

Montross Middle School

“Together We Achieve”



WCPS Vision:

To provide an exemplary learning environment that empowers the voice and choice of ALL students to reach their full potential.

WCPS Mission:

Working together to provide students with the cultural, moral, academic, and life skills needed to become successful citizens.

Instruction in Westmoreland County is guided by the Standards of Learning. The standards describe the Commonwealth's expectations for student learning and achievement in grades K-12 in English, mathematics, science, history/social science, technology, the fine arts, foreign language, health and physical education. Westmoreland County also provides specialized instruction and programs for gifted students, students with disabilities, and English language learners

The selection of courses for the upcoming school year is an opportunity for each student to think about his or her interests, achievement, and educational goals. At MMS, teachers design project-based learning opportunities where students engage and collaborate to solve authentic problems.

Program of Studies

6th Grade

Math 6
Language Arts
US History (1865-Present)
Earth Science 6
Health & P.E.
Beginner Band
Exploratory Specials*

7th Grade

Math 7 or Pre-Algebra
Language Arts
Civics & Economics
Life Science 7
Health & P.E.
Band 7
Electives*

8th Grade

Math 8 or Algebra I
Language Arts
World History I
Physical Science 8
Health & P.E.
Band 8
Electives*

* See Elective course descriptions

Language Arts & Reading

LANGUAGE ARTS 6

The English 6 curriculum is taught in two parts – Language Arts and Reading. The sixth-grade student will be an active participant in classroom discussions. Students will begin the study of word origins and continue vocabulary development. They will read independently a variety of fiction and nonfiction for appreciation and comprehension. Students will plan, draft, revise, and edit narratives, descriptions, and explanations with attention to composition and style, as well as sentence formation, usage, and mechanics. They will demonstrate correct use of language, spelling, and mechanics by applying grammatical conventions in all forms of communication. Students will take the Reading 6 Standards of Learning Test upon completion of this course.

LANGUAGE ARTS 7

The English 7 curriculum is taught in two parts – Language Arts and Reading. The seventh-grade student will continue to develop oral communication skills and will become more knowledgeable of the effects of verbal and nonverbal behaviors in oral communication. Students will continue to read a wide variety of fiction, nonfiction, and poetry while becoming more independent and analytical. They will refine written composition skills, with special attention to word choice, organization, style, and grammar. Written explanations will utilize informational writing skills, and persuasive writing will be introduced. Students will continue vocabulary development through a study of figurative language and the continuation of the study of roots and affixes. Students will increase proficiency in the use of print and electronic information resources and will learn how to give credit to reference sources and will demonstrate correct use of language, spelling, and mechanics by applying grammatical conventions in writing and speaking. Students will take the Reading 7 Standards of Learning Test upon completion of this course.

LANGUAGE ARTS 8

The English 8 curriculum is taught in two parts – Language Arts and Reading. The eighth-grade student will learn and apply interviewing techniques. Students will demonstrate correct use of language, spelling, and mechanics by applying grammatical conventions in writing and speaking. They will plan, draft, revise, and edit writing with emphasis on exposition and persuasion. Students will apply reading and writing skills in all subjects, as well as respond critically to literature while continuing to develop vocabulary with attention to connotations and figurative language. Students will become skillful interpreters of the persuasive strategies used in print and mass media. They will continue to develop an appreciation for literature through a study of a wide variety of selections. Students will describe themes or inferred main ideas, interpret cause-effect relationships, and draw conclusions from a variety of literary and informational selections. Students will take the Grade 8 Writing Standards of Learning Test in early spring as well as the Grade 8 Reading Standards of Learning Test upon completion of this course.

Placement decisions will be based on a review of multiple criteria to include SOL scores, benchmark scores, longitudinal performance, academic grades, teacher recommendation, etc.

Mathematics

MATHEMATICS 6

The 6th grade standards are a transition from the emphasis placed on whole number arithmetic in the elementary grades to foundations of Algebra. The standards emphasize rational numbers. Students will use ratios to compare data sets; recognize decimals, fractions, and percents as ratios, use a variety of concrete, pictorial, and abstract representations to develop proportional reasoning skills, solve single-step and multistep problems, using rational numbers; and gain a foundation in the understanding of integers. Students will solve linear equations and use algebraic terminology. Students will solve problems involving area, perimeter, and surface area, work with π (pi), and focus on the relationships among the properties of quadrilaterals. In addition, students will focus on applications of statistics. Students will take the Math 6 Standards of Learning Test upon completion of this course.

MATHEMATICS 7

The 7th grade standards continue to emphasize the foundations of Algebra. Topics in grade seven include proportional reasoning, application of integer computation to problem solving situations, solving two-step linear equations, and recognizing different representations for relationships. Students will apply the properties of real numbers in solving equations, solve inequalities, and use data analysis techniques to make inferences, conjectures, and predictions. Students will take the Math 7 Standards of Learning Test upon completion of this course.

PRE-ALGEBRA (7th grade ONLY)

This course follows Math 6 and will continue to challenge students motivated to work at an accelerated pace and to prepare them for the study of Algebra I in Grade 8. Students will complete the remaining seventh-grade and all of the 8th grade Standards of Learning set by the state of Virginia. Students will gain proficiency in computation with rational numbers, determine slope as a rate of change, and write equations for and graph lines representing proportional relationships. They will solve multistep equations and inequalities. Relations and functions will be represented using tables, graphs, and rules. Additionally, geometric concepts of surface area and volume will continue to be developed and the use of the Pythagorean Theorem will be introduced. At the end of this course students will take the Grade 8 Math SOL.

MATHEMATICS 8

The 8th grade standards are intended to serve two purposes. First, the standards contain content that reviews or extends concepts and skills learned in previous grades. Second, they contain new content that prepares students for more abstract concepts in algebra and geometry. The 8th grade standards provide students additional instruction and time to acquire the concepts and skills necessary for success in Algebra I. Students will gain proficiency in computation with rational numbers and will use proportions to solve a variety of problems. New concepts include solving multistep equations and inequalities, graphing linear equations, visualizing three-dimensional shapes represented in two-dimensional drawings, and applying transformations to geometric shapes in the coordinate plane. Students will verify and apply the Pythagorean Theorem and represent relations and functions, using tables, graphs, and rules. Students will take the Math 8 Standards of Learning Test upon completion of this course.

ALGEBRA I

This course requires students to use Algebra as a tool for representing and solving a variety of practical problems. Tables and graphs will be used to interpret algebraic expressions, equations, and inequalities and to analyze behaviors of functions. The student will earn a credit for graduation upon completion of the course and a verified credit upon passing the Algebra I End of Course Test.

Science

SCIENCE 6 - semester course

Science 6 is an introductory science class. Students are given a broad view of earth science, life science, and physical science. Topics taught are watershed processes, electricity and magnetism, and the solar system. The scientific method is utilized to process skills as a basis for solving problems, answering questions, and demonstrating laboratory safety. Laboratory experiences are included in instructional time.

SCIENCE 7 – LIFE SCIENCE - semester course

Life Science introduces students to the living world, stressing the nature of living things and how they grow, adapt, and survive in a competitive environment. The ecological relationship between man and his environment is stressed. The scientific method is utilized to teach important concepts including collecting and organizing information, observing and describing, measuring, experimenting, and drawing conclusions.

SCIENCE 8 – PHYSICAL SCIENCE - semester course

Knowledge and skills are developed through the exploration of fundamental physics and chemistry. The structure of matter and its relationship to energy, and the forms of energy and the ways they are used are investigated. Emphasis is placed on “hands-on” laboratory experiences and the presentation of concepts and theories. The scientific method is also employed in a wide variety of laboratory investigations. Laboratory safety and the proper use of laboratory equipment are stressed. Students will take the Science 8 Standards of Learning Test upon completion of this course.

History & Social Sciences

UNITED STATES HISTORY 1865 TO PRESENT (US II) - semester course

Having previously studied the pre-revolutionary period through the Civil War, students will engage in an in-depth study of the United States, incorporating themes from Reconstruction to the present. This study will include the historical and cultural development of the United States, as well as the governmental, geographic, economic, social, and current issues facing our nation. The concepts of change, conflict, diversity, economics, and citizenship will be woven into the study. Critical thinking, communication, geographic, and study skills will be an integral part of this study.

CIVICS AND ECONOMICS - semester course

Civics and Economics examines the roles citizens play in the political, governmental, and economic systems in the United States, students examine the constitutions of Virginia and the United States; identify the rights, duties, and responsibilities of citizens; and describe the structure and operation of government at the local, state, and national levels. They investigate the process by which decisions are made in the American market economy and explain the government's role in it. Students will identify personal character traits, such as patriotism, respect for the law, and a sense of civic duty, and how those characteristics relate to participation in the civic life of an increasingly diverse democratic society. Students will take the Civics and Economics Standards of Learning Test upon completion of this course.

WORLD HISTORY I - semester course

Students will explore the historical development of people, places, and patterns of life from ancient times until 1500 A.D. in terms of the impact on Western civilization. The focus is on the Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Phoenician, Roman, African Kingdoms, migrating peoples, Islamic, Byzantine, and Medieval civilizations. The student will earn a standard unit of credit for graduation upon the successful completion of the course and a verified credit for the successful completion of the End of Course World History Test.

6th Grade Elective Courses

ART

Exploration class that uses the lives of different artists to introduce a variety of mediums and techniques. It encompasses both written and hands on activities.

BAND

Students can join band in 6th grade with no prior musical experience necessary, and will learn how to play an instrument of their choice! During the students' 6th grade year, the focus is on learning music knowledge and skills required to play their instrument. Students can choose to play Flute, Clarinet, Alto Sax, Trumpet, Trombone, Tuba, or Percussion.

CHORUS

In chorus, students will learn the basics of vocal technique, music reading, and sight-singing. They will study and sing a variety of styles of music. At least two required evening performances will be held throughout the school year. Appropriate concert attire is required for these performances.

EXPLORATORY SPANISH

This exploratory Spanish class will focus on culture and beginning level Spanish expressions, writing through listening, speaking, reading and writing. Concepts such as the alphabet, calendar, cognates, classroom objects and school subjects, commands, numbers, colors, greetings, and a basic understanding of Spanish-speaking cultures will be taught.

FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES

Family and Consumer Sciences in 6th grade provides a foundation for managing individual, family, career, and community roles and responsibilities. In FACS, students focus on areas of individual growth such as personal goal achievement, responsibilities within the family, and accountability for personal safety and health. They also explore and practice financial management, clothing maintenance, food preparation, positive and caring relationships with others, and self-assessment as related to career exploration.

KEYBOARDING

The goal of keyboarding is intended for students who want to improve their keyboarding skills or have no previous keyboarding experience. This course introduces keyboard-operating techniques, the touch system, speed, and accuracy. Students will develop basic skills in touch typing and learn proper use and care of equipment and materials. Major emphasis will be placed on keyboarding technique and timed keyboarding drills; as well as organization and following oral and written directions. These skills will help students obtain proficient use of the keyboard that will assist them in school, at home, and in the future. Students gain competence integrating other applications such as database and spreadsheet into word processing activities. These skills will help students obtain proficient use of the keyboard that will assist them in school, at home, and in the future

STEM

Students will study the basic elements of all technology including the basic system model as well as the design processes. Students learn that resources are the underlining theme of all areas of technology. Design process, the inherent process of technology, becomes a way of thinking and creating new ideas, processes, and products. Basic hand-tool identification and use will be taught through STEM concepts (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math). The course is designed to be 1/3 classroom instruction, and 2/3 hands-on activities.

THEATRE ARTS (DRAMA)

Students will acquire the technical and artistic knowledge and skills necessary for expressive dramatic performance. They will learn to think and act creatively by employing originality, flexibility, and imagination when solving problems individually and collaboratively.

7th Grade Elective Courses

ART

Students in Art 7 are introduced to the various periods of art starting with prehistoric art and continue through the art ages. This reinforces what they have learned in history and allows for a new look using different media. Color theory is also introduced which allows for painting.

BAND

During the 7th year, the focus is on continuing development of musical and instrumental skills and on ensemble performance. MMS Band students participate in a variety of activities including school and local concerts, the Area Band Festival, All-Area Honor Band, and an annual Spring trip.

CHORUS

In chorus, students will learn the basics of vocal technique, music reading, and sight-singing. They will study and sing a variety of styles of music. At least two required evening performances will be held throughout the school year. Appropriate concert attire is required for these performances.

FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES

Family and Consumer Sciences in 7th grade is one of the middle school courses that provides a foundation for managing individual, family, work, and community roles and responsibilities. In 7th grade FACS, students focus on their individual development as well as their relationships and roles within the family unit. They learn how to maintain their living and personal environments and to use nutrition and wellness practices. Students also apply consumer and family resources, develop textile, fashion, and apparel concepts, and explore careers related to Family and Consumer Sciences. Time is also provided for developing early childhood education concepts and leadership skills.

THEATRE ARTS (DRAMA)

Students will acquire the technical and artistic knowledge and skills necessary for expressive dramatic performance. They will learn to think and act creatively by employing originality, flexibility, and imagination when solving problems individually and collaboratively.

TECHNOLOGICAL SYSTEMS (STEM)

Students combine resources and techniques to create systems, attaining comprehension of how technological systems work. Students will explore, design, analyze, and evaluate technological systems. By simulating systems and assessing their impacts, students gain insight into how to approach the problems and opportunities of a technological world. Students will also explore technology-oriented careers.

COMPUTER SOLUTIONS

Students are introduced to the world of business using the computer as a problem-solving tool. Emphasis is placed on using basic touch keyboarding skills to complete a variety of projects incorporating word processing, database, presentation, and spreadsheet software. Basic Internet safety and computer maintenance issues are important components of this course.

EXPLORATORY SPANISH

This exploratory Spanish class will focus on culture and beginning level Spanish expressions, writing through listening, speaking, reading and writing. Concepts such as the alphabet, calendar, cognates, classroom objects and school subjects, commands, numbers, colors, greetings, and a basic understanding of Spanish-speaking cultures will be taught.

8th Grade Elective Courses

ART

Art 8 varies from year to year. Some years, students “travel” around the world exploring the art of different cultures such as China, Japan, Australia, etc. This allows students to try calligraphy, mask making, and origami. In other years, students use what they know best already, the alphabet, to discover different types of art that exist, other than just drawing. *Advanced Art class will be available to students that want to learn advanced art skills.

BAND

During the 8th grade year, the focus is on continuing development of musical and instrumental skills and an ensemble performance. MMS Band students participate in a variety of activities including school and local concerts, the Area Band Festival, All-Area Honor Band, and an annual Spring trip.

GUITAR

Beginner’s class. Bring your own guitar or a school guitar will be provided. Limited number of openings. (PARENT PERMISSION IS REQUIRED)

PIANO LAB

Beginner’s class. Learn the basics of playing the piano/keyboard. Limited number of openings. (PARENT PERMISSION IS REQUIRED)

CHORUS

In chorus, students will learn the basics of vocal technique, music reading, and sight-singing. They will study and sing a variety of styles of music. At least two required evening performances will be held throughout the school year. Appropriate concert attire is required for these performances.

THEATRE ARTS (DRAMA)

Students will acquire the technical and artistic knowledge and skills necessary for expressive dramatic performance. They will learn to think and act creatively by using originality, flexibility, and imagination when solving problems individually and in a group.

FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES

Family and Consumer Sciences in 8th grade is one of the middle school Family and Consumer Sciences courses that provides a foundation for managing individual, family, career, and community roles and responsibilities. In 8th grade FACS, students focus on their individual roles in the community as well as how the community influences individual development. Students develop change-management and conflict-resolution skills and examine how global concerns affect communities. In addition, students enhance their knowledge of nutrition and wellness practices and learn how to maximize consumer and family resources. The course helps students apply textile, fashion, and apparel concepts to their daily lives and provides background on the stages of early childhood development as related to childcare.

INNOVATIONS AND INVENTIONS (STEM)

Students make models of significant inventions that have advanced society. After studying these developments, they explore contemporary technological problems facing them, their community, or the world and apply a systematic procedures to invent new products or innovations as solutions.

SPANISH I

The language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing are taught in the order in which they are listed. Self-expression is emphasized from the outset. The study of important and interesting aspects of foreign culture is also included. **REQUIREMENT**- B or better in 7th Language Arts and passing grade on 7th grade Reading SOL. (PARENT PERMISSION IS REQUIRED)

Special Education

SPECIAL EDUCATION (GRADES 6 – 8)

All students with disabilities who are eligible for exceptional education services participate in the secondary curriculum according to their Individualized Educational Plan (IEP). A variety of programs are provided to meet the students' individual needs including supportive and related services, resource assistance, collaborative and small-group classes. Collaborative classes are co-taught by exceptional and general educators in the general education setting. Small-group classes are taught by one instructor in a more individualized setting with special instruction from trained teachers. Parents, teachers, counselors, or administrators may refer students to the Child Study committee to determine eligibility for these services.

Gifted Education

At the middle school level, identified gifted students are cluster-grouped when possible and scheduled into advanced English and/or math classes, where differentiated instruction is provided by the designated classroom teachers of the gifted. Differentiation strategies include those published by Susan Winebrenner, among others. This differentiation is documented by teachers. Extension and enrichment are provided using research-based instructional strategies and curricular models, e.g., the William & Mary Language Arts Curriculum for High Ability Learners. Middle school students are accelerated on an individual basis. Qualifying students may take advanced courses for high school credit. Additionally, gifted students in grades six and seven have the opportunity to apply for participation in the Northern Neck Regional Governor's School (NNRGS). Students at grade eight and beyond have the opportunity to return to the NNRGS as student assistants. Identified gifted students in grades six - eight (and grade nine from the high school) also have the opportunity to participate in supplemental enrichment activities, e.g., Community Problem Solving, Future Problem Solving and Scenario Writing.

MMS Clubs & Activities

Future Problem Solvers
School Beautification Club
Recycling Club – “Trash Talkers”
Student Council Association (SCA)

Sports

Participation in co-curricular activities is a privilege. As representatives of Westmoreland County Public Schools, student-athletes are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that meets the highest standards at all times.

It is the goal of Westmoreland County Public Schools to provide all students with opportunities to engage in athletic activities that enrich their education and further develop the core values of respect, responsibility, fairness, trust, and good citizenship.

Engaging in planned instruction teaches good sportsmanship and proper behavior. It is the responsibility of the administration, staff, coaches, parents and the community at large to create a climate that fosters the development of these behaviors. This is accomplished by encouraging and modeling positive and appropriate behavior within the sporting environment while, at the same time striving for excellence.

Student-athletes must maintain a 2.0 grade point average and exhibit acceptable behavior. Student-athletes can be placed on academic probation and/or be removed from a team if their grades or behavior declines during a season.

FALL	WINTER	SPRING
Girls' Basketball Cheerleading Girls' Volleyball Coed Soccer	Boys' Basketball Cheerleading	Baseball Softball

Grading System

Letter Grades – Students earn letter grades of A, B, C, D, or F on their report cards. They may also be assigned a grade of "I" for "Incomplete" if, because of an emergency, they do not complete work by the end of the grading period. The "Incomplete" becomes an "F" if work is not finished by an assigned time. Letter grades have the following numerical values:

- A = 92 – 100
- B = 84 – 91
- C = 77 – 83
- D = 70 – 76
- F = 69 or lower

Promotion Requirements

Students must demonstrate a proficient level of knowledge and skills in three of the four core academic areas. Two of the three must be English and mathematics. Students must score at least 400 on the English, math, history, and science (8th grade only) SOL tests or be successfully remediated during the summer or after school. Additionally, students who miss more than 18 total absences may be recommended for retention.

Tips for Success at MMS

1. **Become a reader:** Reading is a skill that gets better with practice. Limit the amount of TV you watch and read more. Parents play an important role in helping their children become better readers. If you lose interest in reading, ask your parents to help you find interesting materials.
2. **Get organized:** Use a notebook or binder and use a different section for each class. Use your agenda to write down assignments. Make time for homework by finding a quiet place to work and not playing on your phone. Get ready for school the night before by packing your backpack and getting your clothes ready.
3. **Making new friends** can take time. Get to know people by being friendly, being a good listener, and being yourself. Avoid bullies. It's okay to say no to something that you know is wrong.
4. **Talking is the first step in problem-solving.** If you feel stressed or are having problems, talk to a parent, teacher, or counselor.
5. **Prepare for changes.** You will be given more responsibility and have more independence. You will have different classes and teachers for each subject. Different students will be in your classes. You will need to learn the rules for the middle school.
6. **Get along with others** by respecting others. Come to school prepared to respect your teachers and your classmates.
7. **Be prepared** for tests by studying, studying, studying. Read over your notes at night. Go over homework and quizzes. Reread chapter summaries. Students who put forth effort will be rewarded.
8. **After-school tutoring sessions** will be offered on Tuesdays and Thursdays during the 2nd and 4th quarters if you need help.
9. **Attend, Attend, Attend!** Core classes are 97 minutes long and electives are approximately 48 minutes. When you are absent, you miss a lot of material.

Planning for Your Future

The Middle School Program builds the foundation for high school success, and planning your educational program is one of the most important steps to a successful high school experience. The information below will help you plan for high school and beyond.

Planning for High School

In the Spring of your 8th grade year, you will be guided by your eighth grade teachers and school counselors in selecting courses for ninth grade. This process includes choosing your ninth grade courses and projecting your tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grade courses. When you are in ninth, tenth, and eleventh grades, your high school teachers and school counselors will continue to assist you as you choose courses for the next school year and plan for your future.



MONTROSS MIDDLE SCHOOL

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MMS Motto:

“Together, We Will Achieve”