



2024-2025  
ALTOONA MIDDLE SCHOOL

6TH GRADE

# COURSE DESCRIPTION HANDBOOK

ALL COURSES, INCLUDING CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION COURSES, ARE AVAILABLE WITHOUT DISCRIMINATION BASED ON RACE, COLOR, RELIGION, NATIONAL ORIGIN, ANCESTRY, CREED, PREGNANCY, MARITAL STATUS, PARENTAL STATUS, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, SEX (INCLUDING TRANSGENDER STATUS, CHANGE OF SEX OR GENDER IDENTITY), OR PHYSICAL, MENTAL, EMOTIONAL, OR LEARNING DISABILITY, ANY OTHER CHARACTERISTIC PROTECTED BY LAW ("PROTECTED CLASSES") IN ANY OF ITS STUDENT PROGRAMS, ACTIVITIES, AND EMPLOYMENT.

# *Altoona Middle School*

## **6<sup>th</sup> Grade Course Description Handbook**

All courses, including Career and Technical Education courses, are available without discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital status, parental status, sexual orientation, sex (including transgender status, change of sex or gender identity), or physical, mental, emotional, or learning disability, any other characteristic protected by law ("protected classes") in any of its student programs, activities, and employment.

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### *Required Courses*

#### **Art Around the World**

Students will have a first-class seat as they travel and study different countries to create art based on inspirational facets around the world. Students will learn about & appreciate the similarities & differences in people, traditions & regions around the globe while making cool multicultural creations as they learn more about the world around them.

#### **Beginning Band**

Beginning Band is the first opportunity to learn and play one of the instruments of the concert band. Students will try out different instruments and, with parent and teacher guidance, determine which instrument to play. The first year of instruction will have a strong emphasis on music fundamentals and beginning technical skills. Because this is a performance-based class, students will also need to practice outside of the school day and attend evening concerts. Parents and students will be responsible for the financial obligations of instrument upkeep, such as valve oil, reeds, and methods books.

#### **Choir**

We've all heard talented singers, but did you know much of their talent boils down to hard work and an understanding of how the voice works? In choir, students will learn how to sing with healthy technique to be their very best! The class will work together to master reading music and understanding the different elements of music. Students will learn unison and two-part (or more!) songs with the class, as well as learn songs as solos or small groups. Two evening performances are required for this course.

#### **English Language Arts**

English Language Arts (ELA) encompasses the standards of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Language arts skills are acquired through a variety of experiences. Targeted areas of instruction involve developing comprehension reading strategies, gathering, organizing and interpreting information from multiple sources/multiple mediums, researching and citing specific textual evidence, and presenting using written and oral communication. Students continue to develop a level of literacy that enables them to become informed and productive in all areas of the curriculum.

## *Required Courses, cont.*

### **Information Processing**

This course will help prepare students to communicate professionally and use a variety of computer programs to prepare them for high school and beyond. Building on their keyboarding skills from fifth grade, students will explore a variety of Google and Microsoft applications to increase their computer literacy. Students will also be introduced to Xello, a career readiness program, where they will begin to investigate their educational and career pathways to help guide their future elective choices.

### **Math**

Math 6 encompasses the Common Core Standards of ratios and proportional relationships, the number system (fractions and decimals), expressions and equations (algebra), geometry and statistics and probability. We focus on relating math concepts to real-world applications.

### **Physical Education**

Students will be introduced to a variety of fitness based warm-ups, followed by the specific unit activities and skill work. The following units will be taught throughout the year if time permits; net games, (volleyball, tennis, badminton) invasion games, (basketball, lacrosse, team handball floor hockey, soccer), fitness, (fitness testing, partner fitness), outdoor recreation, (Frisbee golf, winter games, ultimate, track & field), and team building. Students will be expected to work well in a team/partner setting as well as perform the necessary individual and group skill work to be successful in the units.

### **PIE (Prevention/Intervention/Enrichment)**

This non-graded course provides students an opportunity for additional instruction in the areas of math and ELA helping meet their needs. This course also provides an array of enrichment and school-community activities. Students are selected for the intervention or enrichment options based on how their teachers feel they can best be supported. These courses change throughout the year. Elective courses are assigned randomly, giving students various experiences.

### **Science**

This course is based on the Wisconsin State Standards and is designed to help students think like a scientist. Students will have opportunities to develop questions, create models, collect, analyze, and evaluate data. Topics include Living Systems (the energy cycle, adaptations, and limiting factors), Weather and Climate (air pressure, air masses, wind, weather fronts, and atmosphere) and Earth Materials (rock cycle and plate tectonics).

### **Scratching the Surface!**

Students will develop painting skills and color theory. Along with multiple 3-Dimensional skills in Ceramics and Plaster of Paris. Hold on to your shoes because it's going to go by fast.

### **Social Studies**

This course will explore ancient civilizations and uncover the secrets of the human experience through geography, economics, history, art and culture. In social studies we connect the past to the present in an inquiry based program allowing students to use mind-on, hands-on, and individual strengths to gain understanding of complex systems.

### **Spanish**

¡Bienvenidos a español! Welcome to Spanish! In 6th grade Spanish the essential question is "How can I describe the environment in the world in Spanish?" Students will learn how to describe the environment by incorporating numbers, colors, animals, and more! Students will also explore the environment through learning about Colombian culture- get ready for music, movies, games, and so much fun!

### **Tech Ed A:**

All students will become competent at sending simple jobs to the laser engraver and 3D printer, as well as learning the software needed to prepare these jobs for a cohesive project. Students will also tackle reading a ruler to the nearest sixteenth of an inch while putting those skills to work while troubleshooting a marble run with his/her team.

### **Tech Ed B:**

We will practice our measurement skills by creating a project to race across the floor. Through the use of Lego Mindstorms, we will apply simple machine properties. We will also use our creative skills to create a picture frame/magnet with the laser engraver.

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## Altoona Middle School *Co-Curriculars*

We strongly advocate that fostering socially active and responsible students is intertwined with engaging in school-sponsored activities. Participation offers students the chance to acquire valuable skills, understand the significance of teamwork, sportsmanship, and fair play, and recognize that a positive attitude, dedication, and hard work are crucial for achieving success in life.

### *Clubs & Activities*

**Art Club** is an activity where students gather to explore various artistic mediums and techniques. Through guided sessions and collaborative projects, members have the opportunity to express their creativity, develop their skills, and foster a deeper appreciation for the visual arts.

**Drama Club** is a student organization focused on exploring and celebrating the art of theater through rehearsals, performances, and workshops. The club provides a supportive environment for students to express themselves, build confidence, and foster a passion for the performing arts.

**Fitness Club** is a program designed to promote physical, mental, and emotional wellness among students through exercise and strength training. Participants engage in regular sessions focusing on fitness activities, weightlifting, and team-building exercises, fostering a supportive community and healthy lifestyle habits.

**Forensics** is an activity focused on developing students' public speaking and communication skills. Participants typically compete in speech events such as persuasive speaking and storytelling, gaining confidence and proficiency in presenting in front of an audience.

**Fuel Up to Play** Participation in Fuel Up to Play offers students various leadership and engagement opportunities. By managing activities like the Snack Shack, students cultivate essential entrepreneurial and teamwork abilities while advocating for healthy eating habits and physical fitness within their school community.

## *Clubs & Activities, cont.*

**In Training (Show Choir)** "In Training" is a program where students engage in singing and dancing to musical selections. Through dedicated rehearsals and performances, participants refine their vocal skills, enhance stage presence, and cultivate teamwork while delighting audiences with their musical expression.

**Mathcounts** is a competitive mathematics program designed for middle school students. Participants engage in individual and team problem-solving challenges, fostering critical thinking and mathematical skills in a supportive and collaborative environment.

**Racquet Club** The club provides an opportunity for students to improve their skills, stay physically active, and socialize with peers who share an interest in racquet sports such as badminton, pickleball and tennis.

**S.A.F.E. (Students Advocating For Excellence)** is a student-led organization dedicated to promoting positive values, behaviors, and academic excellence within the school community. Members work together to organize events, workshops, and campaigns that focus on issues such as mental health awareness, diversity and inclusion.

### **Student Council**

Consisting of student representatives who advocate for their peers within the school community, they strive to cultivate a positive school environment, encourage student participation, and spearhead projects benefiting the entire student body through their leadership roles.

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## **Altoona Middle School** *Athletics*

### *6th Grade Athletics*

In 6th Grade Athletics, students can participate in coed cross country, girls tennis, and boys soccer during the fall season, which runs from September 3rd to October 16th. Coed wrestling is available during the winter season, starting on January 2nd and ending on February 28th. In the spring, students have the chance to join girls soccer and boys tennis from March 31st to May 16th. It's important to note that 6th grade students participate in these sports alongside 7th and 8th grade students.

# MIDDLE SCHOOL COURSE PLANNING GUIDE

Name of Child \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_

## Choose one of the following music electives:

\_\_\_\_\_ 6th Grade Band

\_\_\_\_\_ 6th Grade Choir

## All 6th grade students will have the following Specials for 6 weeks each:

- ✓ Art Around the World
- ✓ Information Processing
- ✓ Tech Ed A
- ✓ Tech Ed B
- ✓ Scratching the Surface (Art)
- ✓ Spanish

## Physical education and the music electives meet on alternate days of the week throughout the entire school year.

- ✓ Physical Education
- ✓ Music Elective