

WEST SYLVAN MIDDLE SCHOOL

7th & 8th Grade Elective Courses

Some elective classes have prerequisites, which are listed in the course descriptions. In some situations, eighth graders will be given preference over seventh graders.

7th Grade Courses

Spanish 1 (Full Year Commitment) Grade 7

This is the first of a two year sequence. In this beginning course students will learn the basics of listening, speaking, reading and writing Spanish. They will also learn about the countries that use Spanish and their cultures. Activities include performing dialogues, conversations and presentations, learning songs and poems in Spanish. Music, film and speakers support cultural understanding. This is an academic elective and students will be required to put in regular study time at home. Students will complete the first year with basic conversational skills, a growing vocabulary and Spanish writing skills. Another goal of the course is that students will develop an interest in the language and culture and see the value of continuing to study Spanish as they move on in school and their lives. Students, who maintain a 'C' or higher throughout 7th and 8th grade, can receive a high school credit of foreign language and can enter Spanish 3-4, at Lincoln High School and other cooperating schools.

French 1 (Full Year Commitment) Grade 7

This is the first of a two year sequence. In this beginning course students will learn the basics of listening, speaking, reading and writing French. They will also learn about the countries that use French and their cultures. Activities include performing dialogues, conversations and presentations, learning songs and poems in French. Music, film and speakers support cultural understanding. This is an academic elective and students will be required to put in regular study time at home. Students will complete the first year with basic conversational skills, a growing vocabulary and French writing skills. Another goal of the course is that students will develop an interest in the language and culture and see the value of

continuing to study French as they move on in school and their lives. Students, who maintain a ‘C’ or higher throughout 7th and 8th grade, can receive a high school credit of foreign language and can enter French 3-4 at Lincoln High School and other cooperating schools.

Mandarin 1 (Full Year Commitment) Grade 7

This is the first year of a two year sequence. In this beginning course students will learn the basics of listening, speaking, reading and writing Mandarin. They will also learn about China and the Chinese culture. Activities include performing dialogues, conversations and presentations, learning songs and poems in Mandarin. Music, film, and speakers support cultural understanding. This is an academic elective and students will be required to put in regular study time at home. Students will complete the first year with basic conversational skills, a growing vocabulary, and pinyin and character writing skills. Another goal of the course is that students will develop an interest in the language and culture and see the value of continuing to study Mandarin as they move on in school and their lives. Students who maintain a ‘C’ or higher throughout 7th and 8th grade, can receive a high school credit of foreign language and can enter Mandarin 3-4 at Lincoln High School and other Portland Public schools.

Arabic 1 (Full Year Commitment) Grade 7

This is the first of a two year sequence. In this beginning course students will learn the basics of listening, speaking, reading and writing Arabic. They will also learn about the countries that use Arabic and their cultures. Activities include performing dialogues, conversations and presentations, learning songs and poems in Arabic. Music, film and speakers support cultural understanding. This is an academic elective and students will be required to put in regular study time at home. Students will complete the first year with basic conversational skills, a growing vocabulary and Arabic writing skills. Another goal of the course is that students will develop an interest in the language and culture and see the value of continuing to study Arabic as they move on in school and their lives. Students, who maintain a ‘C’ or higher throughout 7th and 8th grade, can receive a high school credit of foreign language and can enter Arabic 3-4 at Lincoln High school and other cooperating schools.

Symphonic Band (Full Year Commitment), Grade 7

Prerequisite: at least 1 year of band experience or approval by instructor. Symphonic Band is the group for all 7th grade band members regardless of experience.

This class is designed to:

- develop individual & group skills in playing band instruments
- explore band music from a variety of musical styles & eras
- develop each student's overall musicianship.

As a performance class, Symphonic Band members can expect to be involved in 2-3 evening performances throughout the year, and to march in the 2015 Junior Rose Parade (and perhaps 1 or 2 others) plus possible field trips. Symphonic Band members will be eligible for nomination for the Oregon All State Middle School Honor Band and the PPS Middle School Honor Band, and will be encouraged to participate in the PPS Middle School Solo and Small Ensemble Festival during the year.

7th/8th Combined Grade Level Electives

Leadership (1/2 year class) Grades 7-8

In Leadership Class you will be planning and providing service both to the school and community. You will plan, organize and carry out activities and projects that encourage school spirit and provide opportunities to make our school a positive and encouraging place to be. Students will identify, develop and refine personal characteristic needed to be an effective leader. The students will be involved in administering school wide programs and assisting in important events on our campus.

Study Hall (1/2 year class) Grades 7-8

Students in Study Hall will have the opportunity to catch up on their homework in a structured environment and with the potential support of peers or a Study Hall teacher.

Students in Study Hall should expect conversations that support individual monitoring of grades, organizational skills and teaching around effective learning habits, if necessary and appropriate. *This class is a Pass/No Pass course.*

Beginning Art Grades 6, 7, 8
(Half-Year)

Students will be introduced to the studio through a variety of 2D and 3D projects that teach the elements of art and design. Media may include ink, graphite, charcoal, pastel, watercolor, acrylics, metals, Papier-Mache, ceramics, and more. Within the context of our studio work, students will analyze and interpret works of art and learn to critique their own work and the work of peers. Students will incorporate techniques and ideas based on the work of model artists and movements, while developing their own originality and creativity. Studio projects may also include cultural studies both modern and ancient.

Half year course (semester), no prerequisite required. *\$25.00 materials fee*

Intermediate Art Grades 7-8

Explore and solidify fundamental techniques in drawing, painting, collage, printmaking, and sculpture. 2D and 3D Media may include graphite, charcoal, pen & ink, pastel, watercolor, acrylic, metals, papier Mache, fabric, oils, ceramics, and more. Tutorials, individualized technical assistance, and flexible project-based assignments will provide structure and guidance for students as they explore media and ideas. Studies of model artists will inform and inspire our work. Independently but with teacher guidance, students will initiate a *capstone* project that develops a *thematic* and culturally resonant idea, using an independently chosen media. Students are encouraged to push beyond their comfort zone and explore new media.

Half or full year course, no prerequisite required. *\$25.00 materials fee per semester.*

Advanced Art Grades 7-8

This advanced art course is for students interested in rigorous and in-depth studies in art, working on both assigned projects and independent explorations. Independent work is

supported but driven by the student's interest and skill set, working within a flexible framework provided by the instructor. Students are encouraged to use art to communicate ideas and opinions through a variety of 2D and 3D media. Students will concentrate on the development of thematic ideas while continually honing skills in composition and technique. Students will either complete a *commission* piece, working with a client, or develop an *independent* body of work that includes a portfolio of three projects. Either option must demonstrate quality, concentration and breadth.

Half or full year course, prerequisite required (Art 1, 2, or instructor approval). \$25.00 materials fee per semester.

Dance I (1/2 year class) Grade 7-8

This course offers students an opportunity to learn basic tap and jazz as well as performance skills. Students of all levels are *required* to participate in the semester's final recital. They will be asked to purchase tap and jazz shoes and appropriate attire for dance class. We do have some tap and jazz shoes available for students to rent at a small cost. Students may use this course to fulfill their PE requirement and may be repeated in future semesters.

Ripped and Fit (1/2 year class) Grades 7-8

You will be introduced to a variety of fitness and conditioning styles: yoga, Pilates, weight training, dance, aerobics, kickboxing and circuit training. You will learn in a comfortable, fun and challenging atmosphere. This class will encourage development of self-discipline, physical flexibility and endurance as well as self-confidence. Students may use this course to fulfill their P.E. requirement and may be repeated in future semesters.

Physical Education (1/2 year class) Grade 7-8

This course offers an introduction to a range of individual, dual, and team activities such as flag football, basketball, golf, hockey, pickle ball, and volleyball. Many of these activities teach lifetime skills and team cooperation. NOTE: P.E. is highly recommended for at least one semester, although you may choose to take a second semester.

Media Arts (1/2 year class) Grades 7-8

Students write, produce, direct, act in and edit their own short movies. The best films of the year might make their way into one or more film festival competitions around the country.

Technology Education – Tech. Ed. (1/2 year class) Grades 7-8

This class blends the best aspects of industrial arts, hands-on science based project, and computer applications. Students explore projects such as carving skateboards, building birdhouses, making model bridges, and designing buildings on the computer.

Speech and Debate

The number one fear of humans is speaking in public. Yes, before death! Yet, it's one of the most important skills employers look for in their employees – the ability to be an effective communicator. In this speech class, not only will you learn how to gain confidence through giving speeches, but you will also engage in impromptu speaking, debates, and slam poetry. If you're already a confident speaker, this class will further develop your public speaking abilities. Last but not least, the class is a great way to share your voice in a way you don't normally get to do in school and you will make friends with students you might otherwise not get to know!

Media Journalism

This comprehensive course will focus on documentary production, magazine publishing, reporting, and social media usage. In addition, this class will have an overall emphasis on journalistic integrity, grammar and the revision process. Students will be able to see their work in print in the biannual West Sylvan Magazine.

8th Grade Courses

Yearbook (1/2 year class) Grade 8

This class lets you use your creative ability to create and design the yearbook. Students will take pictures and learn how to use Photo – shop to edit and arrange them. They will learn about page layout and cover design. Finally, the work will be published as the West Sylvan Yearbook 2014. This class is only offered first semester.

Spanish 2 (Full year commitment) Grade 8

Prerequisite. Spanish 1 and teacher approval. This is the second year of a two year sequence. Students coming from other schools should have been studying Spanish in a classroom for at least a year. This year builds on the vocabulary and grammar skills that the students acquired in 7th grade. Students should complete the 8th grade year with a much broader vocabulary base, a better command of the present tense and a basic understanding of the simple past. Students who maintain a 'C' or higher throughout 7th and 8th grade, can receive a high school credit of foreign language and can enter Spanish 3-4 at Lincoln High School and other cooperating schools.

French 2 (Full year commitment) Grade 8

Prerequisite. French 1 and teacher approval. This is the second year of a two year sequence. Students coming from other schools should have been studying French in a classroom for at least a year. This year builds on the vocabulary and grammar skills that the students acquired in 7th grade. Students should complete the 8th grade year with a much broader vocabulary base, a better command of the present tense and a basic understanding of the simple past. Students who maintain a 'C' or higher throughout 7th and 8th grade, can receive a high school credit of foreign language and can enter French 3-4 at Lincoln High School and other cooperating schools.

Mandarin 2 (Full year commitment) Grade 8

Prerequisite. Mandarin 1 and teacher approval. This the second year of a two year sequence. Students coming from other schools should have been studying Mandarin in a classroom for at least a year. This year builds on the vocabulary, grammar, pinyin and character writing skills that the students acquired in 7th grade. Students should complete the 8th grade year with a much broader vocabulary base, a better command of the present tense and a basic understanding of the simple past. Students will deepen their understanding of the Chinese culture. Students who maintain a 'C' or higher throughout 7th and 8th grade, can receive a high school credit of foreign language and can enter Mandarin 3-4 at Lincoln High School and other cooperating schools.

Arabic 2 (Full Year Commitment) Grade 8

Prerequisite. Arabic 1 and teacher approval. This is a second year of a two year sequence. Students coming from other schools should have been studying Arabic in a classroom for at least a year. This year builds on the vocabulary, grammar and writing skills that the students acquired in 7th grade. Students should complete the 8th grade year with a much broader vocabulary base, a better command of the present tense and a basic understanding of the simple past. Students will deepen their understanding of the cultures who speak Arabic. Students, who maintain a ‘C’ or higher throughout 7th and 8th grade, can receive a high school credit of foreign language and can enter Arabic 3-4 at Lincoln High School and other cooperating schools.

Dance II – (Full Year Commitment) Grades 7-8

Prerequisite. Dance 1 or teacher permission. This class is a *full year* continuation of Dance I fundamentals for students committed to expanding their technical dance skills and knowledge. Performance requirements and other expectations are the same as Dance I. Students who have not taken Dance I must obtain special permission from Dance Instructors. Curriculum will be supplemented with dance history, dance criticism and other knowledge components through written assignments, projects and tests. The teacher’s signature of approval is required.

Wind Ensemble (Full Year Commitment), Grade 8

Prerequisite. at least 2 years of band experience or approval by instructor. Wind Ensemble is the group for all 8th grade band members regardless of experience.

This class is designed to:

- develop individual & group skills in playing band instruments
- explore band music from a variety of musical styles & eras
- develop each student's overall musicianship.

As a performance class, Wind Ensemble members can expect to be involved in 2-3 evening performances throughout the year, to march in the 2015 Junior Rose Parade (and perhaps 1 or 2 others), and participate in a variety of performance oriented field trips. Wind Ensemble members will have opportunities to perform with the Lincoln High School Bleacher Band at one home football and one home basketball game, and will perform at Lincoln High School’s “Future Cardinals” concert. Wind Ensemble members will be eligible for nomination for the

Oregon All State Middle School Honor Band and the PPS Middle School Honor Band, and will be encouraged to participate in the PPS Middle School Solo and Small Ensemble Festival during the year.