

SAVANNA OAKS MIDDLE SCHOOL

Website: soms.verona.k12.wi.us



CURRICULUM HANDBOOK

SIXTH GRADE

2018 – 2019

Student Name:



February, 2018

Dear Savanna Oaks Families,

This Curriculum Handbook describes the sequence of classes and choices each learner may make as he or she navigates 6th, 7th, 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.

SIXTH GRADE CLASSES

CORE Classes

Language Arts
Math
Science
Social Studies
Read to Succeed (R2S)

ENCORE/EXPLORATORY CLASSES

- Physical Education for all students
- Exploratory Classes for all students:
 - Art
 - Information and Technology Literacy
 - Family and Consumer Education
 - Exploring World Languages
- Music Options:
 - Band
 - Orchestra
 - Choir
 - General Music

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS – SIXTH GRADE

REQUIRED CLASSES

Language Arts

The sixth grade language arts curriculum emphasizes writing with lessons and practice in the writing process, particularly paragraph structure, narrative, and informational writing. Students read and discuss story elements such as characters, setting and plot as they apply to different pieces of literature. Sixth graders focus on vocabulary building, comprehension strategies, story elements, and literary devices. Students are introduced to research resources, note-taking strategies, and ways to organize information. Students practice oral communication skills in the form of presentations and discussions.

Math

The 6th grade math curriculum is built off of the Common Core Mathematics Standards. The topics covered are Number Systems, Geometry, Ratios and Proportions, Expressions and Equations, and Statistics and Probability. Ongoing work to reach mastery in basic math skills (addition, subtraction, multiplication and division) with rational numbers is required of all sixth grade students. Students are expected to practice and demonstrate the 8 Math Practices (for example, attend to precision).

Students will be offered opportunities to explore and potentially master the 7th and 8th grade Common Core Math Standards, should they choose to do so.

Science

The sixth grade curriculum incorporates a hands-on approach to learning that allows students to develop their skills of inquiry and gain confidence in dealing with the open-endedness of the scientific method. Group and individual lab work, teacher demonstrations, problem-solving activities, and research support the learning of astronomy, plate tectonics, meteorology, and ecology concepts. Students will demonstrate the knowledge gained through a variety of formats including authentic assessments, technology-based assessments, and formal testing.

Social Studies

Sixth grade social studies is focused on the Western Hemisphere, specifically Canada and Latin America. Students learn about the five themes of geography and apply them to map skills and to the study of specific regions. More specifically, students study the geography, culture, history and economy of various regions of the Western Hemisphere using various resources including technology. Another focus is the ancient civilizations of Latin America, which include the Mayas, Aztecs, and Incas. By means of research and discussion, students come to recognize interdependence as a key in their study of people, cultures, the land, history and economy of world regions.

Physical Education

In sixth grade physical education, units include jogging and fitness, fitness testing, track and field, team building, and cooperative games. 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 set the stage for a healthy, active life.

ENCORE/EXPLORATORY CLASSES

Each sixth grader takes Art, Information and Technology Literacy, Family and Consumer Education, and Exploring World Languages for a nine-week period. A description of each class is listed below.

Art

Art in sixth grade focuses on the understanding of art through hands-on learning experiences. This course is the foundation for the sequential learning process in the middle school art program. The areas of focus are: contour line drawing, introduction to composition, value drawing (working with light & shadow), color theory, painting skills, and clay sculpting techniques. Art history is explored through the study of various artists and cultures. In addition, students learn how to analyze and interpret visual images.

Information and Technology Literacy

In this year's Information Technology class, we will be covering new topics in the technology realm including: robotics, computer animation, 3D drawing and printing, web 2.0 utilization, cyberbullying, online plagiarism, 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.

Family and Consumer Education

In sixth grade Family and Consumer Education, students explore a number of areas related to the family and the individual. These areas are sewing, independent living skills, personal financial literacy, bullying prevention, and human growth and development.

Exploring World Languages

Exploring World Languages acquaints students with three languages: Spanish, French and German. Students are introduced to the process of learning languages, comparison of language structures and culture.

In Spanish and French, students will be introduced to culture, common phrases, numbers, colors, greetings, months, days, asking for information, the weather, and basic nouns. German: Students learn to recognize, understand and speak basic phrases, colors and numbers.

Special Projects:

- **French:** Simulated flight to Paris using Smart board and Google earth. Food will be served and as we fly around Paris, students will give information on the 3D models of famous Paris Landmarks.
- **Spanish:** Research project on Cuba and its complex and colorful relationship to the U.S. We will touch on the Cuban missile crisis leading to a general trade embargo, and the economic effects thereafter. In general, we will explore the history, music, food, schools and art of Cuba.

MUSIC CLASSES

All sixth graders are involved in **at least one** of the music programs which include: Band, Orchestra, Choir, or General Music. Participation in a performance class (band, choir, or orchestra) is a one year commitment.

Band

Sixth grade band is the introduction to wind and percussion instruments. The basic skills of instrument position and playing posture, rhythm understanding and note reading are taught and reinforced. In addition, personal skills of responsibility, self-discipline and cooperation are improved. The sixth grade band performs several times in the year, demonstrating solo and small ensemble music, as well as performing as a full band. No previous experience is required for this class, with the exception of students wishing to play bells, and then move into percussion. They really should have had at least a year of piano experience to make this a successful experience for them. Students are expected to practice outside of class. Instruments that are offered in this class are flute, oboe, bassoon, clarinet, alto sax, trumpet, french horn, trombone, euphonium, tuba and bells.

Orchestra

Sixth grade orchestra is a class for beginning string players. Many students will have started playing during the VASD summer program for beginning strings. Orchestra meets every day and focuses on solidifying basic string playing skills such as basic posture and position, tone production, music literacy, and general musicianship. Students will complete a string method book and will begin to learn how to play together as a music ensemble. The orchestra has three to four evening performances during the school year. No prior experience is required to participate in sixth grade orchestra.

Choir

Sixth grade choir is an introduction to singing and musical literacy in a group setting. Singers are taught the use of their vocal instrument through correct posture, breathing, and exercises in tone production. Other concepts about music (form, style, sight singing, etc.) are taught throughout every rehearsal. In addition to all of the elements of musical literacy, students will focus on the skills of cooperative learning and self-discipline. Students participate in several evening concerts throughout the year. A positive attitude toward music and openness to trying new things is key to success in choir!

General Music

General Music is offered to those students who do not wish to take a performance class of Band, Orchestra, or Choir. The class concentrates on world music, guitar, the basics of music, music genres and piano.

STUDENT SUPPORT

We believe strongly in providing additional resources beyond the classroom to facilitate the learning of our students.

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. Counselors work with all students in classroom settings and are also available to meet with students individually and occasionally in group settings. Classroom lessons vary by grade level and include: drug and alcohol prevention, career exploration, 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 concerns.

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. When students require additional help to strengthen their reading skills and or strategies, we consider small group or individualized interventions/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 **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; November & December
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 may 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

