes events to support reading, including the Reading Marathon, book fairs, author visits, book club, and the annual summer reading list.

Through teacher collaboration, the Media Specialist provides instruction in research skills and guided inquiry to help students become successful users of ideas and information, including information literacy, sources evaluation, research process, plagiarism, and the ethical use of information.

The Media Center also provides technology support for students, teachers, and staff. Students may receive instruction and support in the use of chromebooks, Google Workspace, portfolios, and other digital initiatives. The Media Center is open for students and staff throughout the day, including homerooms and before and after school.