



Asheville Middle School



COURSE CATALOG ACADEMIC YEAR 2018 - 2019



**The Vision of Asheville City Schools is to Empower and Engage every child to:
Learn. Discover. Thrive.**

As a district, we are committed to “create learning environments that will ensure Excellence with Equity for all students.” To accomplish that, we have a comprehensive, standard curriculum that we have put in place to be nurtured in a teaching and learning environment for our middle school students.

Asheville City Schools’ leadership and administration understand that success can be defined in many ways, and therefore, we will continue to allow the three focal areas of the 2015-2020 strategic plan, *Early Childhood, Academic Achievement and the Whole Child*, to be foundation of our teaching.

It is the responsibility of the Superintendent and the Asheville City Board of Education to ensure that the academic journey of all our students has the same end result of ***College and Career Ready***.

Parents and students, we encourage you to review the contents of the course catalog. It is vital to have an understanding of the requirements needed for Asheville Middle School students to move to the next level in their education.

In addition to the comprehensive course catalog, be sure to review the information about the programs and the array of athletic sports Asheville City Schools has to offer.

COUGARS, we wish you the best of luck in your educational journey!

Faculty and Staff of Asheville City Schools

Superintendent's Statement:

Dear Families,

It is with great honor that I welcome all students to the middle school program. Asheville City Schools has numerous curriculum opportunities to offer our students. We encourage each student to review these opportunities and take advantage of participating in highly-engaged, rigorous courses during their middle school years. Our goal is to prepare students for high school, college, career, and workforce experiences.

We encourage you to review your child's schedule and discuss all required and elective courses. Students should meet with his/her counselor frequently each school year. Middle school is an exciting time in a student's life. The middle school team approach to scheduling provides a supportive structure for student to begin exploring an increased amount of independence and accountability as they transition from elementary to high school. We challenge each student to be responsible, engaged learners who attend class, complete all assignments, attend study sessions, and do their best to achieve success. In Asheville City Schools, we promote global, lifelong learners to be productive citizens.

I wish each student the very best year in Asheville City Schools.

Educationally yours,

Dr. Denise Q. Patterson
Superintendent

Principal's Statement:

Dear Cougar Scholars,

Middle school is an awesome adventure where you get to explore lots of different courses that help you discover your own potential and thrive. I am so excited and honored that you have chosen to attend Asheville Middle School! It is important that you review this course catalog with your families and discuss your options to make the most of your middle school experience. We have a wide variety of elective courses to choose from. Take your time and select the courses that you feel will best prepare you for high school and beyond.

Each grade level has four core teachers - English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies. Each course is taught by an expert educator that specializes in that content area. All core courses are supported by our Special Education and Academically Gifted staff to co-plan and co-serve all of our students.

Physical Education and Health is a class that every student must take once a year. We have a fantastic gym and outdoor space to learn new games and gain lifelong skills to help you stay healthy and strong. Our Health classes are designed to guide you making healthy choices and better understanding your social, emotional and physical growth.

Students have the option of taking up to three more electives each year. Don't be afraid to register for a course that you have never heard of. Take advantage of your time in middle school to discover new things that excite you and motivate you to do your best in school. For example, the Arts Department at Asheville Middle School offers Visual Arts, Chorus, Drama, different levels of Band, and Strings. In this course catalog you can learn more about all of our elective courses including Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) College & Career readiness program, Spanish, Journalism, Career Technical Education courses, including Project Lead the Way courses. Pick one and try it, you may love it and discover a talent you didn't even know you had!

Another special opportunity at AMS, not included in our course catalog, is weekly clubs. Clubs are created based off of student interest and needs of our school community. Clubs will provide you another chance to explore your passions and discover more about yourself.

As always thank you for all you do to make our community stronger - Cougar Pride!

Principal Dockery
828-350-6206

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Vision

Asheville Middle School where a strong, kind and healthy community inspires dreams.

Mission

Asheville Middle School is a community where we embrace our strengths, recognize our potential, and thrive in the pursuit of our dreams.

Leadership and Support Contacts

AMS Principal	April Dockery	828-350-6200
6th Grade Assistant Principal	April Collins	828-350-6226
6th Grade Counselor	Jesse Pitt	828-350-6236
7th Grade Assistant Principal	Michael Holton	828-350-6227
7th Grade Counselor	Paul Battenfeld	828-350-6237
8th Grade Assistant Principal	Dr. Amanda Swartzlander	828-350-6228
8th Grade Counselor	Karen Thompson	828-350-6238
Social Worker	Kim Robinson	828-350-6240

A Day in the Life

Middle school is an exciting time for students! New school, new friends, and new teachers are just some of the experiences awaiting you at Asheville Middle School.

Here are explanations of a few aspects of life in middle school:

Homerooms

Students are organized into homerooms. Each morning, students go to their homeroom class for attendance and to hear the morning announcements.

Teams

Middle schools use a team approach to smooth the transition for students from elementary school. In 5th grade students are typically with one or two teachers for the entire day, while in middle school students will work with four or more teachers each day. Each middle school academic team is comprised of core academic teachers (Social Studies, English Language Arts, Math, and Science), one of which also serves as the homeroom teacher.

Required Courses

Students are required to take four core academic courses in middle school: English Language Arts (ELA), Math, Science, and Social Studies (SS).

Elective Courses

Elective courses are the classes middle school students take in addition to their core academic courses listed above. In North Carolina, all middle school students must take one semester of Health/Physical Education (PE) each school year. At Asheville Middle School, students participate in three additional semester-long elective courses, or one semester-long and one year-long elective course.

Schedule

School starts at 8:30am and dismisses at 3:30pm. Students rotate through four academic courses (Math, English Language Arts, Science, and Social Studies) and two elective classes daily.

Laptop Program

Our students are using technology to collaborate, communicate, and create as partners in learning. With teachers as leaders, facilitators, mentors, and partners, our students are preparing to live and work as responsible citizens and lifelong learners. Asheville Middle School participates in Asheville City Schools’ laptop program where all 5th-12th grade students are assigned a dedicated laptop to be used as an educational tool both in the classroom and at home throughout the school year. For more information about the cost and details of the program, please look for a link to *Laptop Information* from our main website, under the *Parents* menu.

Course Progression 6-8

6th Grade	7th Grade	8th Grade
Required Courses:	Required Courses:	Required Courses:
Mathematics English Language Arts Science Social Studies Physical Education	Mathematics English Language Arts Science Social Studies Physical Education	Mathematics English Language Arts Science Social Studies Physical Education
Elective Courses:	Elective Courses:	Elective Courses:
_____ _____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____ _____

All AMS students are required to take Mathematics, English Language Arts, Science, and Social Studies each year, as well as one semester of Health/Physical Education. Students can then choose up to three Elective courses from those offered in this guide. Students may take up to three semester-long courses, or one semester-long course and one year-long course.

Sixth Grade: Academic Core Courses

MATHEMATICS

Sixth Grade Math follows the progression of the Common Core State Standards. The five areas of focus for the year are Numbers and Operations, Ratio and Proportion, Expressions and Equations, Geometry, and Data and Statistics. Students are supported in accessing the appropriate grade level content through in-class differentiation. Data is used to plan and implement enrichment and remediation activities throughout the year. Classroom activities consist of, but are not limited to, AVID strategies (note-taking), individual and group practice, centers, and small-group collaboration. Additional supports include computer assisted diagnostic/prescriptive programs designed to help students in their individual areas of need.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Sixth grade English Language Arts covers standards for reading and writing, as well as speaking and listening. Emphasized skills include analysis of rigorous text including short stories, novels, poetry, and informational texts. Paideia seminars, based on Socratic seminar techniques, feature open discussion and critical thinking around important texts and are used throughout the year. Students also enjoy participating in the annual spring poetry slam.

SCIENCE

The process of scientific inquiry, experimentation and technological design support understanding of the core concepts drawn from physical science, earth science and life science. Students in the 6th grade learn about geology, matter and transfer of energy, plant structures and functions, and the Earth within the universe. Hands-on activities and investigations reinforce the notion that "what" is known is inextricably tied to "how" it is known through the merging of content acquisition and application.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Students in 6th grade Social Studies will build a foundation of knowledge, skills and understandings through an examination of the world from the Beginning of Time to 1450. Civilizations range across the seven continents and include: Mesopotamia, Egypt, Mediterranean cultures including Greece and Rome, Early India and China, Western Africa, as well as the Americas. This course will guide students to see patterns of change and continuity over time with a focus on conflict and cooperation, economic development, population shifts, political thought and organization, cultural values and beliefs and the impact of the environment over time, examining both similarities and differences.

Sixth Grade: Elective Courses

EXPLORING JOURNALISM - Semester-long

Exploring Journalism is a year-long course for 8th graders; 6th & 7th graders have the option to take it for a full year or one semester only. This course is perfect for students who enjoy writing, taking photographs, graphic design, and/or news reporting. Students will design the AMS Yearbook and contribute news articles to the Student News site (www.cougarprideAVL.com). Students will conduct interviews, take pictures, write articles, and use a web-based graphic design program. Learn how to write captions, theme, and marketing as well! This course requires approval by Ms. Forsythe. Interested students should fill out the application and turn it into Ms. Forsythe. Students interested in this course should have basic writing skills, as much of this class consists of writing!

CREATIVE DRAMATICS - Semester-long

In creative dramatics, students will learn about the history of theatre from various cultural perspectives, play improv games, study and perform scenes and monologues, learn about the technical aspects of theatre, build sets, and discuss the cultural context of famous and historical plays. The primary focus of this class is the preparation and performance of a full length play. Productions take place once per semester, and will require students to perform in front of others. This involves participating in rehearsals and memorizing lines! Students will learn how to improve your acting by examining the emotions of your character, projecting your voice, and interacting with others on stage. This class is open to all grades. Students may participate for one or both semesters.

EXPLORING PERSONAL CHARACTER AND CAREERS - Semester-long

This course is designed to provide an orientation to the world of work. Experiences are designed to introduce students to the technical nature of today's world and the role of productive workers. Activities enable students to increase self-awareness and make wise educational and occupational decisions as they plan for careers. Work-based learning strategies appropriate for this course include job shadowing and field trips.

DESIGN AND MODELING PROJECT LEAD THE WAY (PLTW) - Semester-long

Have you ever wanted to create a toy or a device to help people? Students use tools such as the design process, a dynamic mathematics software, a computer-aided design program, computer simulations, an engineering notebook, and a 3D printer to design, model, and build objects. Discover the design process and turn your ideas into realities!

COMPUTER SCIENCE INNOVATORS AND MAKERS PROJECT LEAD THE WAY (PLTW) - Semester-long

This unit will allow students to discover computer science concepts and skills by creating personally relevant, tangible, and shareable projects. Throughout the unit, students will learn about programming for the physical world by blending hardware design and software development. They will design and develop a physical computing device, interactive art installation, or wearable, and plan and develop code for microcontrollers that bring their physical designs to life.

CHORUS - Year-long

Do you like to sing? Do you enjoy performing? Do you want to improve your vocal and acting skills so you can become a star? If so, join the AMS Chorus! In this year-long course, you will learn all about singing, acting, and performing techniques. You will also learn how to read music and you will sing songs from a variety of genres, including pop, jazz, gospel, classical, multicultural, and Broadway show tunes. Throughout the year, you will participate in several concerts and field trips that will showcase your awesome talent. In the spring, you will perform in our annual musical theater variety show, which will feature monologues, skits, dances, solos, duets, and group songs. Join the AMS Chorus and see how exciting it is to be in the spotlight!

VISUAL ARTS - Semester-long

Art in the Middle School takes creative thinking to a whole new level. With each project we go deeper into the history and theology behind the techniques; we explore a variety of mediums (materials), and challenge our creative thinking and problem solving skills to think outside of the box. We will develop and improve upon the following skills: drawing, painting, sculpture (clay and paper mache), hand eye coordination, and much more. My goal is to expose each of my students to several different artists, cultures, materials, techniques, and to help them become creative problem solving citizens.

6th GRADE STRING ORCHESTRA - Year-long

This course is designed for beginning students to receive instruction in the use of and performance on a string orchestra instrument. No experience is necessary. Instruments include violin, viola, cello, and upright bass. Strings is a year-long class and meets every day for 45 minutes. Focus is on basic note reading, rhythm, music theory, music history, and proper posture when playing an instrument. Students perform each year at their winter and spring concert.

6th GRADE BAND - Year-long

The 6th Grade Beginning Band class is a year-long exploratory class designed to provide students with an introductory experience on band instruments. Prior instrumental experience is NOT required. Beginning Band instrument choices include: Flute, Clarinet, Trumpet, Trombone and Percussion. 6th Grade Band will have 2 after school concerts a year (one in December and one in May).

SPANISH - Semester-long

This course introduces the basics of the Spanish language. The goal is for students to be able to conduct simple conversations in Spanish. We will also learn about the history, customs and songs/cultures of some Spanish-speaking countries. We will cover greetings, numbers, food, classroom objects, days of the week, and will begin verb conjugation. Through these topics, students will learn common phrases and will be able to communicate on an introductory level.

AVID Prep - Year-long paired with PE

AVID Prep is offered to 6th grade students as an introductory class to the AVID Program. AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) is a national program that puts students on a path to college preparatory classes at the high school level. Students will use WICOR strategies (Writing, Inquiry, Collaboration, Organization, and Reading) as a curriculum guide. Note-taking skills will be emphasized. A teacher or counselor recommendation will be required.

HEALTH/PHYSICAL EDUCATION- Semester-long

Sixth grade students are introduced to the following Healthful Living strands: mental and emotional health, personal and consumer health, interpersonal communication and relationships, nutrition and physical activity, alcohol, tobacco and other drugs, motor skills, movement concepts, health related fitness and personal/social responsibility.

Seventh Grade: Academic Core Courses

MATHEMATICS

In grade seven, students will further develop their understanding of rates and ratios, using tables, graphs, and equations to solve real-world problems involving proportional relationships. Students will also work on quickly and accurately solving multi-step problems involving positive and negative rational numbers. Additionally, students will expand their knowledge of geometry and apply the properties of operations to solve real world problems involving the measurement of multi-dimensional objects. Students will also understand connections between algebra and geometry.

***NORTH CAROLINA MATHEMATICS 1**

The fundamental purpose of North Carolina Mathematics 1 is to formalize and expand the mathematics that students learned in the middle grades. The critical areas, organized into units, deepen and extend understanding of linear relationships, in part by contrasting them with exponential phenomena, and in part by applying linear models to data that exhibit a linear trend. Mathematics 1 uses properties and theorems involving congruent figures to deepen and extend understanding of geometric knowledge from prior grades. The final unit in the course ties together the algebraic and geometric ideas studied. The Mathematical Practice Standards apply throughout each course and, together with the content standards, prescribe that students experience mathematics as a coherent, useful, and logical subject that makes use of their ability to make sense of problem situations. The format of this course, face-to-face or virtual, will be determined by the availability of staff and the total number of students who meet the placement criteria.

**Students must meet school criteria for placement into Mathematics 1*

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

In 7th grade English Language Arts students will learn to analyze author's craft and how literary elements work together to create meaning in a text. Through the course, students will also work with informational text, analyzing text structures and features, as well as completing close readings of challenging text. In addition to a focus on informational nonfiction and literature, students will learn how to create an effective argument, using supporting reasons and evidence and addressing counterclaims. Students will participate in book clubs, write in a variety of genres, use technology to research and create products, and develop speaking and listening skills in various discussion forums, including Paideia. Texts will be leveled based on student reading ability, but all students will learn 7th grade concepts.

SCIENCE

The process of scientific inquiry, experimentation and technological design support understanding of the core concepts drawn from physical science, atmospheric science and life science. Students in the 7th grade learn about weather and atmosphere, cells, genetics, physics, and human body systems. Hands-on activities and investigations reinforce the notion that "what" is known is inextricably tied to "how" it is known through the merging of content acquisition and application. Seventh grade offers a unique layered curriculum that offers students who grasp the content quickly or have extensive prior knowledge to explore the content in greater depth and at their own pace. It offers basically a guided independent study per unit and offers students choices of assignments in three consecutive layers. The first layer builds basic content knowledge, the second layer insists that students apply their knowledge, and the final layer requires the student to exhibit mastery and often includes a project. Students not eligible for the layered curriculum are taught in a general class with inquiry-based instruction. Students also build their content literacy by learning new strategies to comprehend nonfiction text.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Students in 7th grade Social Studies will build upon the foundation of knowledge laid in 6th grade investigating and gaining skills and understandings through an examination of the history of the world from 1450 to present day. The focus will remain on the discipline of geography by using the themes of location, place, movement, human-environmental interaction and region to understand modern societies and regions. This course will guide students through patterns of change and continuity with a focus on conflict and cooperation, economic development, population shifts, political thought and organization, cultural values and beliefs and the impact of environment over time. Through an investigation of the various factors that shaped the development of societies and regions in the modern world and global interactions, students will examine both similarities and differences. Students often explore these concepts through a variety of methods including oral histories, primary source analysis, simulations, and graphic organizers. Students also build their content literacy by learning new strategies to comprehend nonfiction text.

Seventh Grade: Elective Courses

EXPLORING JOURNALISM - Year-long

Do you enjoy writing and taking photographs? Are you interested in writing, graphic design, or news reporting? Do you want to be part of a team that will capture memories of life at Asheville Middle School throughout the year? If so, Exploring Journalism is the class for you! This is a year-long course for 8th graders; 6th and 7th graders have the option to take it for a full year or one semester only. You will design the AMS Yearbook and contribute news articles to the Student News site (www.cougarprideAVL.com). You will conduct interviews, take pictures, write articles, and use a web-based graphic design program. Learn how to write captions, theme, and marketing as well! This course requires approval by Ms. Forsythe. Interested students should fill out the application and turn it into Ms. Forsythe. Students interested in this course should have basic writing skills, as much of this class consists of writing!

CREATIVE DRAMATICS - Semester-long

Do you like performing? Do you want to learn how to put on a show? This is the class for you! In creative dramatics, you will learn about the history of theatre from various cultural perspectives, play improv games, study and perform scenes and monologues, learn about the technical aspects of theatre, build sets, and discuss the cultural context of famous and historical plays. The primary focus of this class is the preparation and performance of a full length play. Productions take place once per semester, and will require students to perform in front of others. This involves participating in rehearsals and memorizing lines! You will learn how to improve your acting by examining the emotions of your character, projecting your voice, and interacting with others on stage. This class is open to all grades. Students may participate for one or both semesters.

EXPLORING APPAREL AND INTERIOR DESIGN - Semester-long

This course is composed of instructional modules designed to explore basic Family and Consumer Sciences foundations and skill sets. The modules that are covered in this course are: Apparel - explore factors influencing clothing choices, basic clothing construction techniques, and the function of marketing on clothing choices; and Interior Design - basic principles of design, sustainable design, and managing a living space.

DESIGN AND MODELING PROJECT LEAD THE WAY (PLTW) - Semester-long

Have you ever wanted to create a toy or a device to help people? Students use tools such as the design process, a dynamic mathematics software, a computer-aided design program, computer simulations, an engineering notebook, and a 3D printer to design, model, and build objects. Discover the design process and turn your ideas into realities!

AUTOMATION AND ROBOTICS PROJECT LEAD THE WAY (PLTW) - Semester-long

Design, Build, and Program a Robot! Students use tools such as the engineering design process, an engineering notebook, and VEX Robotics® programming software to invent and innovate. Learn how creative thinking and problem solving can change your world! Automation and Robotics (AR) allows students to trace the history, development, and influence of automation and robotics as they learn about mechanical systems, energy transfer, machine automation, and computer control systems. Students use the VEX Robotics® platform to design, build, and program real-world objects such as traffic lights, toll booths, and robotic arms.

COMPUTER SCIENCE INNOVATORS AND MAKERS PROJECT LEAD THE WAY (PLTW) - Semester-long

This unit will allow students to discover computer science concepts and skills by creating personally relevant, tangible, and shareable projects. Throughout the unit, students will learn about programming for the physical world by blending hardware design and software development. They will design and develop a physical computing device, interactive art installation, or wearable, and plan and develop code for microcontrollers that bring their physical designs to life.

CHORUS - Year-long

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VISUAL ARTS - Semester-long

Art in the Middle School takes creative thinking to a whole new level. With each project we go deeper into the history and theology behind the techniques; we explore a variety of mediums (materials), and challenge our creative thinking and problem solving skills to think outside of the box. We will develop and improve upon the following skills: drawing, painting, sculpture (clay and paper mache), hand eye coordination, and much more. My goal is to expose each of my students to several different artists, cultures, materials, techniques, and to help them become creative problem solving citizens.

7th GRADE STRING ORCHESTRA - Year-long

Continuation of 6th grade strings building on skills to improve and develop pitch, tone and rhythm. In addition, students will start on vibrato, scales and arpeggios in the key of C,G,D, and A Major.
Prerequisite: 6th grade strings or 1 year of private lessons.

7th GRADE BAND - Year-long

The 7th Grade Band is an elective course for 7th grade band students who completed requirements in 6th Grade band. The primary focus is on the development, continuation, and expansion of basic skills learned in 6th grade band that are necessary for effective instrumental performance. In addition to the two after-school concerts, individual growth and achievements are encouraged through participation in adjudicated solo and ensembles performance, all-district band, and private lessons. 7th Grade Band instrumentation is expanded to include ALL instruments of a full concert band.

7th / 8th GRADE JAZZ BAND - Year-long

Jazz Band is an auditioned group made up of 7th and 8th grade band students. In order to be in jazz band one must be enrolled in the regular band class. Jazz Band meets before school at 7:30 AM twice a week for the first semester of school. Regular attendance at these rehearsals is mandatory in order to be in the Jazz Exploratory class 2nd semester. In Jazz Band we explore the basic concepts of Jazz music through performance. Students will learn to be creative through the use of improvisation. Students will also learn different genres and stylistic differences between Jazz and Classical music. There are many extra-curricular performance opportunities in this group.

SPANISH - Semester-long

This course introduces the basics of the Spanish language. The goal is for students to be able to conduct simple conversations in Spanish. We will also learn about the history, customs and songs/cultures of some Spanish-speaking countries. We will cover greetings, numbers, food, classroom objects, days of the week, and will begin verb conjugation. Through these topics, students will learn common phrases and will be able to communicate on an introductory level.

HEALTH/PHYSICAL EDUCATION - Semester-long

Seventh grade students are introduced to the following Healthful Living strands: mental and emotional health, personal and consumer health, interpersonal communication and relationships, nutrition and physical activity, alcohol, tobacco and other drugs, motor skills, movement concepts, health related fitness and personal/social responsibility.

Eighth Grade: Academic Core Courses

MATHEMATICS

The foundations that the 8th grade math curriculum is built upon includes integers, number facts, vocabulary and numeracy. Eighth grade math focuses on four main areas. First, formulating and reasoning about expressions and equations. This includes modeling an association of two sets of variables with a linear equation, and solving linear equations and systems of linear equations. Second, understanding the concept of a function and using functions to describe quantitative relationships. Third, analyzing two- and three- dimensional space figures using distance, angle, similarity, and congruence, and understanding and applying the Pythagorean Theorem. Finally, students must display understanding of scatterplots in two forms; word problem associations and graph correlations.

***NORTH CAROLINA MATHEMATICS 1**

The fundamental purpose of North Carolina Mathematics 1 is to formalize and expand the mathematics that students learned in the middle grades. The critical areas, organized into units, deepen and extend understanding of linear relationships, in part by contrasting them with exponential phenomena, and in part by applying linear models to data that exhibit a linear trend. Mathematics 1 uses properties and theorems involving congruent figures to deepen and extend understanding of geometric knowledge from prior grades. The final unit in the course ties together the algebraic and geometric ideas studied. The Mathematical Practice Standards apply throughout each course and, together with the content standards, prescribe that students experience mathematics as a coherent, useful, and logical subject that makes use of their ability to make sense of problem situations. The format of this course, face-to-face or virtual, will be determined by the availability of staff and the total number of students who meet the placement criteria.

**Students must meet school criteria for placement into Mathematics 1*

***NORTH CAROLINA MATHEMATICS 2**

The focus of Mathematics 2 is on quadratic expressions, equations, and functions; comparing their characteristics and behavior to those of linear and exponential relationships from Mathematics I as organized into 6 critical areas, or units. The need for extending the set of rational numbers arises and real and complex numbers are introduced so that all quadratic equations can be solved. The link between probability and data is explored through conditional probability and counting methods, including their use in making and evaluating decisions. The study of similarity leads to an understanding of right triangle trigonometry and connects to quadratics through Pythagorean relationships. Circles, with their quadratic algebraic representations, round out the course. The Mathematical Practice Standards apply throughout each course and, together with the content standards, prescribe that students experience mathematics as a coherent, useful, and logical subject that makes use of their ability to make sense of problem situations. The format of this course, face-to-face or virtual, will be determined by the availability of staff and the total number of students who meet the placement criteria.

**Students must meet school criteria for placement into Mathematics 2, including completion of Mathematics 1*

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

In eighth grade, students build upon and apply their prior knowledge to the study of complex themes in literature. Through Paideia Seminars, close reading and writing, and high-level, engaging texts, students deepen their understanding of literary works and concepts. By the end of eighth grade, students should have a rich background and deepened understanding of literature and nonfiction and the role they play in shaping our society. The literature students will engage with in eighth grade is wide-ranging from Shakespeare to Southern Gothic, Literary Nonfiction, and Poetry. Writing in eighth grade includes in-depth research, literary analysis, and creative fiction. Students will also participate in a variety of delivery methods to showcase their learning. Our students participate in the “One to World” program and have access to technology which is utilized to enhance their engagement in English Language Arts and participate in personalized learning activities.

SCIENCE

In 8th grade students will be introduced to a variety of scientific fields. There will be a focus on scientific investigation and reasoning across the entire course. Class time will typically be spent researching informational text, conducting group projects, data analysis, doing inquiry labs and taking detailed notes. Major topics covered in science will include, Matter: Properties and Change; Energy: Conservation and Transfer; Earth Systems, Structures and Processes; Earth History; Structures and Functions of Living Organisms; Ecosystems; Evolution and Genetics; Molecular Biology and Biotechnology.

SOCIAL STUDIES

8th grade Social Studies continues to build on previously introduced topics in United States and North Carolina studies. Topics will include history, geography and environmental literacy, economics and financial literacy, civics, government, and culture. This will be accomplished through engaging projects, class discussion, brainstorming, role playing, and the study of primary sources, maps, and informational texts. We will also explore the big themes of history to demonstrate relevant links between what did happen and what is happening.

Eighth Grade: Elective Courses

EXPLORING JOURNALISM - Year-long

Do you enjoy writing and taking photographs? Are you interested in writing, graphic design, or news reporting? Do you want to be part of a team that will capture memories of life at Asheville Middle School throughout the year? If so, Exploring Journalism is the class for you! This is a year-long course for 8th graders; 6th & 7th graders have the option to take it for a full year or one semester only. You will design the AMS Yearbook and contribute news articles to the Student News site (www.cougarprideAVL.com). You will conduct interviews, take pictures, write articles, and use a web-based graphic design program. Learn how to write captions, theme, and marketing as well! This course requires approval by Ms. Forsythe. Interested students should fill out the application and turn it into Ms. Forsythe. Students interested in this course should have basic writing skills, as much of this class consists of writing!

CREATIVE DRAMATICS - Semester-long

Do you like performing? Do you want to learn how to put on a show? This is the class for you! In creative dramatics, you will learn about the history of theatre from various cultural perspectives, play improv games, study and perform scenes and monologues, learn about the technical aspects of theatre, build sets, and discuss the cultural context of famous and historical plays. The primary focus of this class is the preparation and performance of a full length play. Productions take place once per semester, and will require students to perform in front of others. This involves participating in rehearsals and memorizing lines! You will learn how to improve your acting by examining the emotions of your character, projecting your voice, and interacting with others on stage. This class is open to all grades. Students may participate for one or both semesters.

EXPLORING INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS AND CHILDCARE - Semester-long

This middle school course is designed to meet the developmental needs of the early adolescent. Students will explore family and personal relationship issues, develop resource conservation and management skills, explore life, career and consumer decisions, identify factors to improve nutrition and wellness, and develop an understanding of the impact of new technology in their daily lives. Areas of study include managing resources, relating with others, making healthy food choices, learning about children, and preparing for careers. Emphasis will be placed on Early Childcare Education. Students will be introduced to the American Red Cross Babysitter's Training (modules 1 and 5).

DESIGN AND MODELING PROJECT THE LEAD THE WAY (PLTW) - Semester-long

Have you ever wanted to create a toy or a device to help people? Students use tools such as the design process, a dynamic mathematics software, a computer-aided design program, computer simulations, an engineering notebook, and a 3D printer to design, model, and build objects. Discover the design process and turn your ideas into realities!

AUTOMATION AND ROBOTICS PROJECT LEAD THE WAY (PLTW) - Semester-long

Design, Build, and Program a Robot! Students use tools such as the engineering design process, an engineering notebook, and VEX Robotics® programming software to invent and innovate. Learn how creative thinking and problem solving can change your world! Automation and Robotics (AR) allows students to trace the history, development, and influence of automation and robotics as they learn about mechanical systems, energy transfer, machine automation, and computer control systems. Students use the VEX Robotics® platform to design, build, and program real-world objects such as traffic lights, toll booths, and robotic arms.

COMPUTER SCIENCE INNOVATORS AND MAKERS PROJECT LEAD THE WAY (PLTW) - Semester-long

This unit will allow students to discover computer science concepts and skills by creating personally relevant, tangible, and shareable projects. Throughout the unit, students will learn about programming for the physical world by blending hardware design and software development. They will design and develop a physical computing device, interactive art installation, or wearable, and plan and develop code for microcontrollers that bring their physical designs to life.

APP CREATORS PROJECT LEAD THE WAY (PLTW) - Semester-long

Have you ever wondered how mobile apps are created? Students learn and apply computational thinking and technical knowledge and skills to create mobile apps. Students also acquire and apply skills pertaining to the design process, problem solving, persistence, collaboration, and communication. Go beyond being an app consumer and become an app creator!

CHORUS - Year-long

Do you like to sing? Do you enjoy performing? Do you want to improve your vocal and acting skills so you can become a star? If so, join the AMS Chorus! In this year-long course, you will learn all about singing, acting, and performing techniques. You will also learn how to read music and you will sing songs from a variety of genres, including pop, jazz, gospel, classical, multicultural, and Broadway show tunes. Throughout the year, you will participate in several concerts and field trips that will showcase your awesome talent. In the spring, you will perform in our annual musical theater variety show, which will feature monologues, skits, dances, solos, duets, and group songs. Join the AMS Chorus and see how exciting it is to be in the spotlight!

VISUAL ARTS - Semester-long

Art in the Middle School takes creative thinking to a whole new level. With each project we go deeper into the history and theology behind the techniques; we explore a variety of mediums (materials), and challenge our creative thinking and problem solving skills to think outside of the box. We will develop and improve upon the following skills: drawing, painting, sculpture (clay and paper mache), hand eye coordination, and much more. My goal is to expose each of my students to several different artists, cultures, materials, techniques, and to help them become creative problem solving citizens.

8th GRADE STRING ORCHESTRA - Year-long

Continuation of 7th grade strings building on dynamics, improvisation, scales and arpeggios in the key of C,G,D,A,F, and Bb Major, and time signatures in 3/8, 6/8, and 12/8. In addition, students will be exposed and perform music from different genres including classical, contemporary pop, bluegrass and Jazz. Performances include school concerts, community events, music festivals in the area and participation in the All County (Buncombe) String Orchestra held in early spring. Prerequisite: 7th grade strings or 2 years private lessons.

8th GRADE BAND - Year-long

The 8th Grade band is the middle school's most advanced performing ensemble. This year long course introduces comprehensive musicianship through music performance of challenging and varied literature. Skills and concepts from the previous years are developed and expanded upon. In addition to continued refinement of individual performance skills, greater emphasis is placed on ensemble performance skills. Students will continue to develop their knowledge of music theory and use critical thinking skills to polish their musicianship. In addition to the two after-school concerts, individual growth and achievements are encouraged through participation in adjudicated solo and ensembles performance, all-district band, and private lessons.

7th / 8th GRADE JAZZ BAND - Year-long

Jazz Band is an auditioned group made up of 7th and 8th grade band students. In order to be in jazz band one must be enrolled in the regular band class. Jazz Band meets before school at 7:30 AM twice a week for the first semester of school. Regular attendance at these rehearsals is mandatory in order to be in the Jazz Exploratory class 2nd semester. In Jazz Band we explore the basic concepts of Jazz music through performance. Students will learn to be creative through the use of improvisation. Students will also learn different genres and stylistic differences between Jazz and Classical music. There are many extra-curricular performance opportunities in this group.

SPANISH - Semester-long

This course introduces the basics of the Spanish language. The goal is for students to be able to conduct simple conversations in Spanish. We will also learn about the history, customs and songs/cultures of some Spanish-speaking countries. We will cover greetings, numbers, food, classroom objects, days of the week, and will begin verb conjugation. Through these topics, students will learn common phrases and will be able to communicate on an introductory level.

Spanish 1 - Year-long

Spanish 1 will provide the student with a general introduction to the Spanish language: such as pronunciation, functional vocabulary related to everyday life, cultural information and basic grammatical structures. Emphasis will be on the acquisition of four skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. However, in this course, students will be expected to have a deeper understanding of the Spanish language and be able to communicate both in spoken and written Spanish about familiar topics such as school life. There are two main objectives to the course. Foremost is to give the students the ability to carry on an intermediate conversation about familiar topics. The second is to provide the students with instruction that teaches a basic understanding of Spanish culture, vocabulary, and grammatical concepts. Students who pass the Spanish 1 Final Exam will be placed in Spanish 2 at Asheville High School and will receive credit for Spanish 1 on their high school transcript.

HEALTH/PHYSICAL EDUCATION - Semester-long

Eighth grade students are introduced to the following physical education strands: mental and emotional health, personal and consumer health, interpersonal communication and relationships, nutrition and physical activity, alcohol, tobacco and other drugs, motor skills, movement concepts, health related fitness, and personal/social responsibility.

Asheville Middle School Supports All Student Learners

At Asheville Middle School it is our core belief that all students can learn, discover, and thrive. By putting students first and remaining standards focused, we will strive to create learning environments that ensure excellence with equity for all students.

Asheville Middle School understands that all learners are not the same and because of this, we aim to ensure each student has an individualized experience. Educators meet these individualized needs through differentiated standard-based instruction as outlined in Asheville City Schools Instructional Frameworks, workshop model classrooms, small strategy groups, and other researched based strategies.

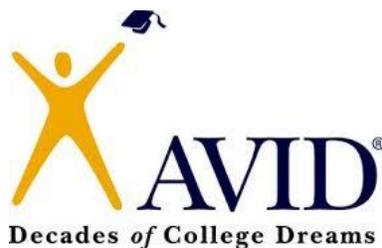
Through formal and informal assessments, teachers and school staff monitor your child's progress and results which are used to make data driven decisions about additional instruction and interventions

For more information on the Asheville Middle School Instructional Frameworks go to the Asheville City Schools website.

For more information visit:

http://www.ashevillecityschools.net/pages/Asheville_City_Schools/TeachLearn/MTSS.

Advancement Via Individual Determination



AVID stands for Advancement via Individual Determination and is a nationwide rigorous college prep program for students in grades 6-12. This program is for motivated students with average to high standardized test scores. In addition, the AVID course is an elective class for students who are looking to improve their GPA and are college bound. Students learn strategies to enhance academic success. Students work collaboratively in tutor-led groups twice a week. Note-taking, writing, speaking, reading, and test-taking skills are strengthened through various strategies presented to the students. In addition, the course includes college motivational activities and visits, and family/community events. The AVID curriculum focuses on Writing, Inquiry, Collaboration, Organization and Reading (WICOR) through both teacher and tutor led activities.

A sample week in AVID elective class includes two days of tutorials, two days of AVID curriculum and learning strategies, and Friday as an activity day and/or for binder evaluation. The AVID curriculum includes writing, college and career, and strategies for success. Tutorials include collaborative study groups, writing groups, and Socratic seminars. Cornell note-taking, an essential part of AVID, is stressed as a tool to use in all academic classes.

Students interested in the AVID program should have a 2.0-3.5 GPA, no major discipline problems, and good attendance. Students should also be dedicated to continuing their education at a four-year college or university after graduation. Interested students will be interviewed by the AVID selection committee and will need a teacher or guidance counselor recommendation to the start of the course selection process. For more information please visit AVID.org.

Academically and Intellectually Gifted Program

General Information

Definition: The Asheville City Schools system defines gifted students as individuals who perform or show potential to perform at substantially high levels of accomplishment when compared with others of their age, experience, or environment. Academically or intellectually gifted students exhibit high performance capability in intellectual areas, specific academic fields, or in both intellectual areas and specific academic fields. Academically or intellectually gifted students require differentiated educational services beyond those ordinarily provided by the regular education program. Outstanding abilities are present in students from all cultural groups, across all economic strata, and in all areas of human endeavor.

Overview: The Academically-Intellectually Gifted (AIG) Program at Asheville Middle School serves sixth, seventh and eighth grade students who qualify through the criteria set by Asheville City Schools. Two full-time AIG Specialists are staffed to provide and coordinate services for AIG students. Services focus on differentiation of core content material in Math and/or English/Language Arts, enrichment, acceleration, social and emotional support, and interest-based learning.

Identification, Screening, and Referral of Students for AIG Services

Identification: Students can qualify for AIG services as Academically Gifted in Math, Academically Gifted in Reading, Academically Gifted in Reading and Math, or as “Intellectually Gifted.” Students are identified through multiple pathways that include aptitude, achievement, observation of gifted characteristics, and school performance. Qualifying scores are determined by Asheville City Schools and are based on nationally normed percentiles. An AIG Services Committee meets regularly at Asheville Middle to review individual students’ assessment results and to determine which services will be appropriate for each student.

Screening and Referral: Every third and sixth grade student in the Asheville City Schools is screened for giftedness using multiple indicators. Outside of these windows, any student can be referred for AIG testing by an educator, parent, or peer. When a referral is made, the Asheville Middle School AIG Specialists gather additional information in order to make a decision about whether or not the student shows a demonstrated need for AIG services.

Classroom Differentiation

Differentiation within the core content areas of Math and English Language Arts is an important component of the Asheville Middle School AIG program. The AIG Specialists work directly with classroom teachers in these areas to plan for and deliver content that is designed to be engaging and rigorous for gifted learners. Classroom teachers use pre-assessment evidence and classroom performance to appropriately differentiate instruction and curriculum for the varied levels of learners in each classroom. Best practices in grouping, extension activities, acceleration, and enrichment are used to ensure that gifted learners are appropriately challenged in areas of strength.

Enrichment

Enrichment in the area of gifted education means to improve the learning experience through the addition of depth, complexity, interesting topics, and engaging and rigorous activities. AIG Enrichment Groups meet once each week during club times to provide engaging and stimulating content to qualifying AIG students. AIG Specialists lead enrichment groups, and the topics of these classes are selected for their complexity and depth of content. Examples of topics taught in enrichment groups are creative thinking, logical problem-solving, world religions, and psychology. Enrichment is also provided as a form of differentiation in both Math and English/Language Arts classrooms.

Acceleration

Acceleration is a strategy that allows a student to progress through school at a faster than usual rate and/or younger than typical age. While on occasion this may include grade-skipping, at Asheville Middle School the most common form is subject area acceleration. . For example, there are both seventh and eighth grade students enrolled in High School Math I, which is a ninth grade level course. Students who qualify for the service Online Learning also have the opportunity to pursue high school courses through the North Carolina Virtual Public School. Most typically these are language or arts courses.

Social and Emotional Support

Social and emotional support is an important component of serving gifted learners. AIG Specialists work with classroom teachers to help them design lessons that challenge gifted learners so that they have the opportunity to learn from failure and develop perseverance and resilience. Specialists also embed social and emotional support into services with a focus on motivation and the development of the *Seven Habits of Highly Effective Teens*.

Extra-Curricular Activities, Co-curricular Competitions, and Field Trips

Extracurricular activities and co-curricular competitions, enhance the learning experience for gifted learners through extended enrichment opportunities.

Extracurricular Activities: While there are many activities that enrich gifted learners that are not sponsored by the AIG program, such as Battle of the Books and In Real Life (IRL) after school programs, including bridge, chess, and other activities, the following are facilitated directly by the AMS AIG Specialists, and while open to any student, are often of interest to AIG students:

- **MATHCOUNTS Club** - MATHCOUNTS is open to students in grade sixth through eighth. It strives to engage students of all ability and interest levels in a fun and challenging math program in order to expand their academic and professional opportunities. Meets for an hour weekly.
- **AMS Speech and Debate Team** - Students interested in learning about speech and debate work with high school debaters weekly to explore the different events, and as desired, move on to participate in competitions. Meets for seventy-five minutes per week.
- **National Junior Honor Society** - More than just an honor roll, NJHS inducts students who have demonstrated excellence in the areas of scholarship, leadership, service, citizenship, and character and develops them into strong leaders. Members are selected for induction each spring and are expected to complete five hours of service work each term and to contribute to the organization through active membership on one of the standing committees.
- **AMS Troutkeepers** - Students interested in learning about cold water conservation or aquarium care can elect to become a part of the group that cares for the trout as part of the Trout in the Classroom sponsored by Trout Unlimited.

Co-curricular Competitions: Co-Curricular Competitions give students an opportunity to compete in their areas of strength and/or interest.

- **American Math Competitions 8/10/12** - Students who have shown interest in math challenge either as a part of the MATHCOUNTS club or within the regular classroom compete in the AMC 8 competition in November. The AMC 8 is a 25 question, 40 minute, multiple choice examination in middle school mathematics designed to promote the development and enhancement of problem-solving skills. Selected students move on to the AMC 10 and the AMC 12 competitions, which are written for tenth and twelfth grade math students.
- **N.C. High School Mathematics Contest** - A group of students enrolled in High School Math I and Math II are selected to represent AMS in this course-specific math competition.
- **National Geographic Geography Bee** - This contest is designed to inspire students to be curious about the world through an entertaining and challenging competition. Students first compete in a classroom bee. Up to ten students move on to the School Level Bee. The school wide winner takes an exam to determine if s/he will move on to the state level bee.
- **History Bee** - The National History Bee is an academic competition that tests knowledge of a wide range of historical topics. Interested students compete in an intramural bee that will determine who takes the online qualifying exam. Top student then move on to the regional finals.

Asheville Middle School Special Education Programs

The Exceptional Children's Program provides specially designed instruction to ensure that all with disabilities have available to them a free and appropriate public education. The program emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet students' unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment and independent living. Services may include specialized educational instruction, speech/language therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, hearing impaired services, visually impaired services, and transportation.

What curriculum is used in classes for students with disabilities?

The Common Core State Standards and North Carolina Essential Standards are used throughout Asheville Middle School. Exceptional Children teachers use a variety of strategies to help students make progress in the curriculum, including inclusion support with general education teachers using Universal Design for Learning. Universal design for learning (UDL) is a framework to improve and optimize teaching and learning for all students based on how the brain works.

Students with significant cognitive disabilities participate in the Extensions of the Common Core Standards. This curriculum teaches the essential elements of the traditional course of study while also emphasizing the acquisition of functional skills.

What is special about special education at Asheville Middle School?

Individualized instruction and student achievement are valued at Asheville Middle School. This is evident through the services that are available, including:

- Specially designed instruction to meet the needs of all students with disabilities
- Access to the general curriculum and intervention programs designed to provide maximum opportunities for instruction in the general-education setting
- Full continuum of special education services
- Curriculum-driven instruction: North Carolina Standard Course of Study and North Carolina Extended Content Standards
- Related services that include but are not limited to speech, occupational and physical therapy
- Specialized instruction for students with hearing, visual and physical disabilities
- Modified materials, including but not limited to books on tape, large-print materials and specialized equipment and furniture
- Accessible space in schools to meet the needs of students with physical disabilities
- Appropriate technology to support students with disabilities.

Asheville Middle School Athletics

Asheville Middle School offers three distinct seasons of sports for our 7th and 8th grade students. 6th grade students are not allowed to compete in our athletic programs but occasionally are selected by coaches to help “manage” the teams. All interested students need to listen for morning announcements that will detail the initial interest meetings as well as the time and location of tryouts. Parents can always contact the school directly for information. Up to date information is posted on the AMS Facebook page as well. Every student must have a current athletic physical completed and on file with AMS before trying out. These forms are available on the AMS website.

The fall season consists of football, girls’ volleyball, tennis, cross country, and boys’ soccer. This season runs from approximately late August until late October. The winter season consists of wrestling and boys’ and girls’ basketball. This season runs from early November until early February. The spring season consists of track, girls’ soccer, baseball, softball, and golf and runs from late February until May. We have a cheerleading squad that competes throughout the year. Games vary depending on the sport but typically take place at least once a week during the season. Practices occur nearly every day during the week. Each team’s coach will provide detailed practice and game schedules as they are developed. Transportation is provided to and from the games, but students will need rides home from school after practices and games.

Our sports teams are very competitive and are designed to help develop players’ abilities and deepen their understanding of the game. Students are required to try out for most of these sports. Our athletic program becomes a vital component of developing the whole child here at Asheville Middle. Under the close guidance of our excellent coaching staff, the opportunities for leadership and personal growth abound as our student athletes practice, compete, and grow into the young men and women our community needs.

IRL: “In Real Life”



IRL (In Real Life) after-school, a program of the Asheville City Schools Foundation, brings together talented, passionate, and dedicated community members to offer a wide range of program offerings (over 100 programs each year!) for AMS and MNSA students. Uniquely IRL, we provide transportation, healthy snacks, and guarantee no child we be turned away on the basis of pay. Sliding scale options are available to everyone. High-quality afterschool programming is essential to the healthy development of young people in our community. We bridge the opportunity gap by offering meaningful programming enriched by a focus on Social-Emotional Learning. We are committed to character development, academic enrichment, and FUN! Visit our website for important dates, catalogs, and registration: [www. ACSF.org/irl](http://www.ACSF.org/irl)



ASHEVILLE CITY SCHOOLS

Learn. Discover. Thrive.