

# **SAVANNA OAKS MIDDLE SCHOOL**

Website: [soms.verona.k12.wi.us](http://soms.verona.k12.wi.us)



## **CURRICULUM HANDBOOK EIGHTH GRADE 2017 – 2018**

Student Name:



**Savanna Oaks**  
**Middle School**

Principal Sandy Eskrich

Associate Principal Pete Christofferson

February, 2017

Dear Savanna Oaks Families,

This Curriculum Handbook describes the sequence of classes and choices each learner may make as he or she navigates 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8th grade at Savanna Oaks.

All students' core classes include language arts, math, science and social studies. Encore and exploratory classes are offered in the areas of music, physical education, family and consumer education, art, world languages and technology education.

Savanna Oaks provides a variety of levels of instruction to differentiate for our learners. We also provide personalized learning approaches that we believe will meaningfully engage each learner at his or her next steps. We offer students voice and choice in activities that allow them to explore and demonstrate mastery of learning standards.

We hope you will find the handbook to be a practical guide to you as you examine the required and elective course offerings.

If you have any questions relating to our curriculum, please call Savanna Oaks Middle School at 845-4000.

Sincerely,

Sandy Eskrich, Principal  
Savanna Oaks Middle School

The Verona Area School District is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination on the basis of race, religion, sex or sexual orientation, economic status, age, national origin, handicap, marital status, political affiliation, arrest or conviction record or any other factor provided for by state and federal laws and regulations.

## **EIGHTH GRADE CLASSES**

### **REQUIRED CLASSES**

Language Arts  
Math  
Science  
Social Studies  
Read-to-Succeed (R2S)  
Physical Education/Health

### **YEAR LONG CLASSES**

Music  
    Band  
    Orchestra  
    Instrumental Music for Beginners  
    Choir  
Spanish 1  
Spanish Language Arts 1 (Native Spanish Speakers)

### **SEMESTER CLASSES**

Art  
    2-D Art & Design Technology  
    3-D Art & Design

Family and Consumer Education  
    Follow the Food - Cultural Foods Class  
    KFC (Kids, Food and Chicks)  
    "Business Wannabees" – The Treehouse (Student Store)

Information and Technology Literacy  
    Advanced Information Literacy  
    Film Production and Editing/Coding, Circuits and Robotics

Physical Activity  
    The Great Outdoors  
    Adapted PE Mentor Class

Creative Writing Class  
    Finding Your Muse

# **COURSE DESCRIPTIONS – EIGHTH GRADE**

## **REQUIRED CLASSES**

### **Language Arts**

In eighth grade language arts, one component that students explore is the writing process. Using the standards, students will compose argumentative essays, expository essays, creative writing pieces, poetry, and responses to literature. To prepare them for high school, students also practice writing in the form of a "MEL-Con," which is a structured writing format. Another component is that students are encouraged to become critical, interactive readers. To enhance this skill, students are exposed to various literary genres including an assortment of novels and poetry. In addition, students learn to recognize specific literary devices and to appreciate reading as a leisure activity. The final component requires students to practice other communication skills of speaking and listening through formal and informal oral presentations.

### **Math**

The focus at eighth grade for most students is algebra. Topics covered in the area of pre-algebra and algebra include operations with rational numbers, exploring ratios, similarity, solving equations, representing data, identifying coordinates and functions, direct variation and modeling with linear equations. Students develop their abilities to explore and solve mathematical problems to think critically, to work cooperatively with others and to communicate ideas clearly. Some students will be continuing math coursework in Geometry or Algebra 2 and some students will spend 8<sup>th</sup> grade math developing strong foundational pre-algebra skills.

### **Science**

The eighth grade science curriculum emphasizes physical science topics representing introductory concepts in chemistry and physics. Next Generation Science Standards addressed are: STRUCTURE AND PROPERTIES OF MATTER, CHEMICAL REACTIONS, FORCES AND INTERACTIONS, ENERGY AND WAVES and the ELECTROMAGNETIC RADIATION. Throughout the year students will also study ENGINEERING AND EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN as well as the IMPACT OF HUMANS on the world.

Skills emphasized throughout the curriculum are: designing quality experiments, data collection and analysis, use of scientific problem solving and competency in the safe use of laboratory procedures and equipment. Design and construction activities are also incorporated to challenge and help develop problem-solving skills.

### **Social Studies**

Eighth grade social studies focus on two areas; American History and American Government. The American History component is designed to provide the student with a basic appreciation of U.S. History from its beginnings to 1865. Units emphasized include the founding of a new nation, its growth and expansion, developing sectionalism and the Civil War. In addition, the student will gain a fundamental understanding of the U.S. Government structure based on the Constitution, the continuing development of the American political system, and each individual's rights and responsibilities as a positive, contributing citizen.

Both components are designed to build on basic social studies concepts and skills involving charts, graphs, map skills, and information research; as well as developing higher level thinking

skills such as translation, interpretation, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation and cause and effect.

Throughout the year there is on-going emphasis on current events using different media such as the newspaper, news-oriented magazines, assorted videos, and other news-generated resources.

### **Physical Education**

In eighth grade physical education, our units include flag football, fitness testing, ropes course, volleyball, adventure education, badminton and cooperative games. During gym class, we work to create a positive learning experience that capitalizes on each student's natural love of movement. We encourage students of all athletic abilities to learn and play to the best of their ability. This philosophy helps to create a positive attitude about physical activity and sets the stage for a healthy, active life.

### **Health**

The comprehensive Health class is a semester long-alternate day course. It encourages skills for healthy living by preparing students to make healthy, pro-active choices now and in the future. Issues concerning human growth and development are included in the curriculum. Parent/guardian permission is required for this section of the curriculum. Permission forms are available online during registration. All curriculum is available for preview by contacting the school office or the instructor.

## **ELECTIVE CLASSES**

### **Band**

Eighth grade band is a continuation of skills and learning from seventh grade as well as an introduction to more advanced techniques and expectations. As the musical expectations increase in this ensemble, so do the performance opportunities. Students must have consent of teacher and/or prior playing experience to be in this group. Incoming 8th graders may not start band as a beginner in the fall of 8th grade.

Eighth grade band performs several times during the year, and on a few occasions in combination with older musicians from the High School ensembles. Students from this group are invited to perform in the solo and ensemble festival and the Jazz Ensemble as well. They will continue to develop the skills of cooperation, dedication, personal control and responsibility...important skills for a lifetime!

### **Orchestra**

Eighth grade orchestra meets every day. Orchestra students continue to develop intermediate/advanced performance skills including bowing styles, musical phrasing, shifting and playing in higher positions. The music performed by this ensemble will be on a higher level and is preparatory to playing in the high school orchestra. This orchestra gives three to four evening concerts each year. Additionally, students in the 8th grade orchestra are eligible to participate in the Savanna Oaks Solo/Ensemble Festival. Prior string playing experience is required for this class.

## **Instrumental Music for Beginners**

This class is an opportunity for seventh and eighth graders who do not play an instrument to learn a brass, woodwind, or string instrument, or for current music students to learn an additional instrument. The course will cover the basic note-reading, rhythm, tone production and technique necessary for beginners to play in a music ensemble. After completing this course, students will be eligible to enroll in band or orchestra for the following school year. There may be performance opportunities for some or all students who are enrolled in this course.

## **8th Grade Treble Clef Choir**

Students in this choir continue to learn about the mechanics of singing and work on musical literacy in a group setting. Singers learn and review the basics of singing and musical concepts and move beyond to balance and blend while preparing two-, three-, and four-part literature for female voices as well. Students continue to work on the skills of cooperation, dedication and self-discipline necessary for a performing group. In addition to required evening concerts, optional participation in festivals, solo and ensemble contest, and honor choir are also available. All 8th grade **girls** who have a desire to sing are welcome to join this year-round class.

## **7th and 8th Bass Clef Choir**

Students in this choir learn about the mechanics of singing, the nature of the voice change in adolescent males, and work on musical literacy in a group setting while preparing literature written or arranged for two- and three part male voices as well as singing several songs per year as part of a mixed voice choir. Students continue to work on the skills of cooperation, dedication and self-discipline necessary for a performing group. In addition to required evening concerts, optional participation in festivals, solo and ensemble contest, and honor choirs are also available. All 7th and 8th grade **boys** who have a desire to sing are welcome to join this year long class.

## **Spanish 1**

Students focus on listening, speaking, reading, writing and culture in Spanish. We cover topics such as school, leisure activities, family, and food. As students continue developing their vocabulary through these various thematic units, there is more emphasis on the structure and grammar of the Spanish language. Students will also learn about the culture of the countries that speak Spanish, and will become more knowledgeable about the world around us.

After successfully completing the 8th grade course, students will have completed the equivalent of one year of world language at the high school. Note: Students must maintain at a least a C average all four quarters of the school year summative assessments- tests, quizzes and projects. In addition, student must also pass three major common assessments with at least a C and have their Spanish teacher's recommendation to go on to the second level in high school.

Note: While 8th grade students do not receive high school credit for the eighth grade course, students are taught at the same pace and with the same expectations as Spanish 1 at the high school.

## **Spanish Language Arts 1**

This year-long class teaches the principles of language arts in Spanish to native Spanish speakers. Students read, write, speak, and listen to Spanish in an academic setting and create projects, complete homework, and complete summative assessments. The class is conducted in Spanish, and various topics are taught, including identity, health, heritage, geography, diverse

cultures, and education while aligning with the Common Core Language Arts Standards. Focus is on gaining academic vocabulary and grammatical skills in Spanish, as well as improving reading, and speaking, listening and writing in Spanish. All participation and work is performed in Spanish, so a high level of Spanish proficiency is required.

### **SHOULD I TAKE A WORLD LANGUAGE?**

Students and their parents often wonder whether it is a good idea to take Spanish in eighth grade. This information is given to help you make this choice.

A foreign language is not required for high school graduation, but 2-3 years are required to enter some colleges or universities. If a student is college bound, a foreign language may be necessary. A student may start in middle school or choose to wait until high school to begin a foreign language. Both are good choices. Each student should think through what is best for him/her.

### **SEMESTER ELECTIVE CLASSES**

All electives depend on enrollment numbers adequate to run the class. If you chose electives, please select several choices in your order of preference. Course materials fees (between \$15.00-\$20.00) are charged for these electives. Scholarships are available.

### **ART**

#### **2-D Art & Design Technology**

In 2-D Art & Design Technology, students will work in a creative, hands-on environment to explore drawing and painting materials, as well as, digital cameras, scanners, and computers. The students will create unique works of art using: ink, chalk, scratchboard, colored pencil, watercolor paint, acrylic paint, etc. They will also learn about a variety of artists and their particular styles of art-making. Students will explore computer software programs to enhance digital photos and create digital drawings and paintings.

#### **3-D Art & Design**

If you enjoy hands-on projects and building 3-D forms, then this class is for you! In this class, students will build multiple clay projects using their hands, clay tools, and the pottery wheel. Students will also construct sculptures with: wood, wire, papier mache, found objects, and metals. Students will learn about 3-D artists, sculptural styles, and create: carvings, jewelry/metal sculpture, masks, & plaster castings.

### **Should I take an Art & Design Class?**

Art and design classes promote creative thinking and problem solving, and they are a key component of STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts & Mathematics) education. Students use their imaginations and that leads to innovative thinking. These are important skills that are required for future employability in all fields. Research has also shown that art courses improve SAT/ACT scores. Above all, art and design classes are fun, and the students take great pride in their creations.

## **Family and Consumer Education**

### **KFC (Kids, Food and Chicks)**

This is a class that allows for a moderate amount of hands-on activities. One quarter of the class focuses on foods and nutrition. Students will have the opportunity to further develop kitchen management skills by participating in many cooking and baking labs. The second quarter focuses on child development and parenting. Students will care for a baby chick for a week and apply classroom learning to a real-life experience.

### **Follow the Food- Cultural Foods Class (Cooking Our Way to Global Understanding).**

This course is focused on teaching students to cook with the exploration of different cultures and the different food options available. By doing so, students will develop independence and self-sufficiency; to increase awareness of healthy choices and nutrition; to make science and math concepts come alive through real-world applications; and to practice or reinforce the 21st century skills of collaboration, time management, communication, and problem solving. Food is also an obvious way to introduce young people to a variety of countries and cultures, but we will go beyond simple exposure of international dishes at food festivals in order to increase youth's global competencies. There are a variety of ways the students and I can design learning units using cooking as an instructional strategy to develop young people's understanding of people and cultures through their cuisine.

### **Business Wannabees**

This is your opportunity to prepare yourself for your first job. You will do this by working in the school store. Learn how to provide good customer service, operate the cash register, order snack products, prepare foods and much more. While in this class you are responsible for all aspects of running the Treehouse. Increase your technology skills by using an excel spreadsheet to keep track of income and expenses of the store. You will create a business plan for an age appropriate business before you complete this class.

## **Information and Technology Literacy**

### **Advanced Information and Technology Literacy**

In this year's Advanced Information Literacy class, we will be covering new topics in the technology realm such as: 3-D drawing, sculpting, computer animation & printing, cyber-scam awareness, data analysis, website design, and much more. The course was designed to meet the standards described by the International Society for Technology in Education. The students will work on the following goals throughout the course: Creativity and Innovation, Communication and Collaboration, Research and Fluency, Critical Thinking, Digital Citizenship, and Technology Concepts. This is a personalized course enabling students to work at their own pace and choose to focus on higher interest projects. This course will also research various STEM career opportunities and design a project that test scientific principles.

### **Film Production and Editing/Coding, Circuits and Robotics**

This course will promote student creativity and innovation, online and face-to-face collaboration as well as opportunities for problem solving and planning. Learner will model digital citizenship, learn tools for processing information, and master troubleshooting skills for everyday technology operations.



Students will learn a variety of software applications to create various video productions including: public service announcements, infomercials, storytelling/movie trailers, and exposition. Students will alternate weekly projects with coding skills, hands-on circuitry, and robotics allowing students to explore different types of physical applications regarding technology.

## **Physical Activity**

### **The Great Outdoors**

Do you enjoy challenging physical education activities? Then this is the class for you. The class will focus on outdoor activities that may include archery, orienteering, lacrosse, golf, cricket, eclipse ball, and other outdoor adventures.

### **Adapted Physical Education Mentor**

This class is aimed at teaching students to serve as mentors for students with disabilities in a physical education setting. Students will learn and implement strategies to promote life-long fitness and create connections with students to benefit them physically, socially, and emotionally. This class will meet every other day and will focus on basic movement patterns, game play, and leadership/team building activities.

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## **Creative Writing**

### **Finding Your Muse**

A new creative writing course for 8th grade. We will explore short story, journaling, poetry, and story telling. Also, Ipad productions combining writing, visuals and music. Production of a final class 'literary review' where selected works will be published for the school library.

## **STUDENT SUPPORT**

### **School Counselors**

Middle school counselors help students focus on academic, personal/social, and career development in their efforts to achieve success in school and life. In 8th Grade, counselors provide lessons in the classroom throughout the year and are also available to meet with students individually and occasionally in group settings. Classroom lessons typically include: career exploration, drug and alcohol prevention,, community building and responsible decision-making. Individual and group work with students can range from organization, work strategies, and conflict resolution to social, behavioral and emotional concerns. Counselors often collaborate with parents, administrators, teachers, and other student services personnel to facilitate the best possible middle school experience for each child. Parents are encouraged to contact their child's counselor at any time with questions, updates or to discuss anything from friendship concerns to preparing for high school expectations. Families can arrange these conversations with their student's counselor by signing up for an 8th Grade planning conference mid-year in preparation for 9th Grade enrollment.

## **Social Worker**

The primary function of the school social worker is to promote the emotional, social and mental well being and adjustment of students. The school social worker provides direct and indirect services to students, parents and school staff. These may include counseling and family intervention, groups, consultation with staff or parents, liaison with community agencies, classroom instruction, and coordination and implementation of district programs. The social worker role includes advocacy for children and families in the school system and community programs. The school social worker is the liaison for families in transition.

## **School Psychologist**

The school psychologist helps to determine the educational needs of students who are having significant difficulty finding success at school. The psychologist provides direct and indirect services to students, collaborating regularly with school staff and parents/guardians. The school psychologist also conducts assessments of students to help determine special education needs related to learning, behavior, and social/emotional functioning. Other services provided by the psychologist include educational planning, program development, individual or small group intervention to address academic/behavioral needs, liaison with mental health providers in the community, and coordination of school services with other school staff.

## **Learning Resource Coordinator**

The Learning Resource Coordinator (LRC) works to enhance teaching and learning at Savanna Oaks Middle School. In collaboration with teachers, the LRC provides data about, and suggests strategies to meet the needs of learners. The LRC facilitates the administration of district and statewide assessments and provides information to parents and works with parents and students to help students access programs that meet their learning needs

## **Literacy Coach**

The Literacy Coach facilitates progress towards literacy goals at Savanna Oaks Middle School.

The coach supports teachers in their daily work as reading instructors to meet students' unique reading needs. The coach conducts both formal trainings and ongoing job-embedded professional learning that increases teacher ability to meet the needs of students. The coach is responsible for the administration of the Achieve 3000 non-fiction reading program including: testing, data-analysis, daily problem solving, contests and incentives.

## **Special Education**

Savanna Oaks provides instructional services and supports that meet the needs of all of our students. Special education services address the individual needs of any student who meets state eligibility criteria for special education programming. Our cross-categorical services provide educational programs for students with learning, speech, behavioral, physical, health, hearing, visual, developmental and/or cognitive disabilities. Students may receive services on an individual basis, in small groups, and/or in the large group classroom. These services address a diverse range of learning needs including academic, functional, behavioral, prevocational, social-emotional, cognitive, and/or adaptive.

## **Reading**

All Savanna Oaks teachers embed reading instruction and content area reading into their classes using reading strategy instruction and Achieve 3000 articles (Associated Press non-fiction articles). This is done strategically by providing learners with access to text that is both motivating, connected to content, and leveled to provide them with appropriate challenges and high level reasoning and writing expectations.

Reading is the building block of learning. At Savanna Oaks, we offer multiple approaches that support a literacy-rich environment. All students participate in reading enrichment activities during Core and Encore classes. If students require additional help to strengthen their reading skills and or strategies, we consider alternatives to build these skills.

## **Support Platforms**

### **Technology**

Savanna Oaks Middle School has a wide variety of technology used to support teaching and learning. Our school has embraced the idea of putting digital technology learning tools into the hands of students. Our school is one to one where every student has an ipad. Students are allowed to use their own personal electronic device under the supervision of staff. Each classroom is equipped with a data projector, TV, or smartboard to assist in the presentation of curriculum. Many classes are offered in a blended format where content is presented online and face to face. Teachers are also recording tutorials and posting them online so students can continue their learning outside of the school walls and at any convenient time

### **Library Media Center**

The Savanna Oaks LMC supports classroom instruction and recreational reading for students and staff. With over 9,000 books, magazines, audiobooks, and DVDs, the LMC has resources for students of all reading levels. The collection is made up of current, peer reviewed materials that provide readers with the best of young adult publications. The Librarian promotes reading through booktalks, book displays, fun activities and one-on-one reader advisories. Libraries are moving from places to consume the ideas of others to places to create and innovate. The LMC has added a Makerspace. Patrons will be able to engage in a wide range of activities from crafting to coding. Students are encouraged to make use of the LMC website which is linked from the Savanna Oaks webpage. Click on "Library Media Center" to discover links to the online catalog, online resources, authors, books, ebooks, audiobooks, homework and research aides and much more. ([www.verona.k12.wi.us](http://www.verona.k12.wi.us) **Go to - Our Schools - Savanna Oaks Middle School - Library Media Center**)

### **Extra Curricular Activities**

An important part of middle school is the expanded opportunities available outside the school day. Savanna Oaks offers learning, enrichment athletic and service opportunities. There are late busses at 4:30 and 5:30 to provide transportation home. While specific activities vary, below are some of the offerings.

Volleyball	Grades 7, 8, Girls; Fall
Cross Country	Grades 6, 7, 8, Boys & Girls; Fall
Wrestling	Grades 6, 7, 8, Boys & Girls; Fall
Drama Club	Grades 6, 7, 8; Fall - Spring
Student Council	Grades 6, 7, 8; Fall - Spring
Yearbook Staff	Grades 6, 7, 8; Fall – Winter
Ski Club	Grades 6, 7, 8; Winter
Forensics	Grades 6, 7, 8; Winter
Math Meets	Grades 6, 7, 8; Winter/Spring
Boys' Basketball	Grades 7, 8; Nov. & Dec.
Girls' Basketball	Grades 7, 8; January & February
All School Musical	Grades 6, 7, 8; February – May
Science/Discovery Fair	Grades 6, 7, 8; March
Track	Grades 7, 8; Spring

### **After School Ninja Academy:**

Ninja Learning Academy is an opportunity for students for extended learning. Students access technology and other school resources for individual and group projects with the support and assistance of our staff.

### **Programs for English Language Learners**

Students at Savanna Oaks speak many languages. In addition to learning science, math, social studies, language arts, and other academic content, English language learners (ELLs) must also become proficient in English (speaking, listening, reading, and writing). In order to meet students' needs and follow federal and state laws, Savanna Oaks provides the following programs which allow students to learn grade level content and English:

#### **English as a Second Language/English Instruction**

English language arts is taught as part of a daily scheduled class by certified ESL (English as a Second Language) teachers. Topics may include social English vocabulary, English reading and writing, math, science or social studies vocabulary development.

#### **ESL and Bilingual In-class support**

An ESL or Bilingual teacher works in collaboration with the classroom teacher in general ed classes. The teacher works with ELL students and mainstream English-speaking students in small groups to support their learning. Topics may include writing, reading, math, science or social studies vocabulary development.

#### **Assistance of Bilingual Educational Assistants**

Bilingual Educational Assistants work with the students, under supervision of the classroom teacher or ESL/Bilingual teacher to help students learn content/skills (math, science, social studies, etc.). In addition, students may receive limited bilingual assistance in elective classes.

#### **Accommodations made by the Grade Level Teachers**

Grade level teachers modify the way they teach to make the content more understandable. They use additional diagrams, carefully adjust their speech (slower, explain difficult vocabulary), provide more individual help, repeat directions, use visual representations, etc. These accommodations do not change the grade level content students are required to learn.