

WHISCONIER MIDDLE SCHOOL

PROGRAM OF STUDIES



2020-2021

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Mr. Ed Bednarik, Assistant Principal, Grades 7-8
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17 West Whisconier Road, Brookfield, CT 06804
www.brookfieldps.org

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Principal's Letter

Whisconier Middle School

17 West Whisconier Road ~ Brookfield, CT 06804

Phone 203-775-7710 ~ Fax 203-775-7615

www.brookfieldps.org

Summer 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians and Students:

This Program of Studies contains helpful information about the academic Program offered at the Whisconier Middle School. This document was prepared by the administration, guidance counselors, curriculum leaders, and teachers in order to provide you with course summaries and other pertinent information.

If you have questions or concerns about your child's academic program, please contact your child's guidance counselor when school is in session. Regular communications between teachers and parents is a key ingredient for your child's success at school, for example telephone calls, notes, e-mails, as well as appointments with school staff including teachers, counselors, and administrators. The middle school telephone number is (203) 775-7710 and the fax number is (203) 775-7615.

All report cards and progress reports are accessed through the parent portal. Additional details regarding the parent portal will be announced during open house. Please be sure to review this information with your child, help them celebrate their successes, and provide assistance with those courses that challenge them.

Whisconier Middle School offers the students of the Brookfield community a strong academic middle school program; our students are well prepared to achieve success in secondary school and beyond.

The staff of Whisconier looks forward to meeting with you during our Open Houses and Parent Conferences in the autumn, and we wish all our students good luck for a very successful school year!

Best regards,

Deane Renda
Principal

WHISCONIER MIDDLE SCHOOL

Mission/Vision Statement

WMS Mission/Vision Statement

Mission Statement

We at Whisconier Middle School will respect ourselves and one another, appreciate individual differences, and encourage one another to reach our potential.

Vision Statement

The vision statement is intended to serve as both the blueprint for improvement and the benchmark by which we will evaluate our progress at Whisconier Middle School.

I. Environment - Whisconier Middle School:

- Provides a place where students feel comfortable, safe and accepted, allowing them to take the necessary risks to be successful
- Promotes open communication between parents, teachers and students, which encourages a sense of teamwork and cooperation
- Acknowledges and celebrates the achievements of students and staff in learning and leadership

II. Academic Excellence - At Whisconier Middle School:

- The curriculum promotes intellectual curiosity, creative thinking, and challenges students to reach their full potential
- High levels of achievement are accomplished through measurable academic standards aligned with the major instructional goals
- Focus is placed on character development which incorporates respect, social skills, and moral integrity into academic concepts
- The concept of teamwork through academic and extracurricular activities is developed

III. Staff - Whisconier Middle School's staff:

- Focuses on increased student achievement with instruction methods that reflect current research and proven effective classroom practices
- Supports the school's mission, vision, values and goals in attitude and action
- Models the importance of lifelong learning through their commitment to ongoing professional development
- Works to create conditions that promote student success
- Encourages colleagues and students in an atmosphere of support and respect
- Models professionalism through personal integrity, commitment, and ethical behavior
- Collaborates to improve student learning (instructional strategies, methods, and assessments)

IV. Students - Whisconier Middle School's students:

- Accept responsibility for their learning and their actions
- Set challenging goals and give their best effort to achieve high academic standards
- Behave toward other students and teachers in a manner consistent with good character (respectful, considerate, responsible and committed)
- Encourage each other in an atmosphere of support
- Become involved in school and community service

V. Parents and Community Support - At Whisconier Middle School, the parents and/or community:

- Play an active role in the academic education and character development of the students
- Form partnerships with teachers to demonstrate the importance of education
- Monitor their student's academic progress
- Are involved with the school by volunteering their time and/or service
- Are supportive of the school's vision, goals, and mission

Sex Discrimination - Title IX

What does Title IX mean to you? Title IX says:

"No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal Financial Assistance."

The Brookfield Board of Education agrees to comply with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and regulations promulgated pursuant thereto. The Board designates the Supervisor of Special Education as school systems Compliance Officer. The Board shall, at the opening of school each year, notify all students, parents, and employees of the name, address, and telephone number of the Compliance Officer and procedures for processing individual or group grievances.

All individual or group complaints shall be addressed, in writing, to the Compliance Officer who shall be responsible for investigating all complaints. Upon investigation, the Compliance Officer shall effectuate any changes deemed necessary to eliminate any discrimination practices and shall inform the individual or group complainant, in writing, of this action within fifteen working days of the receipt of such complaint.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the actions of the Compliance Officer, within fifteen days, the complainant may appeal the actions of the Compliance Officer, in writing, to the Board of Education, including the remedy sought. The Board of Education shall hold a hearing within thirty days, and shall decide what, if any, remedies are necessary to eliminate the practices deemed discriminatory. The Board shall notify the complainant, in writing, of its decision within five working days after such hearing.

The Compliance Officer shall determine that a notice shall appear on all public announcements, bulletins, catalogues, application forms, and transcripts of the Brookfield School System that the Schools do not discriminate on the basis of sex. The Compliance Officer may be contacted by telephone at 775-7600, and written grievances may be sent to Whisconier Middle School, 17 West Whisconier Road, Brookfield, CT 06804.

BROOKFIELD IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER AND DOES NOT DISCRIMINATE AGAINST ANY PERSON ON THE BASIS OF RACE, COLOR, RELIGION, NATIONAL ORIGIN, GENDER, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, AGE, OR PHYSICAL DISABILITY.

Program of Studies Introduction

The Whisconier Program of Studies is a guide to the courses and programs available in the middle school. The purpose of this guide is to inform parents about their child's academic program consisting of both core courses and exploratory courses known as the Unified Arts Program.

All students are expected to take Health, Literacy, Mathematics, Physical Education, Science, Social Studies and World Language courses in grades 5 through 8. Some students needing more intensive instruction in reading may not be able to participate in either Social Studies and/or World Language.

The Unified Arts program provides middle school students with an opportunity to explore courses in Art, Twenty First Century Skills (7th and 8th grade), Music, Technical Education, Theatre Arts, and World Language (5th and 6th grade Spanish) at some time during their four years at Whisconier. Band and chorus are also available for students who elect to participate.

School Counseling Department

The school counselors at Whisconier are an important resource for both parents and students in answering questions about a student's academic program. Although there are a very limited number of choices in a middle school program, it is important that students are placed in the appropriate level of a course. The counselor can answer specific questions and respond to any concerns in regard to students' schedules.

The Whisconier Middle School counseling program is a student-centered program consistent with the developmental stages of learning. The approach is proactive and preventative. It is also responsive to the individual student when he or she has critical decisions to make or problems to solve.

School counseling services are an integral part of the total educational experience, providing continuous assistance, support, and meaningful growth experiences for our students. School counseling complements the instructional program by helping students realize their potential and understand their academic and personal strengths or weaknesses. This realization empowers them to participate in their own development.



Service delivery in school counseling consists of individual counseling sessions; small group focus meetings; in class or large group structured presentations; consultation and support of parents and staff; coordination of services within the school and between the school, home, and wider community; and student case management. We do also refer to outside community providers for students and families with more in depth needs.

Student Success Plan

The Student Success Plan (SSP) is an individualized student driven plan that will be developed for each middle school student, with a school counselor's assistance, that includes academic, social, and career exploring goals. The counselors will administer, with the use of the Naviance (a web-based career exploration program), a learning style survey, personal interest

inventory and a career key assessment. These inventories will help students to understand how they learn best and how to choose their high school courses based on the career cluster. This career profile will continue through 12th grade.

School counselors are assigned by grade and are an integral part of the teaching team. Counselors follow their students for a two-year period, providing continuity in communication and instructional needs.

School Counseling Personnel:

Mrs. Alison FitzPatrick	8 th Grade
Mrs. Rachel Jalbert	7 th Grade
Ms. Kristy Trotta	6 th Grade
Mrs. Marianne Kish	5 th Grade

Scientific Research Based Interventions (SRBI)

SRBI is a program that provides services and interventions to all students based on their academic and/or behavioral needs. The State of Connecticut Department of Education mandates that all school districts use this formalized process. When a need is identified using assessment data, appropriate interventions are implemented and monitored by school personnel to ensure the interventions are meeting the student's needs.

Common Core State Standards

The Common Core State Standards Initiative is a state-led effort to establish a single set of clear education standards for English-language arts and mathematics that states can share and voluntarily adopt. These standards are designed to ensure that students graduating from high school are prepared to go to college or enter the workforce and that parents, teachers, and students have a clear understanding of what is expected of them.

Students who are college and career ready are characterized as being able to do the following:

- They demonstrate independence.
- They build strong content knowledge.
- They respond to the varying demands of audience, task, purpose, and discipline.
- They comprehend as well as critique.
- They value evidence.
- They use technology and digital media strategically and capably.
- They come to understand other perspectives and cultures.

According to the Common Core State Standards Initiative, the Standards

- Are aligned with college and work expectations;
- Are clear, understandable and consistent;
- Include rigorous content and application of knowledge through high-order skills;
- Build upon strengths and lessons of current state standards;
- Are informed by other top performing countries, so that all students are prepared to succeed in our global economy and society; and
- Are evidence-based.

Helpful Common Core websites:

<http://www.cgcs.org/domain/72>
<http://www.corestandards.org/>



School Attendance

Whisconier School hours for students are 7:55 a.m. - 2:40 p.m.

Connecticut state law requires parents to make sure that their children between the ages of 6 to 16 attend school regularly.* Daily attendance is a key factor in student success, thus any absence from school is an educational loss to the student. These rules are designed to minimize student absenteeism while providing students the opportunity to make up school work missed due to a legitimate absence. We are extremely proud of the many students who have excellent attendance records and honor students who have achieved a perfect attendance for the year.

**Connecticut General Statute 10-15c allows the board to vote on admitting to school any child under five years of age.*

Homework



The following homework guidelines are for students in most of Whisconier's regular courses. If your student is enrolled in any higher-level courses, the time spent on homework may increase. In addition, students may be assigned long-term projects above the every night homework expectations. Teachers discuss time management strategies concerning these projects. Please understand that your student may have an opportunity to complete some of his/her homework in school during his/her extended learning time (ELT), as well. Parental support in helping your student successfully complete his/her homework is important to your child's academic success, but he/she needs to complete the homework himself/herself. Homework on the weekends will be avoided as much as possible.

Grade 5: All fifth grade students are expected to spend an average between 1 and 1.5 hours per night on homework.

Grade 6: All sixth grade students are expected to spend an average between 1 and 1.5 hours per night on homework.

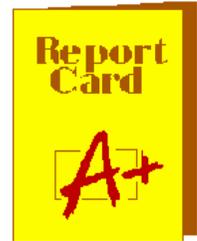
Grade 7: All seventh grade students are expected to spend on average between 1.5 and 2 hours on homework per night.

Grade 8: To continue to prepare students for high school, all students are expected to spend on average between 1.5 and 2 hours per night on homework.

****** READING at home every day is an important part of all middle school students' academic program.***

Report Cards

Report cards are issued four times a year, generally in early November, late January, April, and June. All report cards are accessed through the parent portal on the district website.



Progress Reports

Student progress can be monitored through the parent portal regularly. Staff update the information by the 15th and 30th of each month. Progress reports are available four times per year, approximately halfway between each marking period. Parents are encouraged to contact the teacher and guidance counselor if there are any questions regarding academic achievement.

Assessment and Grading System

Letter Grades

A+	97 - 100	C+	77 - 79
A	93 - 96	C	73 - 76
A-	90 - 92	C-	70 - 72
B+	87 - 89	D+	67 - 69
B	83 - 86	D	65 - 66
B-	80 - 82	F	0 - 64
		Inc.	Incomplete
		P	Pass

*Incomplete becomes an F if the work is not made up in two weeks' time from the closing date for report cards.

Criteria for Grading

Students will receive grades, which reflect their performance in a number of areas. These may include the following:

- Classwork
- Homework
- Tests and quizzes
- Reports and projects
- Class participation, allowing for variation because of individual differences
- Other student activities or products appropriate to the particular subject and student

Note: conduct, attitude, and attendance are important and may be reported separately; however, they shall not be considered as criteria in calculating academic grades. These guidelines are based on the grading policy of the Board of Education.

Honor Roll Criteria

Students will be included on the honor roll if they achieve an average of B+ (87.0) or better in all courses except band and receive no grade below a C.

President's Awards of Educational Excellence

At the end of 8th grade, selected students are eligible to receive the President's Award for Educational Excellence. Student selection is based on the following criteria:

- Honor roll 8th grade through the third quarter
Honor roll in 7th grade
Honor roll in 6th grade
- At goal/above goal on STAR Math and STAR Reading (grades 6-8)
- At goal/above goal on SBAC Math and SBAC English/Language Arts (grades 6-8)
- Teachers' recommendations of outstanding achievement supported by exemplary student work.

This criteria is developed by the United States Department of Education in partnership with the National Association of Elementary School Principals and the National Association of Secondary School Principals.

Parent Conferences

Either parents or teachers can request parent conferences. Arrangements for parent/teacher/student conferences can be made through the teacher or guidance counselor. School-wide parent conferences are scheduled in November and March. Specific dates are listed on the [district calendar](#). Staff members will make their best effort to return telephone calls and emails in a timely fashion. Parents should contact an administrator if a time period elapses without a teacher response.

Vacation/Make-up Work Policy

Students who miss school because of vacation are deemed to have an unexcused absence. Teachers are not required to provide students with work and assignments prior to their absence. The teacher could not possibly repeat all the lessons a child would miss. It is the student's responsibility to find out what work was missed and to get a copy of the assignments. The student has twice the number of school days missed to make up all work, including tests and quizzes. 7th and 8th grade student's who would like to receive their assignments prior to vacation must complete a vacation form at least five school days prior to going on vacation.

Promotion/Acceleration/Retention

The guiding philosophy when considering promotion, acceleration and retention shall be what is in the best interest of the student.



The Board of Education, dedicated to the continuous development of each student enrolled in its schools, shall establish and maintain high academic standards for each grade and monitor student performance in a continuous and systematic manner. The superintendent shall establish a system of grading and reporting academic achievement to students and their parents and guardians. This system shall determine when promotion and graduation requirements are met. The decision to promote or retain a student, shall be based on consideration of the following: performance in the curriculum, attendance, performance on standardized testing and on other testing instruments, social and emotional development, and what is deemed to be in the best interest of the student.

School staff shall identify, as early as possible, students in danger of failing and at risk for retention and notify parents of their concerns. This identification shall also include those students who fail to meet the remedial standards of our Benchmark Assessments (STAR/Acadience). Prior to deciding on retention for a student not mastering the appropriate skills, the district shall provide and may require the student to attend one or more alternatives for remedial assistance. Opportunities provided for supplemental and remedial instruction to assist the student in overcoming academic deficiencies may include, but are not limited to, tutorial programs, basic skills instruction, summer school, instruction during school vacations or during weekend programs, peer tutoring or mentoring.

A recommendation for retention or acceleration is a critical decision, one which requires frequent and informed discussion among parents, teachers and administrators so that they may weigh carefully the advantages and disadvantages to the student before any decision is made. Discussions shall center around child, family and school factors that indicate for or against retention.

After consultation with appropriate staff and parents, the final decision for promotion, retention, and acceleration shall be made by the building administrator. A Planning and Placement Team has the ultimate jurisdiction over the placement of a special education student and a PPT shall determine promotion, retention and graduation utilizing modified criteria in accordance with State Statute.

Students shall be placed at an instructional level that will ensure the likelihood of continued success and, at the same time, provide a challenge. The majority of students will spend the normally allotted time to progress through the curriculum. A small number of students may benefit from spending additional time at a particular level or may need to have their instructional assignment scheduled across grade levels.

Occasionally students demonstrate mastery of nearly all the skills and objectives at the present and/or subsequent levels. These students may profit from accelerating, spending less than one year at one level. Instructional provisions shall be made for these students.

Progress toward high school graduation shall be based on the student's successful completion of courses necessary to earn the required number of credits, and meeting the credit distribution requirements.

Cf 6146.01 - Grading

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
10-76, Children Requiring Special Education
10-221(b) Boards of Education to Prescribe Rules

P.A. 99-288 An Act Concerning Education Accountability

Policy Adopted: 8/15/94 BROOKFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Revised: 5/6/92 Brookfield, Connecticut
Revised: 5/17/2000
Policy Approved: 1/2/2002

Program of Studies

Sequence of Math courses:

Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9
Common Core Math 5	Common Core Math 6 Advanced	Common Core Math 7 Advanced	Common Core Algebra Honors	Honors Geometry
	Common Core Math 6	Common Core Math 7	Common Core Algebra Advanced	Geometry
			Common Core Math 8	Algebra

Sequence of World Language courses:

Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9
Introduction to Spanish	Introduction to Spanish	Spanish IA	Spanish IB →	Spanish I or II Academic
				Spanish II Honors
		French IA	French IB →	French I or II Academic
				French II Honors

WMS Math Policies

Mathematical Computations:

Here at WMS we encourage and accept a variety of calculation methods. Students are expected to become proficient in at least one algorithm (calculation method) for each mathematical operation. When assessing a computation skill (add, subtract, multiply, divide) it is the answer that we are grading not the method used to get the answer. The following algorithms: lattice, partial product, partial sum, trade first subtraction, and partial quotient are taught and used by most students because they are efficient and easy to learn and understand. When WMS math students perform calculations they should be using their knowledge of place value, estimation and mental math skills to determine if an answer is reasonable. Any method that is both efficient and accurate will be accepted as a method used to complete calculations.

Paper and pencil expectations (without calculators) are the following:

- In grades 5-8 addition and subtraction up to 4 digits, this includes whole numbers and decimals.
- In grades 5-7 multiplying and dividing at least 1 digit times 3 digit or 3 digit divided by 1 digit, this includes whole numbers and decimals.
- In grade 8 multiplying at least 2 digits by 3 digits and dividing at least 3 digits by 2 digits, this includes whole numbers and decimals.

Calculators:

- Calculators are an essential tool for mathematical instruction and computation.
- Calculators are the most efficient and accurate tool for students to use on: class work, homework, quizzes, tests, and problem solving when working with any numbers that exceed the paper and pencil guidelines from above.
- Using the calculator does not eliminate the requirement of the student showing their work or explaining their answer.

Science Overview

The goal of the science program at Whisconier Middle School is to engage students in the practices of science and engineering as they explore scientific phenomena and big ideas. These big ideas are organized in coherent storylines that allow the students to figure out phenomena in a way that makes sense to them. This will produce students that are curious about their world and ask questions to figure out what is happening in the world around them and why. The science and engineering practices will provide students with a foundation to construct explanations that clarify phenomena through big ideas. These science and engineering skills will empower students to be critical consumers of scientific information related to their lives enabling them to engage in evidence based discussions and argumentation about important issues. Lastly, these skills will help to prepare our students for designing solutions to problems.

Remedial Support Programs

Math Lab Program (grades 5-8)

The purpose of math lab is to provide support for students struggling with specific math skills and/or improving daily classroom performance. Using the most recent assessments in math classes, we identify students who had difficulty on various concepts assessed. These students attend math lab classes and will miss a limited number of UNAH/PE/Health classes. The math lab teacher tracks students' progress, which may be shared with teachers and parents throughout the school year. It is important that all WMS students become stronger and more confident math students.

Remedial Reading Program (grades 5-8)

The purpose of the remedial reading program is to provide additional literacy support to 5th - 8th grade students during a UNAH class or during extra learning time (ELT). The remedial reading teacher provides extra support and/or direct reading instruction in the class or with flexible groups during ELT time. In addition, the teacher assists in identifying and tracking the progress of remedial students through administering different assessments and comparing the data, which is periodically shared with grade-level teams and parents throughout the school year.

Developmental Reading Program (grades 5-8)

The purpose of the developmental reading program is to provide additional direct reading instruction to students who need to develop stronger reading skills. This instruction could focus on developing phonemic awareness (which refers to an understanding about the smallest units of sounds that make-up the speech stream/phonemes) and addressing phonological awareness which encompasses longer units of sound; i.e., syllables, onset and rhymes. The focus could also be to continue to develop reading comprehension strategies. Improved reading fluency and comprehension skills will be an expectation. Progress will be assessed via Benchmark Tests and progress monitoring reading assessments . A small number of 5th- 8th grade students will be required to participate in this program based on assessment scores and teacher recommendations. Students who participate in this program will take this class in lieu of Spanish and/or Social Studies. Grade level social studies content will also be incorporated to teach reading comprehension skills.

Grade 5

Overview

The fifth grade academic program strives to weave a solid core of academic curricula with a transitional experience for students entering a middle school environment. To facilitate this transition, students, teachers, and parents work together as a team to foster independence, develop organizational skills, encourage responsibility, and promote accountability. Common Core curricula include literacy (for a double period), social studies, math, world language and science. The Unified Arts Program includes Technical Education, Theater Arts, Music, Art, World Language, Health and Physical Education.

Grade 5 Literacy

Literacy 5: The fifth grade Literacy program is based on the CT Core Standards and focuses on developing our students' fluency and proficiency in reading, writing, speaking, listening, viewing, and thinking. Through the use of Reader's and Writer's Workshop students explore and respond to a variety of contemporary and classic genres of literature. Students will make and revise predictions, generate questions, read for facts, infer and conclude, identify main ideas and supporting details, and utilize figurative language. They will also analyze characters, plot, purpose, setting and sequence. The students will use a variety of strategies to develop an extensive vocabulary. Students will also write for a variety of purposes, focusing on expository skills, the writing process, and standard conventions of English. These include sentence structure, punctuation and capitalization, and grammar mechanics.



Grade 5 Common Core Mathematics

The Whisconier fifth-grade math program begins with a review of mathematical concepts and skills such as addition, subtraction, place value and multiplication and division concepts are taught and applied to problem-solving.

The focus of the math curriculum for the year will be on the Common Core State Standards Mathematical Practices below.

1. Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.
2. Reason abstractly and quantitatively.
3. Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others.
4. Model with mathematics.
5. Use appropriate tools strategically.
6. Attend to precision.
7. Look for and make use of structure.
8. Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning



Grade 5 Science

Unit 1: How Can We Identify Materials Based Upon Their Properties?

In this module, students learn how they can use properties of materials to identify them. In the first focus question, they use their senses to compare properties of six solids, including sugar and cornstarch. They read about how sugar and cornstarch are made by plants and used as food by animals. In the second focus question, students learn that dissolving and evaporation can be explained by particles. They compare how six solids behave when mixed with water. In the third focus question, students learn that melting points can be used to identify solids. They look at the effect of heat on six solids. In the fourth focus question, students record what happens when six solids are mixed with either iodine or vinegar. They read about how carbon dioxide and water combine to produce sugar and oxygen in a plant. They weigh cornstarch and iodine before and after mixing and conclude that weight is conserved in any change. In the science challenge, students apply what they have learned about properties to identify four unknown solids.

Unit 2: How Can We Use the Sky to Navigate?

In this module, students observe phenomena of ships disappearing below the horizon, shadows pointing in different directions, and balls falling to Earth. Students use these observations as well as models as evidence that gravity is directed to the center of a spherical Earth. Students use models as well as observations of shadows and stars to make a claim that Earth rotates once on an axis every 24 hours. Students carry out an investigation to determine the times of the year that different constellations are not visible and use the data to develop a model of Earth revolving around the Sun once a year. After learning the daily and annual patterns of motion of the Sun and stars, students consider the problem of using those patterns to navigate. Students discover that the altitude of Polaris is the latitude of the observer's location. Students carry out an investigation to compare two solutions for finding

the altitude of Polaris in the night sky. Finally, students are presented with the sweet potato mystery. Did ancient Polynesians sail from the Marquesas Islands to Peru and bring back the sweet potato? Students use the sky to navigate an imaginary boat and use the experience to support an argument about the mystery.

Unit 3: How Can We Provide Freshwater to Those In Need?

In this module, students will explore the topic of water scarcity and the various ways humans have attempted to get water to where it is needed. In the first focus question, students will collect evidence and experiences on their water footprints and on how little accessible freshwater actually exists. The culminating activity in the first focus question asks students to create a water scarcity-based public service announcement for a region in distress. The second focus question asks students to solve a water pumping challenge, develop models based on the interaction of Earth's four spheres, and then design a solution to a water pollution problem. In focus question three, students use a digital game and a newspaper activity to see how humans have tried to solve the global and regional problems of getting freshwater to where it's needed. The unintended consequences of our solutions are a point of emphasis in this focus question. In the final focus question, students engage in a two-part summative assessment. The written summative assessment complements the performance-based summative assessment and both focus on how key stakeholder groups must work together to design solutions to the water access, treatment, and allocation issues facing individuals and communities around the Earth.

Unit 4: How Can We Predict Change in Ecosystems

In this module, students will explore how plants and animals get the matter and energy they need to live and grow, how they interact in food webs, how change in one part of an ecosystem can have various effects, and how newly introduced species can sometimes become invasive. In the first focus question, students investigate what contributes most of the matter to plant growth. Starting with a broad list of what plants need to live and grow, students narrow down this list of water and air through a series of investigations that provide evidence for or against each potential contributor. In the second focus question, students explore animals' needs for matter and energy. By analyzing weight and food intake data, and observing energy transfer from food items, students build the case that animals get both matter and energy by consuming food. In the third focus question, students trace matter and energy through complex food web interactions. In the fourth focus question, students consider what happens when one component of an ecosystem changes. They use models to make predictions about how the introduction of a top predator can affect even the bottom of a food web. In the final focus question, students are challenged to analyze data, develop and use models, and engage in argumentation to make a prediction about which of two coastal locations is likely more susceptible to an invasion by a nonnative sea squirt.



Grade 5 Social Studies

The course will start with a geographical overview of Eastern and Western Europe and will cover a variety of mapping skills. Next, students will learn about the role of geography in the development of civilizations and our current relationship with modern Greece and Rome. Students will then travel back to the past learning about the cultural impact that has remained strong until today, as well as the foundational understandings of government. This sequence will allow students to develop core knowledge about ancient Greece and Rome that are referred to in other content areas and build a foundation for the study of early American history. The course will finish with understanding the motivation of early explorers and the challenges they encountered.



Grade 5 World Language

The goal of our 5th grade Spanish program is to have a communication-based program in which courses are vertically aligned and are based on the following World Language Standards:

- **Communication:** communicate in languages other than English
- **Cultures:** gain knowledge and understanding of other cultures
- **Connections:** connect with other disciplines and acquire information
- **Comparisons:** develop insight into the nature of language and culture, and
- **Communities:** participate in multilingual communities at home and around the world

The course will integrate the Common Core State Standards in reading, writing, speaking and listening introducing the Advanced Placement themes of Families and Communities, Beauty and Aesthetics, and Global Challenges. Topics will include Physical Characteristics, Personality Traits, Emotions, Family Members and Friends, Geography, Nationalities, Numbers, and Weather.

Grade 6

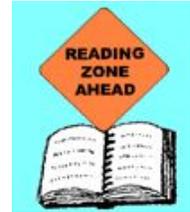
Overview

The goal of the sixth-grade program is to promote and engage active and enthusiastic learners in an atmosphere of support and respect. Critical thinking and problem-solving skills are honed and strengthened in crafted, unique learning experiences. Expectations of ownership of independent learning skills are clearly defined in preparation of students for transition to a higher level of learning. Students are challenged with the responsibility of learning in a rigorous academic environment that harnesses their energy in a spirit of community. Physical, emotional, intellectual, and social developmental changes in the growth process continuum are recognized and monitored in home-school communication. It is the collaboration among student, parent, and teacher that will bring about personal and academic achievement, success, and happiness for our students.

All sixth-grade students will take academic classes in Literacy (for a double period), Mathematics, Social Studies, World Language and Science. In addition, students rotate through three of the following unified arts classes: Theatre Arts, Technical Education, World Language, Music, Art, Health, and Physical Education.

Grade 6 Literacy

Our sixth grade Literacy program is based on the CT Core Standards and though using Reader's and Writer's Workshop we focus on helping students develop into independent, life-long, enthusiastic readers and writers. Students attend literacy classes daily. Through many genres of literature, vocabulary is developed, thinking skills are sharpened, and oral communication is improved.



Students continue to implement many skills, such as summarizing, comparing and contrasting, drawing conclusions, and generating questions; identifying main ideas and supporting details in exposition and key events, main characters, and setting in narration; determining the author's audience, purpose, and point of view; and making predictions.

Other skills, which are addressed in sixth grade, include proofreading and editing for grammar and usage, spelling, and punctuation and capitalization. Process writing skills are developed in many writing genres, such as personal narratives, descriptions, expositions, persuasions, and research. As students become more focused in their writing skills, they also address tone, purpose, and writing for a specific audience.

Grade 6 Mathematics

Common Core Math 6

The Whisconier Grade 6 math program emphasizes units of fractions and decimals. This encompasses all basic computation and concepts of fractions and decimals. Additional units include ratios and proportions, the number system, expressions and equations, geometry, and statistics and probability. Throughout all units, problem-solving strategies are emphasized.



The focus of the math curriculum for the year will be on the Common Core State Standards Mathematical Practices below.

1. Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.
2. Reason abstractly and quantitatively.
3. Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others.
4. Model with mathematics.
5. Use appropriate tools strategically.
6. Attend to precision.
7. Look for and make use of structure.
8. Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning



Selection: Teacher recommendation and compliance with the criteria standards will determine placement in sixth grade mathematics.

Common Core Math 6 Advanced

In this accelerated math course the students review fractions, decimal concepts and computation. The students will learn division of fractions and decimals. Additional units include ratios and proportions, the number system, expressions and equations, geometry, and statistics and probability. Problem solving is emphasized throughout all major units.

The focus of the math curriculum for the year will be on the Common Core State Standards Mathematical Practices below.

1. Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.
2. Reason abstractly and quantitatively.
3. Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others.
4. Model with mathematics.
5. Use appropriate tools strategically.
6. Attend to precision.
7. Look for and make use of structure.
8. Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning



Selection: Teacher recommendation and compliance with the criteria standards will determine placement in the sixth grade mathematics.

Grade 6 Science

In ***Weather and Climate Systems***, students investigate the phenomena why does one city struggle with droughts while another suffers from annual floods? During this unit, students learn the basics about weather and the atmosphere through investigation using materials and engineering as it applies to the weather and the technologies used for weather reporting.

In the unit ***Energy, Forces, and Motion***, students learn how an object's motion is dependent on the forces that are acting on it. Students will illustrate an object's motion in a graph and interpret motion from a graph. This unit addresses balanced and unbalanced forces, types of forces, speed, and reviews graphing to address the understanding and district expectations as it applies to mathematics. In this unit, students plan investigations and design solutions to explore energy, forces, and motion.

In the unit ***Ecosystems and Their Interactions***, 6th graders are exposed to the many ways that organisms interact with both the living and nonliving components of ecosystems. Students gather evidence and make predictions about ecosystems and their interactions to figure out how a change in the world's ecosystem can affect them. Every day organisms interact with both the living and nonliving components of ecosystems.

Grade 6 Social Studies

The sixth-grade social studies curriculum begins with students taking on the role of geographers to develop an understanding of the five themes of geography: place, location, movement, human-environment interaction and region. They will explore the world and learn about concepts including climate, natural resources, landforms, and demographics. They will demonstrate their learning by deciding where in the world and why to build a new amusement park.

The rest of the year will be a world tour of Africa, China, and India through current events. Students will develop a global perspective and use 21st century skills to help them understand their role in the world.

Grade 6 World Language

The goal of our 6th grade Spanish program is to continue to have a communication-based program in which courses are vertically aligned and are based on the following World Language Standards:

- **Communication:** communicate in languages other than English
- **Cultures:** gain knowledge and understanding of other cultures
- **Connections:** connect with other disciplines and acquire information
- **Comparisons:** develop insight into the nature of language and culture, and
- **Communities:** participate in multilingual communities at home and around the world

The course will integrate the Common Core State Standards in reading, writing, speaking and listening introducing the Advanced Placement themes of Families and Communities, Beauty and Aesthetics, and Global Challenges. Topics will include Music, Literature, Visual Art, Food, Daily Life, Holidays and Celebrations, School, Capitals and Countries, Demographic Information, Personal Interests, Health and Fitness, and Parts of the Body.

Grade 7

Overview

Seventh grade is a transition year where students are expected to function as independent learners with minimal guidance.

With this focus in mind, students are given more responsibility and accountability within the core curriculum areas including Literacy, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, World Language or Literacy Workshop. They will continue to explore applied and fine arts through the following Unified Arts electives: 21st Century Skills, Technical Education, Theater Arts, Music, Art, Health and Physical Education. Student success is contingent upon participation, motivation, and work ethic.

Grade 7 Literacy Topics

Reading Themes:

- Survival/adventure
- Cultural awareness
- Interpersonal relationships
- Overcoming obstacles

Literacy 7 Standards:

- Reflect on the text to make judgements about its meaning and quality
- Make and confirm or revise predictions
- Use a variety of strategies to develop an extensive vocabulary
- Identify and use main ideas and supporting details, in informational texts, or elements, such as key event, main characters, and setting in narratives
- Write effectively in descriptive, narrative, expository, and persuasive modes
- Proofread and edit for grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization

Additional Reading Skills:

- Comprehension
- Context clues
- Interpretation
- Summary
- Literary analysis

Additional Writing Skills:

- Point of view
- Voice
- Supporting opinion
- Organization
- Revision
- Audience
- Pre-writing strategies

Grade 7 Literacy

Literacy 7 is based on the CT Core Standards and through the use of Reader's and Writer's Workshop the focus is on core and optional novels and includes the study of short stories, poetry, and non-fiction. It is designed to instruct students in the study of literature and effective writing, speaking, and listening. Another important focus is to improve creative and expository writing skills and emphasizes persuasive writing skills. Students will express, develop, and substantiate their ideas and experiences in oral and written language.

Developmental Reading

In addition to taking Literacy 7, selected students take this course *in lieu* of a World Language.

This class is designed for students in need of personalized instruction in which they will be provided the highest challenge according to their abilities. Small class size and individualized instruction enable these students to concentrate on improving their basic Literacy skills.



Grade 7 Mathematics

Common Core Math 7

The Whisconier 7th grade math program transitions students from arithmetic to more algebraic thinking. The course content includes, but is not limited to, the following topics: Operations and Rational Numbers, Expressions and Equations, Ratios and Proportional Relationships, Geometry, Statistics, and probability. More rigorous use of fractions, percents, and proportions in both algebraic and geometric applications will be covered.

The focus of the math curriculum for the year will be on the Common Core State Standards Mathematical Practices below.

1. Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.
2. Reason abstractly and quantitatively.
3. Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others.
4. Model with mathematics.
5. Use appropriate tools strategically.
6. Attend to precision.
7. Look for and make use of structure.
8. Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning



Common Core Math 7 Advanced

This accelerated course will include all of the topics: Operations and Rational Numbers, Expressions and Equations, Ratios and Proportional Relationships, Geometry, Statistics, and probability. More rigorous use of fractions, percents, and proportions in both algebraic and geometric applications will be covered. Skill instruction in this class will be very fast-paced so that ample time may be devoted to problem solving and a deeper exploration of algebraic topics.

The focus of the math curriculum for the year will be on the Common Core State Standards Mathematical Practices below.

1. Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.
2. Reason abstractly and quantitatively.
3. Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others.
4. Model with mathematics.
5. Use appropriate tools strategically.
6. Attend to precision.
7. Look for and make use of structure.
8. Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning



Selection: Teacher recommendation and compliance with the criteria standards designated for this class.

Grade 7 Science

During the unit *Matter and Its Interactions*, students learn that matter is everywhere while investigating what it is made of. In addition, students work to figure out how matter can be separated and how it can be changed. Understanding matter and predicting its behavior can help with engineering solutions to everyday problems. During this unit, students observe a plethora of different matter (from thin sheets of gold to gels made from seaweed) to develop models and construct explanations about different types of matter, its response, and interactions with the world.



In *Structure and Function*, students learn that life on Earth is diverse and well adapted to its environment. By investigating living things, students will discover the characteristics that organisms share, the processes needed for survival, and why some organisms are composed of a single cell while others are made of many. The investigations that students pursue help them answer these questions as well as explain how an organism grows and builds new body structures. Also, students will discover how the structure of the circulatory system and the structure of cells support the movement of water, food, and gas molecules that are needed in these processes. This will promote understanding about how specific structures and functions work to keep them alive.

In *Earth's Dynamic Systems*, 7th graders learn that Earth is a dynamic place and changes, large and small, occur all around. Changes like erosion occur gradually, while others, like an earthquake, may occur suddenly. The ability to anticipate these changes and their effects is vital for maintaining life. Students explore how geologic processes affect the surface of the planet and describe how volcanoes and earthquakes have shaped Earth. This data is used this data to predict Earth's future.

Grade 7 Social Studies

Students in grade 7 will resume their study of American history where fifth grade left off - with the Treaty of Paris that ended the French and Indian War. Through the lenses of conflict, revolution, freedom, change and system, students will come to understand what motivated colonists to fight for independence and win their freedom from England, the establishment of a democratic form of government and what characteristics effective leaders possess. Primary source documents will play a role in understanding how our country works even today. The course of study will end with the westward expansion and Age of Jackson. The seeds of civil war will be planted for the following year.

World Language

Spanish 7th Grade

The goal of our 7th grade Spanish program is to continue to have a communication-based program in which courses are vertically aligned and are based on the following World Language Standards:

- **Communication:** communicate in languages other than English
- **Cultures:** gain knowledge and understanding of other cultures
- **Connections:** connect with other disciplines and acquire information
- **Comparisons:** develop insight into the nature of language and culture, and
- **Communities:** participate in multilingual communities at home and around the world

The course will integrate the Common Core State Standards in reading, writing, speaking and listening building on the Advanced Placement themes of Families and Communities, Beauty and Aesthetics, and Global Challenges.

French IA

This course is designed for students with no previous study in French. The goal of the 7th grade French program is to have a communication-based program in which courses are vertically aligned and are based on the following World Language Standards:

- **Communication:** communicate in languages other than English
- **Cultures:** gain knowledge and understanding of other cultures
- **Connections:** connect with other disciplines and acquire information
- **Comparisons:** develop insight into the nature of language and culture, and
- **Communities:** participate in multilingual communities at home and around the world



The course will integrate the Common Core State Standards in reading, writing, speaking and listening building on the Advanced Placement themes of Families and Communities, Beauty and Aesthetics, and Global Challenges.

Grade 8

Overview

The eighth grade is a transition year for students. The focus is on the continued development of becoming an independent learner. Students are expected to take responsibility for the completion of work when due, seek assistance from available resources, and be able to self-advocate and communicate their needs to others. Academic performance at this level is a determiner of Grade 9 placement recommendations at Brookfield High. As models for the rest of the school, students are expected to demonstrate appropriate social interactions and self-disciplined behavior.

All eighth-grade students will take courses in Science, Social Studies, Math, Literacy, and World Language or Developmental Reading. Also, students will take the following UNAH courses Art, 21st Century Skills, Theater Arts, Music, Technical Education, Health, and Physical Education.

Students in Grade 8 are given information on alternative high school options. Students are encouraged to discuss and explore these options at home and in school to identify their future educational and career goals. A free public high school education is available at Henry Abbott Technical School for the trades and at Shepaug High School, which offers a vocational-agricultural program, in addition to the programs offered at Brookfield High School.

Grade 8 Literacy

Our Literacy 8 program is based on the CT Core Standards and through the use of Reader's and Writer's Workshop is designed to instruct students in the study of literature and effective writing, speaking, and listening. It provides an overview of the genres of literature found in fiction and nonfiction writing, focusing on personal response, recognition of literary conventions, interpretation of meaning, and evaluation of quality. Applying rules of standard English grammar to their writing, students will write and present material in a variety of forms, including persuasive, expository, and creative, in order to enhance their oral and written communication skills. Literacy 8 prepares students to meet the expectations of high school English courses.



Grade 8 Mathematics

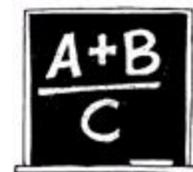
Common Core Math 8



The Whisconier eighth grade Common Core Math 8 class helps students be fully prepared to take Algebra in high school. The topics covered include: Patterns in Numbers, Patterns in Algebra, Side and Angle Relationships, Ratio, Proportion and Percentages, Surface Area and Volume, Patterns and Functions, Statistics and Permutations. The students will also be instructed on the appropriate use of a scientific calculator in this course.

The focus of the math curriculum for the year will be on the Common Core State Standards Mathematical Practices below.

1. Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.
2. Reason abstractly and quantitatively.
3. Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others.
4. Model with mathematics.
5. Use appropriate tools strategically.
6. Attend to precision.
7. Look for and make use of structure.
8. Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning



Selection: Teacher recommendation and compliance with the criteria standards will determine placement in 8th grade mathematics.

Common Core Algebra Advanced

The Whisconier Algebra class is an accelerated program, which encompasses all of elementary algebra. Content includes the use of variables in algebra; the use of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division in operating on equations and inequalities; slopes and lines; exponents and powers; polynomials; factoring; quadratic equations and square roots; linear systems and elementary functions. Scientific and graphing calculators are used extensively. Students will be required to use the tools of algebra to solve high-level problems. After successfully completing this course, students will be ready for a course in geometry in Grade 9.

The focus of the math curriculum for the year will be on the Common Core State Standards Mathematical Practices below.

1. Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.
2. Reason abstractly and quantitatively.
3. Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others.
4. Model with mathematics.
5. Use appropriate tools strategically.
6. Attend to precision.
7. Look for and make use of structure.
8. Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning

Selection: Teacher recommendation and compliance with the criteria standards will determine placement in 8th grade mathematics.

Common Core Algebra Honors

The Common Core Algebra Honors program at Whisconier is an accelerated math program, which will include Algebra One topics necessary for continued success in Honors Geometry and Honors Algebra II. Content includes, but is not limited to, simplification of algebraic expressions and finding solutions for equations and inequalities. The course progresses through the study of linear equations, emphasizing all the characteristics of linear equations and graphs of these equations. The course concludes with the studies of solving systems of equations and operations with polynomials. Instruction of new material is fast-paced so that there will be time for adequate problem solving, exploration of concepts, and presentation by students of their own mathematical applications. This course is designed for the math student who has consistently demonstrated the highest aptitudes and applications of math concepts and computations.

The focus of the math curriculum for the year will be on the Common Core State Standards Mathematical Practices below.

1. Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.
2. Reason abstractly and quantitatively.
3. Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others.
4. Model with mathematics.
5. Use appropriate tools strategically.

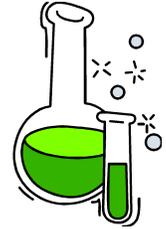


6. Attend to precision.
7. Look for and make use of structure.
8. Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning

Selection: Teacher recommendation and compliance with the criteria standards designated for this class.

Grade 8 Science

In ***Space System Explorations***, grade 8 students will investigate phenomenon related to our solar system and the broader universe to figure out how the moon affects daily life. *This unit promotes student curiosity by helping students clarify what they already know about space and challenging students to perform a series of investigations, extending and enriching their knowledge to identify how living on another planet would affect them.*



During the ***Electricity, Waves, and Information Transfer*** unit, students design and test real-world technologies to investigate electricity, information transfer, and characteristics of waves. By using electric circuits as models, students will study the role of electricity in order to better understand an animal's ability to sense and respond to the environment.

In ***Genes and Molecular Machines***, students investigate the phenomena of why some children look like their parents while others do not, allowing them to identify how traits are passed from one generation to the next. In this unit students gather evidence and make predictions about reproduction and heredity! By understanding how these traits are inherited, students explore how technology can be used to alter the traits of organisms.

Grade 8 Social Studies



The primary objective of this course is to instill in the students an appreciation and understanding of American History from the time period of the Constitution to 1900. Students study the social, political, cultural, physical, and economic aspects that have shaped the history of their country.

Grade 8 World Language

Conversational Spanish

This course concentrates on basic conversational skills. The students will be responsible for learning: the alphabet and sounds, numbers, vocabulary, basic verbs, weather, time, etc. In addition, the class will discuss various aspects of Hispanic culture and its fluency in today's world.

Selection: teacher recommendation.

Spanish 8th Grade

This course is a continuation of 7th grade Spanish. There will be a greater concentration on grammar and advanced sentence structure. Students will be expected to produce paragraphs and conversations in the target language. Cultural information is presented throughout the year. Upon successful completion (a 75 average or more), students will be recommended for Spanish II or Spanish II Honors in high school.



The goal of the 8th grade Spanish program is to have a communication-based program in which courses are vertically aligned and are based on the following World Language Standards:

- Communication: communicate in languages other than English
- Cultures: gain knowledge and understanding of other cultures

French 1B

This course is a continuation of French IA. The goal of the 8th grade French program is to have a communication-based program in which courses are vertically aligned and are based on the following World Language Standards:

- Communication: communicate in languages other than English
- Cultures: gain knowledge and understanding of other cultures
- Connections: connect with other disciplines and acquire information
- Comparisons: develop insight into the nature of language and culture, and
- Communities: participate in multilingual communities at home and around the world



The course will integrate the Common Core State Standards in reading, writing, speaking and listening building on the Advanced Placement themes of Families and Communities, Beauty and Aesthetics, and Global Challenges.

Upon successful completion, students will take French II or French II Honors in high school.

Unified Arts Program

PE/Music Classes: Students in grades 5, 6, and 7 meet on an every other day rotation. Students' cycle through five 18 day rotations.

In Health, all grades meet for one rotation of 36 classes.

Art



The main goal of the Whisconier Art program is to prepare all middle school students for further art training on the secondary school

level. Therefore, the program's emphasis is placed on the development of genuine art skills rather than on the completion of many minor art projects. Craftsmanship and quality are stressed. Students are expected to approach the class with serious attitude and effort.

Students are exposed to a wide range of materials during their art unit. These materials include drawing pencils, ink, markers, oil pastel, charcoal, water colors, tempera, acrylic paint, and craft media (i.e. beads, fibers, paper mache, plaster). Materials for class are furnished, with the exception of regular #2 pencils.

Instruction is given in the characteristics and proper use of art materials. Students will explore a variety of art media during their art rotation and will be exposed to many art historical references spanning Prehistory to Contemporary Art. Students will be using technology throughout the course, and digital citizenship will be integral to their art unit.

5th Grade: Emphasis is placed on the proper use of tempera paint, crayon, and pencil. The art techniques of proportion, perspective drawing, graphic enlargement, and color mixing are demonstrated. The influences of Norman Rockwell, Inuit design and primitive art (i.e. cave painting, Egyptian) are explored.

6th Grade: Emphasis is placed on the proper use of art media such as tempera, crayon, and colored pencil. The art techniques of blind contour drawing, self-portraiture, landscape drawing, still life drawing and painting, and light and shadow are demonstrated. Graphic design concepts are reviewed (i.e. line, texture, color). The influences of Medieval art and the French Impressionist art movements are explored.

7th Grade: Emphasis is placed on the proper use of art media such as water color paint and paper mache. The art techniques of collage, mosaic, water color wash, and glass beading are demonstrated. The influences of African art, European Surrealism (1930), and Pablo Picasso are explored.

8th Grade: Emphasis is placed on the proper use of art media such as tempera paint, acrylic paint, printing ink, plaster, and wire. The art techniques of simple animation, acrylic painting, plaster fresco painting, and linoleum block carving/printing are demonstrated. The influences of Egyptian art and 19th / early 20th century European masters (i.e., Munch, M.C. Escher, Picasso) are explored.

21st Century Skills

The goal of this program is to provide students with the opportunity to enhance their digital and media literacy skills in order to allow students to compete in our digital, global community. The 21st Century Skills curriculum focuses on information and media literacy, digital citizenship, internet safety and security, and basic computer coding. Students will learn how to access and evaluate information sources. Throughout both courses students will be asked to demonstrate critical thinking, communication, and creative skills to effectively evaluate and utilize information. Specifically, students will learn how to access and evaluate the quality of websites and online sources; how to use that information ethically by respecting copyright and citing sources; how to conduct themselves ethically and create a positive digital footprint

for themselves and others; how to be skeptical consumers of news media; and how to create simple animations using Scratch programming.

Grade 7: Seventh graders will focus on four areas. In the first unit, Evaluating Websites, students will learn how to critically evaluate the reliability of a website and the information found there. In the second unit, Copyright, students will learn about copyright protections, fair use, and plagiarism (and how to avoid it). The third unit will provide students with a brief introduction to NoodleTools, an online tool that will help them generate properly formatted citations among other things. In the last unit, students will learn about digital safety and security and how to protect their private information, their devices and reputations.

Grade 8: Eighth graders will focus on three areas. In the first unit, Digital Footprints, students will learn about their digital footprints and the importance of using technology ethically. In the second, Media Literacy, students will use their critical thinking skills to become thoughtful consumers of news and information. In the third, Scratch Coding, students will be introduced to basic coding skills using the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Scratch coding platform to create a computer-generated animation.

Health

The health education program at Whisconier Middle School grants students the opportunity to acquire information essential for the promotion, maintenance and protection of their health. Physical, mental, and social health concepts are explored to help students make decisions with a positive impact on their health and well-being.

As per Connecticut General Statute section 10-19, the teaching about alcohol, nicotine, drugs and acquired immune deficiency syndrome shall be taught every academic year to pupils in grade K-12. As per Connecticut General Statute section 10-16e, no student is required to participate in the family life education unit offered in school. A written notification to the principal by the student's parent or legal guardian shall be sufficient to exempt the student from the family life education unit in its entirety or from any specified portion of the family life education unit. Students opted out of this instruction will be required to complete an alternative assignment. Students in grades 5 and 7 will examine environmental health. Students in grades 6 and 8 will explore consumer health. The opt out letter may be found in the student handbook.

5th Grade: The health education program for the fifth grade covers four units. The injury prevention unit will emphasize the importance of safety and stress reduction skills. The healthy, active lifestyle unit will blend knowledge of nutrition with consumer health skills. The substance abuse prevention unit focuses on the gateway drugs (alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana) while reinforcing refusal skills needed to resist negative peer pressure. The human growth and development unit offers an introduction to the physical, emotional, and social changes that occur in puberty. In addition, fifth grade students will examine the skills needed to make friends and maintain those relationships.

6th Grade: The health education program for sixth grade builds upon knowledge and skills acquired in grade five. The sixth grade program includes four units. The injury prevention unit will focus on an introduction to first aid. The healthy, active lifestyle explores the

relationship between nutrition and fitness. The substance abuse prevention unit concentrates on health problems associated with drug use/misuse as well as refusal skills needed to resist negative peer pressure. The human growth and development unit explores the role of the immune system and HIV infections and reviews the male or female reproductive systems.

7th Grade: The health education program for seventh grade builds upon knowledge and skills acquired in grade six. The seventh grade program includes four units. The injury prevention unit shifts its focus to personal safety where students will explore various topics and situations and how to best respond to them. The healthy, active lifestyle unit considers the impact of media on body image and food selection. Students will identify coping methods other than using food. The substance abuse prevention unit continues its theme with the impact of drug use/misuse. The human growth and development unit reviews the male and female reproduction systems and the impact of male/female teen relationships. Sexually transmitted infections/diseases including HIV highlight the consequences of being sexually active at a young age. Abstinence, as the only safe way to protect from unplanned pregnancies and contracting a sexually transmitted infection/disease, is emphasized.

8th Grade: The health education program for eighth grade builds upon knowledge and skills acquired in grade seven. The eighth grade program includes four units. The injury prevention unit will explore the issues surrounding depression and suicide prevention. The healthy, active lifestyle unit reviews the recommended dietary guidelines, and ways to include healthy food options even when eating out. The substance abuse prevention unit will focus on the impact of drugs and the law. Students will identify the risks associated with being in the company of others who use/misuse drugs. The human growth and development unit shifts its focus to conception, gestation, labor, and birth. Students will explore the role of contraception in prevention of conception. Abstinence is stressed as the only safe method of preventing unplanned pregnancies and contracting sexually transmitted infections/diseases. Students will identify and practice refusal skills to help them remain abstinent. Students will review the non-sexual and sexual modes of HIV transmission, identify the bodily fluids, which may carry HIV and examine the myths associated with HIV transmission.

Music

General Music



All students in Grades 5, 6, 7 and 8 are enrolled in general music classes. The goal is to increase the students' knowledge and appreciation of music.

Grade 5: Students in grade 5 have music once during the school year with Ms. Vogel. In this class students learn how to play the keyboard at a beginner level. Students learn how to read and notate music in C position, and master playing both hands for some of their favorite pieces. They will also perform for their peers in informal class mini-recitals. The teacher's intention is to develop basic musicianship that will lead to an increased participation and appreciation for the arts.

Grade 6: Students will apply their knowledge of music while composing their own music using *Garage Band* for iPad. Students will experiment with the different elements of composition as well as learn how to master the *Garage Band* program. Topics involving music history and appreciation will also be covered.

Grade 7: Students will continue to learn how to read music and apply their knowledge to the keyboard. They will also perform for their peers in informal class mini-recitals. Cooperative learning is emphasized and is a major component of the grade given in this class. The teacher's intention is to develop basic musicianship that will lead to an increased participation and appreciation for the arts. Topics involving music history and appreciation will also be covered.

Grade 8: Students will delve deeper into music composition using the *Garage Band* program for iPads. Students will study song form and harmonic analysis while recording short compositions in a variety of genres. They will also learn the basics of music editing and ways in which music can be manipulated after it is recorded. Topics involving music history and appreciation will also be covered.

Band

Students will learn to perform music of various styles and levels of difficulty. Accomplishments on their instruments will be based on their preparation at home via practicing, which will be monitored by the instructor. It is expected that once students make a commitment to Band or Chorus that they will follow-through until their concert performances. Band and Chorus are team activities and everyone's participation is important for a successful concert/program. Performances are a very important part of each student's experience. Therefore, all performances are mandatory unless special circumstances are discussed with the Band director. Failure to attend any performance will result in the student receiving a lowered grade.

Grade 5: Students review and build on their basic music skills using the *Standard of Excellence* method book. The second half of the year focuses on reading and performing full band arrangements.

Grade 6: Students will study and perform various band arrangements. This course focuses on the skills of the individual player as well as the art of ensemble playing.

Grade 7 & 8: Students will continue to study and perform various band arrangements representing various styles of music. Students will study major scales (up to 3 sharps and 3 flats) as well as chromatic exercises. The 7th & 8th Grade combined band will participate in an adjudication festival in the Spring.

Band students in grades 5-8 will have TWO full Band rehearsals each week. These rehearsals will take place during ELT time. They will also have ONE small group lesson each week. These small group lessons are done on a "pull-out" basis and times will rotate so that students are not missing the same class every week.

Students who demonstrate competent performance skills will participate in band concerts. Band students will perform in the Winter and Spring Concerts as well as the Memorial Day Parade. Band students are graded with a letter grade and comments on their report card. The grade will be based on their attendance, conduct, effort, attitude, participation, home practice, and playing ability. Attendance at all Band functions is an important part of the grade.

Please note: Students will not be able to drop Band after the following dates without approval of the Principal:

- October 1 for the first semester
- March 1 for the second semester

Chorus

Chorus is available for all students in grades 5 - 8. Emphasis is placed on the importance of teamwork and ensemble skills. Other major concepts covered include melody, harmony, rhythm, vocal blending, and the basics of singing.

5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th grade chorus: meets one day per week during activity period.

Choruses are not auditioned and all students are encouraged to join. Students will prepare and perform a winter and spring concert.

Attendance and commitment to the chorus is expected of all members.

Small group chorus lessons also meet one day per week during ELT. Chorus students will perform in the winter and spring concerts as well as the Bock and Blu Concert. Chorus students are graded with a letter grade on their report card. The grade will be based on their attendance, conduct, effort, attitude, participation, and singing skills. Attendance at all chorus functions is an important part of the grade.

Please note: students will not be able to drop chorus after the following dates: for 1st semester after November 1 and for 2nd semester after March 1 without the approval of the Principal.



Physical Education



It has been proven that an active lifestyle contributes positively to a person's physical and mental health. Scientific research shows that these benefits include strengthening the heart, lungs, bones, muscles; reducing stress; lessening the risks for heart disease; increasing flexibility; and increasing self-esteem. The goals of the Physical Education Department are for students to demonstrate an understanding of the importance of physical fitness and for maintaining healthy, active lifestyles. This is achieved through group games, movement activities, modified sports, problem-solving tasks, warm-ups, and

cardio-vascular activities. At this early age, we try to instill in our students habits and attitudes that will encourage them to become active now and for the rest of their lives.

Theater and Performance Arts

Theater and Performing Arts have been an integral part of western culture since the earliest examples of organized societal structures. From storytelling around neolithic campfires to modern Broadway, presenting and performing fictive narratives has been the way humans pass down cultural and social expectations to the next generation for a millenia. The artform has travelled with us since the earliest examples of speech and communication. It has been the primary way we make an effort to explore and understand our world, moreover, ourselves.

The social concepts of communication, collaboration, self-esteem, risk taking, and evaluation of completed work are explored in conjunction with how they apply to both the theater and daily life. Students will learn that the arts offer all of us enjoyment as both an audience as well as a performer.

The basic elements of theater production, stage presence, proper voice projection, dramatic history, script writing skills, directing and stage movements are the core topics of this course. The technical aspects of costumes, props, and scenery are also addressed.

5th Grade: In 5th grade we focus on developing the most basic of performing skills. Physical and spatial awareness, personal focus, use of gesture, posture and facial expressions to communicate and vocal projection. These skills are developed through a variety of improvisation activities, formal public speaking exercises and theater games. This is a Pass/Fail course.

6th Grade: In the sixth grade we explore the origins of stage traditions in ancient Greece. This allows us to make connections between theater, mythology and culture and examine how various standard practices of the Greeks have filtered their way into modern society. We explore design elements through mask building and become familiar with important Greek literary figures, establishing a foothold for content often covered in future high school level English classes. The second portion of the class allows creative freedom by exploring the text "The Jabberwocky" by Lewis Carroll. This unique text gives students an opportunity to explore their choice of stage performance, puppetry or stop motion animation while integrating broader literacy skills such as annotation, personal interpretation and dissecting sentence structure.

Grade 7: Students in the 7th grade move along the continuum from traditions and origins of theater to the more contemporary forms of the art. These include Commedia del Arte and Pantomime, advanced contemporary script analysis, realism, set design, and continued work on improvised (improv) performance skills.

Grade 8: In the 8th grade, we move from the practices of staged theater, into the modern era. Utilizing the previously established performance skills, and introducing cinematography and film techniques, career options in entertainment, the art of filmmaking, and the impact of multi-media on our entertainment and daily lives. Students use their personal devices in order

to learn screenwriting, storyboarding, filming, editing and special effects. Students will develop their own original short films while expressing their world view in a creative and supportive environment. Students are held to high standards of autonomy, teamwork, planning, project management and execution, and meeting of firm deadlines.

Technology/Engineering Education

Technology/Engineering Education, a problem-based learning, utilizing math, science and technology principles. It is the heart of STEM education! In a word, it is about INNOVATION! It is about how people think! It is how to apply technology in the solutions of problems facing society. The aim is to solve problems and create opportunities within a realistic context. That context can start with the student's everyday environment and progressively move into more global issues. It is 21st century thinking!

Technological studies involve:

- Designing, developing, and utilizing technological systems;
- Open-ended, problem-based design activities;
- Cognitive, manipulative, and effective learning strategies;
- Applying technological knowledge and processes to real world experiences using up-to-date resources;
- Working individually as well as in a team to solve problems.

Fifth Grade students have an introduction to technology and the design process. Students will define technology, analyze how it affects their lives, and learn how to apply the design process to any task. A focus is also put on creativity and developing our "creative genius." Students will engage in design activities centered on problem solving, technical drawing, and invention.

Sixth Grade students will focus on transportation technologies, fabrication techniques, safe use of tools, and further application of the design process. Students will engage in a design/build activity focusing on one of the transportation environments. A brief introduction to manufacturing will also be covered.

Seventh Grade students will focus on a different transportation technology, continued fabrication techniques and safe use of tools, as well as further application of the design process. Manufacturing techniques will also be expanded on.

Eighth Grade students will continue to explore up-to-date manufacturing and fabrication techniques through the safe use of tools and materials in problem solving. Students will engage in several real world, current, design-based activities. They will have the opportunity to experience working in a team, designing and building their own skate boards from 1/16th inch maple veneer.

Special Services

Special Education

Each identified special education student is assigned a special education teacher as his/her monitor. The special education monitor collaborates with grade level staff to foster academic achievement. Special Education services are delivered in regular education classes, resource room, and/or small group settings.

Special Education programs/classes are designed with the intent of providing the most effective instruction possible for special needs students in the least restrictive setting. Programs/classes are designed to be flexible and may be added or deleted as needs change.

Resource Program

Selected students in need of additional support are provided assistance in a resource room on an individual or small group basis. Students' individual goals determine the focus of the academic skills covered as well as the amount of resource time provided. Resource assistance is offered during corrective time. The resource program is available to students who are under an Individual Education Plan (IEP) as determined by the Planning and Placement Team (PPT).

Individualized Literacy Program

This approach to Literacy and Reading is designed for students with marked differences in Literacy skills, who have been identified at a Planning and Placement Team meeting (PPT) as needing this program. Small class size and individualized instruction enable students to concentrate on improving their skills and achieving their Individualized Education Plan (IEP) goals. This program is available to special education students on a need basis in Grades 5 through 8. Student need is determined at a PPT where appropriate instructional goals are then developed.

Individualized Math Program

This course is designed to provide special education students with specific instruction and practice in math based on the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Small class size and individualized instruction are provided to help students achieve IEP goals. This program is available to special education students on a need basis in Grades 5 through 8. Student need is determined at a Planning and Placement Team (PPT) where appropriate instructional goals are then developed.

Life Skills Program

The Life Skills class is an individualized program that focuses on functional academics and daily living skills.

Student plans are created to increase levels of independence with the skills necessary for successful functioning in the school, home and community environments.

Social Enrichment Program

The Social Enrichment Program (SEP) aims to provide Whisconier Middle School's social-emotional learners with a safe, non-judgmental classroom environment in which they can learn the social, emotional, academic, and functional skills they need to be successful in school, home, and the community. The SEP believes that all students have inherent value and worth, and the mission of this program is to give both SEP students and WMS, at large, the resources and skills they need to see their worth and the worth of others. Through direct instruction, SEP students will increase their ability to regulate their emotions, tolerate distress, manage interpersonal relationships, and make academic and vocational progress. With a focus on collaboration with general education, special education, and administrative staff, personnel school-wide will gain skills to help SEP students succeed, thus increasing the sense of belonging and meaningful inclusion that SEP students feel. Finally, the SEP will serve as an internal "best practice" by modeling comprehensive, individualized social-emotional programming that can inform special and general education interventions.

Program Information

Through a Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) approach, students receive direct, social-emotional instruction as part of their Academic Support programming. The curriculum includes the following components:

- **Mindfulness:** the mindfulness module teaches skills for increasing self-awareness, becoming less judgmental, and gaining control of one's attention.
- **Distress Tolerance:** the distress tolerance module teaches skills for making distress endurable, so that an upsetting situation is not made worse by impulsive action.
- **Emotional Regulation:** the emotion regulation module teaches skills for decreasing unpleasant, distressing emotions and increasing positive emotions.
- **Interpersonal Effectiveness:** the interpersonal module teaches skills for asking for something or saying no to another person, while maintaining a good relationship and one's self-respect.

For students whose social and emotional needs require skill-practice outside the scope of DBT, individualized therapeutic learning strategies are designed to meet the student's needs. Academic programming will be individualized to each student.

School Psychology Services

The school psychologist provides psycho-educational evaluation and assessment of children's school functioning and educational experiences. Individual and group counseling and/or skills training are designed to guide students in identifying and developing their strengths. The psychologist also consults and collaborates with school personnel and/or parents to design interventions for educational, emotional, behavioral, and familial problems.

Speech-Language Services

The Speech-Language pathologist tests, diagnoses, and plans appropriate therapy programs for students identified with speech, language, and hearing needs, as determined by the P.P.T. The Speech-Language pathologist, as part of the Diagnostic Team, collaborates with special and regular education staff and advocates for students with community and professional agencies.

Occupational and Physical Therapy Services

Occupational and Physical Therapy services are provided to those students who require them to access their special education program. Services include evaluation, therapy, and collaborative consultation with grade level teams.

School Social Worker

School social workers are a link between home, school, and community. They are members of an educational team (teachers, administrators, special education staff, counselors, and parents) that supports students' academic, social and emotional success. The focus is to provide assistance for students and their families around the following issues: school attendance, financial, medical, emotional and/or family issues. The support may include: individual/group counseling to help students cope with stress or loss, improve a student's ability to make smart decisions and develop interpersonal relationships, and to utilize school and community resources.

Mission Statement of the Brookfield Public Schools

To inspire, challenge and prepare all students to live meaningful and productive lives.

Every student is empowered to become a critical thinker, problem-solver, effective communicator, global citizen, and life-long learner through rigorous, relevant and comprehensive educational experiences, expansive student opportunities, and active community involvement.

Core Values

Comprehensive Education:

We hold as a value that the district will provide an educational program that spans a wide range of curricula that can accommodate all children in meeting their educational needs.

Safety:

We hold as a value that all students and staff and other members of the school community will work in an environment that secures their physical and emotional well being.

Life-long Learning:

We hold as a value that all students will be taught the necessary skills and receive the encouragement to be active and inquisitive learners throughout their lives.

Citizenship:

We hold as a value that all students will be taught that the obligations they have as citizens is to fulfill their civic responsibilities to their community, state and nation.

Respect:

We hold as a value that all students will hold themselves in high esteem and treat all others as they wish to be treated.

Continuous Improvement:

We hold as a value that all students and staff will continue to grow through ongoing experiences that fulfill their needs and enrich their knowledge.

Rigor:

We hold as a value that all students will be challenged with a comprehensive array of high quality programs that enables them to expand the limits of their abilities.

Communication:

We hold as a value that all students will be taught and encouraged to articulate thoughts and ideas using oral, written, and non-verbal communication in a variety of forms and contexts integrating the array of communication resources available to them.

Responsibility:

We hold as a value that all students and staff will be accountable for their decisions and their actions.

Integrity:

We hold as a value that all students and staff will demonstrate an adherence to moral and ethical principles rooted in a sense of honesty and truthfulness.

Collaboration:

We hold as a value that all students and staff will work effectively and respectfully with one another in groups to achieve common goals.