

Description of Exploratory Courses

Foreign Language Exploratory 7 – FLEX (semester course)

The purpose of this course is to explore the foundations of our foreign language program with sampling of multiple languages. Students will discover the speaking and writing interactive process in which students learn to communicate with another foreign language speaker. Listening and reading develops students' comprehension of foreign language. Additionally, students speak and write in a presentation to focus on organization of thoughts and awareness of audience in delivering information.

Art 7 (semester course)

The standards for grade seven continue to emphasize exploration, analysis, and investigation of the creative process. Students will develop technical skills that empower them to communicate ideas visually, with the focus on realistic representations of their environment. Students will acquire knowledge that permits them to identify art styles and the periods to which those styles belong. In addition, students will become aware of a variety of art careers that they may consider. They will develop inquiry skills and vocabulary as they explore the meaning of works of art, using analysis of subject matter, themes, and symbols. Students will develop an increased awareness of the nature of art and of their relationship to it as they explore the meaning and value of works of art.

General Music 7 (semester course)

Course availability based on requests and staffing.

The middle school general music standards involve students in a higher level of music concepts and the further development of music skills through singing, playing instruments, moving, and listening. The standards encourage the reading of music notation and the assimilation of previous music study toward understanding the mechanics of a music score. Students will explore the creative and expressive aspects of music through composing and arranging. Evaluation of music performances will allow students opportunities to apply music knowledge and experiences to new situations.

Technological Systems 7 (semester course)

This course provides students with hands-on activities in using a systems approach to solve problems and understand technology. Working in teams or groups, students combine resources and rotate through a number of activities and simulations using hands-on instructional modules. Activities and simulations include topics such as

Computer Aided Drafting; Computer Graphics and Animation; Digital Music; Energy and Power; Environment and Ecology; Flight Technology; Health and Fitness; Laser Technology; Pneumatics; Research and Development; Robotics; and Structural Engineering. Students also explore occupational areas and educational programs for technology-oriented careers

Family and Consumer Sciences 7 (semester course)

This course provides a foundation for managing individual, family, work, and community roles and responsibilities. Students work through a variety of hands-on instructional modules entitled, “Growing Up Ready.” The modules focus on topics and careers such as the Global Family, Your Inner Self, Friends Forever, Spatial Planning, Caregiving, Banking, Scientific Body, Biological Science, Math in the Kitchen, Textile Innovations, Workplace Know-How, and Apparel Manufacturing. Students learn how to maintain their living and personal environments and to use nutrition and wellness practices. Time is also provided for developing early childhood educational concepts and leadership skills.

Keyboarding 7 (semester course)

This course is designed to enhance touch skills for entering alphabetic, numeric, and symbol information taught in Introduction to Keyboarding. Students compose and produce advanced personal, educational, and professional documents. *Suffolk Public Schools require a minimum of one semester of keyboarding for graduation. Typically, students are enrolled in the semester keyboarding course in middle school. Students who earn a grade of “C” or higher in this course will satisfy this graduation requirement and are eligible to enroll in advanced business courses in high school.*

Computer Solutions (semester course)

Pre-requisite: Keyboarding 7/8

This course will engage students in using the computer as a problem-solving tool to complete a variety of projects independently and in groups; using word processing, database, and spreadsheet software; computer maintenance; solving ethical and security problems relating to computers; and participating in co-curricular activities. Students will participate in team-building activities that include both academic standards and business competencies. Basic touch keyboarding instruction is reviewed early in the course. Basic internet safety and computer maintenance issues are important components of this course.

Chorus 7 (year-long course)

The Vocal/Choral Music Standards of Learning are organized into four sequential and developmental levels—Beginning, Intermediate, Advanced, and Artist. These four descriptors are based on vocal maturation and increasing musicianship skills. The Artist Level is the culminating vocal/choral experience in which the singer is prepared for future musical development and career opportunities. Since students in Virginia may be introduced to the choral ensemble experience at varying grade levels, the use of the four sequential and developmental levels allows for consistency and instructional flexibility.

Intermediate Band 7, Jazz Band 7, and Orchestra/Strings 7(year-long course)

Students will begin to use more articulations and bowings, perform scales and music in more difficult key signatures, demonstrate shifting and vibrato, and perform music at an intermediate level of difficulty (VBODA Solo_Repertoire, Level 2-4). Ensemble skills will become more developed as students participate in band and orchestral settings. Students will describe concepts common to music and other disciplines, and will be involved in discussing various cultures, styles, composers, and historical periods.

