

Wythe County Public Schools

Middle School Handbook

This Handbook, designed and written for use by Wythe County Middle School students, parents, staff, and community, contains information concerning our beliefs, policy, programs, requirements, and services. This information has been prepared to assist each student as he or she moves from elementary to middle school and then on to high school. It is also intended to educate parents about the various aspects of our middle school program and provide them early information that is critical as their child moves into the high school. This information should also serve as a handy reference for our staff and community about the middle schools.

Middle School Contact Information

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The Middle School Philosophy

The goal for Wythe County Middle Schools is to provide educational opportunities that will enable early adolescents to reach their potential through the acquisition of academic, life, and social skills in a safe learning environment. We recognize and understand that every middle school student is a unique individual experiencing physical and psychological changes. To accomplish this goal, the school encourages each student to achieve to his/her potential, to develop a positive self-image, to learn to function responsibly in a democratic society, and to prepare for the impact of a rapidly changing world.

Home, school, and community play a vital part in each student's life. Communication and cooperation must be established and maintained to help create a positive environment and to ensure the best education.

Students are encouraged to examine different viewpoints, survey occupational choices, explore goals for the future, understand and appreciate individuals different from themselves, and respect the contributions of others.

Attendance Expectations and Requirements

There is a strong relationship between attendance and academic progress. Poor attendance may impact student grades and academic progress. Our expectations are that students will be in attendance at school every day except in the case of sickness or other emergency situations. In the event that a student must be absent, we ask that the parent/guardian notify the school as early as possible after 8:00 a.m. so that this absence will be verified. Parents and students are asked to review the current Wythe County Public Schools attendance policies and procedures. This policy can be found in the **Wythe County Public Schools Student Handbook** and in the **Wythe County Public Schools Policy Manual**. Questions concerning this policy can be directed to the appropriate school principal.

Guidance and Counseling Program

The counseling programs in our middle schools are available to help students, parents, and teachers develop positive learning experiences. Counseling is available to all students in the areas of academic guidance, career guidance, and personal/social counseling. The program consists of a variety of services and activities, including individual and group counseling, parent and teacher consultation, group guidance, exploration of career choices, assistance with course selections, information services, referral assistance to other programs and services in the community, and student testing.

The school counselor is responsible for developing, scheduling, and evaluating services of the program, and is assisted by the principal. The primary service of the school counselor is to provide direct assistance to students in the school.

Guidance counselors also provide classroom guidance in the areas of career education, drug awareness, and personal and social skills that include decision-making and conflict resolution.

Standards of Learning Assessment

Each student in the middle school shall take all applicable Standards of Learning (SOL) and SOL end-of-course tests following course instruction. The SOL tests to be administered are the following:

SOL Test

- Reading - Grades 6, 7, & 8
- Writing - Grade 8
- Mathematics - Grades 6, 7, & 8 (including students in Algebra I)
- Science - Grade 8 (cumulative for Science 6-8)
- Civics & Economics - Grade 7

SOL Project Based Assessment

- United States History from 1877 to Present in Grade 6
- Science 6 & 7
- Social Studies 8 / Global Studies

SOL End-of-Course Tests

- Algebra I

Wythe County Grading System for Middle School Students

Grade	Descriptor	Numeric Average
A	Excellent	94-100
B	Very Good	86-93
C	Satisfactory	78-85
D	Poor/Minimally Acceptable	70-77
F	Failure	Below 70
I	Incomplete	

Honor Roll

Honor roll will be announced by each middle school at the end of every nine weeks. A list of those students earning honor roll recognition will be posted at the school and provided to the *Wytheville Enterprise* for publication. Requirements for honor roll recognition are as follows:

- **First Honor Roll:** all grades of “A”
- **Second Honor Roll:** all grades of “A” or “B”

Grade Classification and Promotion/Retention Policy

Middle School Students are classified in grades according to the successful completion of requirements from the previous grade according to the table below.

Grade Classification	Requirement
6 th	Promotion from the 5 th grade
7 th	Passing grade earned in 3 out of 4 core area classes in 6 th grade is recommended
8 th	Passing grade earned in 3 out of 4 core area classes in 7 th grade is recommended

STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math) Exploratories

The STEAM Exploratories are developed to provide 6th and 7th grade students opportunities to explore different areas related to real world problem solving. STEAM is an interdisciplinary and applied approach that is paired with hands-on and problem based learning. These skills are intertwined in real world careers and address how students learn most effectively.

6th Grade Curriculum

Sixth grade schedules are a mix of block (90 minute) and singleton (45 minute) classes. Sixth grade classes consist of the following:

Language Arts - Reading, writing, grammar/usage, and spelling. Students advance into higher-level grammar skills, use of research materials, and higher reading skills.

Math 6 - Students build on concrete reasoning experiences learned in elementary as well as construct a more advanced understanding of mathematics.

Science 6 - Students continue to explore data analysis and experimentation while focusing on concepts of science including energy transformations, the solar system, and the earth's systems.

Social Studies 6 - Students will focus on United States History from 1865 to the present.

All sixth graders will complete STEAM Exploratory classes and physical education, and may choose to participate in band or choir as well. Sixth grade students will also be offered intervention, remediation, and enrichment when necessary.

7th Grade Curriculum

Seventh grade schedules are a mix of block (90 minute) and singleton (45 minute) classes. Seventh grade classes consist of the following:

- Civics & Economics – Students study citizenship in the United States and the role of our national government and in the lives of the individual.
- Life Science – Students learn science process skills, use the scientific method, and study living organisms. Health topics geared toward the adolescent are also covered in science class.
- Math 7 - Math 7 continues to build on basic math skills while developing deep mathematical understandings required for success in abstract learning experiences. These skills are important to a student's success in Pre-Algebra.
- Pre-Algebra - Pre-Algebra contains both content that reviews or extends concepts and skills learned in previous grades and new content that prepares students for the more abstract concepts in Algebra I. Placement in Pre-Algebra will be determined by sixth grade math grades (A or B average), Math 6 SOL performance (a score of 475+), and teacher recommendation. It is imperative that students have the necessary math skills to be placed in this class. New concepts include solving multi-step equations, graphing linear equations, applying transformations to geometric figures, and using matrices to organize and interpret data.
- Language Arts – Reading, writing, grammar/usage, and spelling. Students advance into higher-level grammar skills, use of research materials, and higher reading skills through novel studies.

All seventh graders will complete STEAM Exploratory classes and physical education, and may choose to participate in band or choir as well. Seventh grade students will also be offered intervention, remediation, and enrichment when necessary.

Eighth Grade Curriculum

Eighth grade schedules are a mix of block (90 minute) and singleton (45 minute) classes. Eighth grade classes consist of the following:

Eighth Grade Required Subjects (5):

- English 8 or Advanced English 8
- Pre-Algebra or Algebra I
- Global Studies 8
- Physical Science
- Health and Physical Education

Students may choose Eighth Grade Exploratories or Electives

Eighth Grade Exploratories (9 week rotations)

- Agriculture
- Family and Consumer Science
- Art
- Career Study and Development

Electives (high school credit)

- Band
- Chorus
- French I

English 8

The eighth grade students will learn and apply interviewing techniques. The student will plan, draft, revise, and edit writing, with emphasis on narratives, exposition, and persuasion. Students will apply reading and writing skills in all subjects, such as communicating results of scientific experiments, reading and describing the characteristics and contributions of early civilizations. The student will become a skillful interpreter of the persuasive strategies used in mass media. The student will continue to develop an appreciation for literature through a study of literary elements contained in classic works as well as contemporary selections. The student will describe themes or inferred main ideas, and interpret cause-effect relationships from a variety of literary selections.

Accelerated English 8 *Prerequisite: Passed 6th and 7th grade SOL tests (one advanced score), have an A/B average in English 7, and a teacher recommendation*

In addition to the traditional English 8 curriculum, students will be required to expand their reading and writing skills and become more proficient critical thinkers. They will be expected to use the writing process and will publish writing in various forms. Oral presentations are emphasized in this course to help students become more confident and capable public speakers. Additional reading requirements in various genres are required. Students will use research techniques to develop their reading, writing, and thinking skills.

Pre-Algebra

Pre-Algebra contains both content that reviews or extends concepts and skills learned in previous grades and new content that prepares students for the more abstract concepts in algebra. New concepts include solving multi-step equations, graphing linear equations, applying transformations to geometric figures, and using matrices to organize and interpret data. While learning mathematics, students will be actively engaged, using concrete materials and appropriate technologies such as fraction calculators, computers, spreadsheets, laser discs, and videos. Students will also identify real-life applications of the mathematical principles that can be applied to science and other disciplines they are studying.

Algebra I Credit: 1

This course includes types of numbers, algebraic vocabulary, properties and operations of numbers, simplifying expressions, solving equations and inequalities, and graphing. Finding and using prime factors, square roots, repeating decimals, the use of polynomials, rational expressions and radicals are also part of this course. Mastery of graphing, solving equations with two variables, and solving quadratics with the use of a graphic calculator is required. **Requires an SOL End-of-Course assessment (test) for a high school graduation credit.**

Global Studies:

The focus of this course is the study of the world's people, places, and environments with historical emphasis on Asia, Latin America, Africa, and the Middle East. The knowledge, skills, and perspectives of the course are centered on the world's population and cultural characteristics, its countries and regions, landforms and climates, natural resources and natural hazards, economic and political systems, and migration and settlement patterns. Spatial concepts of geography will be linked to chronological concepts of history to set a framework for studying human interactions. The course will emphasize how people in various cultures influence and are influenced by their physical and

Physical Science 8

The purpose of physical science is to provide students with an environment in which to gain a greater understanding of the nature of matter and energy through scientific investigation. The major areas to be covered will include the scientific method, periodic table, heat, light, sound, electricity, motion, atomic structure, and physical changes. There is considerable emphasis placed on technology, research, and practical problem solving.

Health and Physical Education 8

Eighth grade health and physical education concentrates 60% of class time to physical education and 40% to health education. Physical education will place an emphasis on personal fitness and game skills. Social skills will be monitored in a competitive setting. Health will place an emphasis on health-risk behaviors and investigate ways to develop a health community.

Intermediate Band Credit: 1 *No prerequisite*

This course emphasized basic musical skills and their use in the performance of band music. Students also learn how to march and use the marching skills for both field shows and parades. Competition in concert and marching band may be stressed for the musical growth of the organization. Public performance is an integral part of the band program and out-of-school activities may be required of participants.

Intermediate Chorus Credit: 1 *No prerequisite*

Vocal techniques, reading musical notation, voice production, music performance, and diction are stressed. Choirs may perform for public functions, and out-of-school activities may be required of participants. Students are placed in chorus through audition.

French I Credit: 1 *Prerequisite: B in English 7 and a teacher recommendation*

French is a course that offers instruction in the customs, geography, and language of France. Emphasis is placed on the basic communication skills of speaking, reading, writing, and listening. Students use everyday vocabulary for conversational practice. **Basic grammar is emphasized and a strong background in English grammar is recommended.**

Academic and Career Plans of Study

Middle school students will have opportunities to explore, study, and research careers. Students will use Career Clusters to help focus on their interests. Each middle school student will experience career exploratories, career plan development, career investigation class as well as many other opportunities to examine career interests. Below is a link to investigate the career clusters.

[Virginia Department of Education Career Clusters Link](#)

Other Information

Gifted and Talented: Gifted and Talented instruction will be provided in each middle school. The Gifted and Talented Coach will work in conjunction with the classroom teachers to provide enriched academic opportunities.

Olweus Bullying Prevention Program: All students will participate in the Olweus program throughout the year. The goal of the program is to reduce and prevent bullying problems and improve peer relations at school.

Middle School Clubs: All students will have the opportunity to participate in a middle school club. Club day organization may vary between the three schools.

Middle School Athletics – Philosophy

The purpose of middle school athletics is to promote sportsmanship and fair play while enabling our student athletes to gain experience in selected sports. Middle school athletics play a vital role in the total educational program when they are effectively planned, organized, administered, supervised, and evaluated. Through school athletics, many of the interests and needs of young people can be served. The Wythe County Public Schools Middle School Athletics Program will sponsor the following sports: football, baseball, softball, soccer, volleyball, cheerleading, boys' and girls' basketball, boys' and girls' track, cross country, wrestling, and golf. Student participation determines if a team makes.

Middle school students who plan to participate in any school sponsored athletic program must meet the following academic requirements to be eligible:

- Eligibility: students are eligible to participate if they have earned 5 eligibility credits (block classes count as 2 credits, singleton classes count as 1 credit)
- Sixth grade students are automatically eligible to participate in volleyball, cross country, golf, swim, and wrestling during the first semester. To participate in second semester athletics (the remainder of wrestling/swim and track), students' first semester grades must qualify for eligibility.
- Seventh and Eighth grade students must have earned eligibility from the previous year end grades to participate in the first semester of the current year. To participate in the second semester, eligibility is based on the previous semester's grades.
- Winter sport eligibility will be checked at the beginning of the sport and at the end of the first semester (basketball, wrestling, swim).

All students **must have** a VHSL Physical and Concussion Form turned in **prior** to tryouts or participation in any middle school sport..

Team membership is both an honor and a responsibility. Proper conduct, as outlined in the Wythe County Student Code of Conduct, is expected at all times, both on and off the field of play. We pride ourselves on good sportsmanship and displaying the highest level of conduct.

Middle School Athletics – Programs

The following is a listing of guidelines employed for the administration of the middle school athletic programs in the Wythe County Public Schools. Offerings may vary between schools.

Football (Fall)

- The team will consist of 7th and 8th grade students
- There will be no cuts
- If teams have a large number of 7th grade students, some 7th grade scrimmages may be scheduled
- There will be a limit of 10 games per season

Volleyball (Fall)

- The team will consist of 6th, 7th and 8th grade students
- There will be a recommended maximum of 15 players per team
- There may be cuts
- There will be a limit of 22 games per season (including tournament games)

Cross Country (Fall)

- The team will consist of 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students
- There will be no cuts
- Cross Country is organized through the high schools

Golf (Fall)

- The team may consist of 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students
- There may be cuts

Wrestling (Winter)

- The team may consist of 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students
- There will be no cuts

Cheerleading (Fall and Winter)

- There will be a separate fall and winter squad with separate tryouts
- Both squads will consist of 7th and 8th grade students
- There will be a recommended maximum of 10 members per squad
- Tryouts will be held in the spring / there may be cuts


Basketball (Winter)

- Both the boys' and girls' teams will consist of 7th and 8th grade students
- There will be a recommended maximum of 15 players per team
- There may be cuts
- There will be a limit of 22 games per season (including tournament games)

Track (Spring)

- Both the boys' and girls' teams will consist of 6th, 7th and 8th grade students


- There will not be cuts

Baseball (Spring) 

- The team will consist of 7th and 8th grade students
- There will be a maximum of 15 players per team
- There may be cuts
- There will be a limit of 22 games per season (including tournament games)

Softball (Spring) 

- The team will consist of 7th and 8th grade students
- There will be a recommended maximum of 15 players per team
- There may be cuts
- There will be a limit of 22 games per season (including tournament games)

Soccer (Spring) 

- The team will consist of 7th and 8th grade students
- There will be a maximum of 15-20 players per team
- There may be cuts

Diploma Types and Requirements

Profile of a Virginia Graduate

A student meeting the Profile of a Virginia Graduate has achieved the Commonwealth's high academic standards and graduates with workplace skills, a sense of community and civic responsibility and a career plan aligned with his or her interests and experiences.

There are different types of diplomas and certificates that a student may receive upon graduation from high school. Below are the requirements for Advanced and Standard Diplomas.

Wythe County Public High Schools offers the opportunity for students to earn 8 credits per year.

Sample 9th grade schedule for Standard Diploma:

Algebra I or Geometry, Earth Science, English 9, Health and P.E., World History I, Band, 2 Electives

Sample 9th grade schedule for Advanced Diploma:

Algebra I or Geometry, Earth Science, English 9, Health and P.E., World History I, Spanish I, Band, 1 Elective

Academic Program of Studies (Standard Diploma)

Subject Area	Standard Credits	Verified Credits
English	4	2
Mathematics	3	1
Laboratory Science	3	1
History and Social Sciences	3	1

Subject Area	Standard Credits	Verified Credits
Health and P.E.	2	0
World Language, Fine Arts or C.T.E.	2	0
Economics & Personal Finance	1	0
Electives	4	0
Student Selected Test	0	0
Total Credits	22	5

**Academic Program of Studies
(Advanced Studies Diploma)**

Subject Area	Standard Credits	Verified Credits
English	4	2
Mathematics	4	1
Laboratory Science	4	1
History and Social Sciences	4	1
Health and P.E.	2	0
World Language	3	0
Fine Arts or C.T.E.	1	0
Economics & Personal Finance	1	0
Electives	3	0
Total Credits	26	5

Non-Discrimination Notice

The Wythe County School Board is committed to a policy of non-discrimination with regard to race, color, sex, age, religion, disability, national origin, gender, gender identity, ethnicity, ancestry, marital, or parental status, or in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.

Director of Human Resources 1570 West Reservoir Street Wytheville, VA 24382 (276) 228-5411	School Social Worker 1570 West Reservoir Street Wytheville, VA 24382 (276) 228-5411	Executive Director of Educational Services 1570 West Reservoir Street Wytheville, VA 24382 (276) 228-5411
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For further information on notice of non-discrimination, visit [US Department of Education: Office of Civil Rights](https://www.ed.gov/office-of-civil-rights) for the address and phone number of the office that serves your area, or call 1-800-421-3481.