



# Grade 7 Course Handbook 2025-2026

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***Inspire a caring community to ignite learning, innovation, and success for all.***

***-Jordan Public Schools Mission Statement***

Jordan Public Schools believe in the potential of every learner and that education enables future opportunity and success. We accept the responsibility of providing an educational system that positions our graduates with the knowledge, understanding, skills, and character traits they need to fulfill their individual promise for success and achieve their personal best. They deserve a school program grounded by a compelling purpose and our best efforts to achieve it.

Jordan Middle School provides a learning environment that nurtures the cognitive, physical, social, and emotional needs of 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th graders. The staff provides challenging courses for all students and opportunities for students to explore new interests, comprehensive personal wellness education, a safe school environment, and a personalized school climate that provides support and adult guidance.

Adolescence is a distinctive developmental stage characterized by significant growth and change. Experts tell us that adolescence today starts earlier and lasts longer than in previous generations. Understanding the adolescent experience is foundational to creating and implementing a successful middle level education system. In developing our middle school program, we paid particular attention to the following areas:

- Physical Development/Brain Development - Bodies and brains of adolescents grow and mature. They face coordination issues and restlessness. Their brains are refining and pruning some connections and strengthening others as their abilities to plan, reason, anticipate consequences, pay attention, and make decisions continue to develop.
- Intellectual Development - Reasoning, understanding, and the ability for abstract thought grows significantly. To make sense of the world, adolescents prefer real-life learning experiences in areas they find useful or interesting.
- Social Development - Interest and capacity for more mature interaction with groups and individuals may not develop at the same speed as bodies and intellect. Adolescents need to belong; they test limits; they want to be like their peers.
- Emotional/Psychological Development - Adolescents are searching for their own independent, adult identity. They may be moody or restless; they are frequently self-conscious and highly sensitive to criticism. They are likely to believe their experiences and feelings are unique.
- Moral/Ethical Development - The ability to make positive choices grows in adolescence. This involves a transition from a focus on self to considering the rights and feelings of others. Idealism and a strong sense of fairness develop, along with a set of personal values. Shades of gray in moral issues may replace what has always appeared black and white.

We believe understanding adolescent development and brain research supports our focus on relevance, choice, real-life experiences, and positive relationships. It makes full consideration of these issues a necessity for a successful middle level school program. We will respond to these adolescent development issues and their environmental, curricular, and instructional implications through the core principles and strategies that guide our work.

**Middle School Mission:**

The mission of our Middle School is to foster a culture of belonging and to inspire high expectations for achievement through instructional practices that embrace individual differences and learning styles. The middle school provides an environment that allows transition for students as they move from elementary into high school years. Middle school education provides solid standards-based interdisciplinary core courses and diverse exploratory and elective options with the goal of preparing students for Jordan High School and beyond.

- **Core Curriculum**

- Jordan Middle School will build on the foundational personalized core developed at Jordan Elementary School with interdisciplinary standards-based core instruction. Grade level teams will collaborate on interdisciplinary instruction in the areas of reading, language arts, science, social studies, and math. Advanced and remedial courses are offered for students to meet their instructional needs.

- **Exploratory Courses**

- The goal of exploratory courses at the middle school level is to provide a diverse exploratory option for ALL students at JMS. These courses capitalize on the curiosity of middle school level learners while exposing them to a wide range of topics in order to discover new ideas or skills they may not know they have.

- **Elective Courses**

- Elective courses at Jordan Middle School are taught with the goal of providing student choice to expand and explore student interests. These classes include choices such as band and choir.

- **Academic Support Courses**

- Students not meeting grade level standards will be scheduled into a support course(s) to address the identified need. These students will have the option of choosing an exploratory/elective course once this need has been addressed.

- **Advisory**

- Advisory is a class designed to encourage team building, school participation, and serve as a support system for students at Jordan Middle School. Curriculum for Advisory is designed to support students with their social/emotional, academic, and college & career readiness needs.
- Students will participate in weekly Social Emotional activities provided by the Student Support Team during advisory. These activities will center around building skills in the areas of academic success, character building, coping strategies, and other tools to address student needs.
- All students will be assigned to an Advisory class and advisor for the entire year. Students will meet in Advisory daily but will not earn grades in this class.

**What is the scheduling process for 7th grade?**

The registration process for middle school students is very straightforward. Below are the important details:

- In 7th grade, students will automatically be scheduled into grade level core and exploratory classes.
  - Students will be placed into academic and support classes following spring testing to ensure proper placement.
    - Criteria outlined in the course handbook will be followed.
    - There is an appeals process located at the end of the registration materials that must be completed should you choose to appeal your student's course placement.
- Elective courses are scheduled based on the number of students who requested the course. Please be thoughtful while helping your student choose their electives.
  - If a student does not get scheduled into their requested elective course, they will be placed into their alternate course selection at that time.

**What should I do to register my 7th grader?**

- If your student was enrolled in Jordan Public Schools for the current school year, their enrollment is automatically rolled forward for the upcoming academic year.
- Decide whether your child will continue their performance music elective.
  - Choir (Every Other Day)
  - Band (Every Other Day)
  - Band and Choir
- Once finalized, register your 7th graders for other elective courses, if needed.

## Sample Student Schedule

# Grade 7

1	Advisory	
2	Science	
3	Language	
4	Social Studies	
5	Math	
6	Lunch and WIN (What I Need)	
7	Exploratory Hour 1	
	Physical Education	Media Production & Application
8	Exploratory Hour 2	
	Exploratory Spanish	FACS
9	Elective Hour Options	
	Band	Choir
	Elective Option #1 (See Below)	Elective Option #2 (See Below)

\*Actual placement of elective and exploratory courses will be finalized with development of master schedule.

## CORE COURSES

(All course offerings for Jordan Middle School are subject to change based on final budget reductions.)

<b>Language Arts 7</b>	<b><i>Full Year, Every Day</i></b>
<p>The goal of Language Arts 7 is to improve critical thinking, reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills. Students complete journals and essays, read a variety of literature, perform a wide range of writing assignments and study grammar as well as usage. Literature genres include poetry, short stories, non-fiction, novels, legend, and drama.</p>	

<b>Math 7 (Pre-Algebra)</b>	<b><i>Full Year, Every Day</i></b>
<p>Math 7 is a pre-algebra level course that is based on the Minnesota Standards for Mathematics in the areas of number and operation, algebra, geometry and measurement, and data analysis, with a strong emphasis on algebra. Topics include solving equations; integers and exponents; rational and real numbers; plane geometry; graphing lines; calculating perimeter; area; and volume; ratios; similarity; percentages; and probability. Relevant visuals and engaging features spark interest in math by emphasizing its importance in students' everyday lives while sharpening critical thinking skills vital for state testing. When students complete this course with mastery, they will be ready for algebra.</p>	

<b>Advanced Pre-Algebra</b>	<b><i>Full Year, Every Day</i></b>
<p>Advanced Pre-Algebra is based on the Minnesota Standards for Mathematics in the areas of number and operation, algebra, geometry and measurement and data analysis. Skills in working with positive and negative numbers, ratios and proportions, and problem solving are areas of main emphasis. Advanced Pre-Algebra will include advanced pace, rigor and extensions to enhance student learning.</p>	

<b>Science 7</b>	<b><i>Full Year, Every Day</i></b>
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Life Science is an introduction to cell biology, genetics, evolution, microbiology, ecology, and the human body. There is a strong emphasis on experimental design as students create and conduct their own experiments. Students will be involved in problem solving, research, projects, labs, dissections, and model making.

<b>Social 7</b>	<b><i>Full Year, Every Day</i></b>
<p>The objective of this course is to introduce young students to the important people, places, and events that have had a significant impact on American History. Furthermore, this course seeks to help the students gain an insight to, an appreciation of, and a pride in the history of this great country that we call the United States of America.</p>	

### **EXPLORATORY COURSES**

The goal of exploratory courses at the middle school level is to provide a diverse exploratory option for ALL students at JMS. These courses capitalize on the curiosity of middle school level learners while exposing them to a wide range of topics in order to discover new ideas or skills they may not know they have.

<b>Physical Education 7</b>	<b><i>Full Year, Every Other Day</i></b>
<p>In this course, students will have the opportunity to participate in physical activity in a variety of settings including individual and team sports, cooperative games, and fitness based activities. Every effort will be made to help each student recognize significant gains in their overall fitness level as they learn sportsmanship, improve self-esteem, and have fun engaging in physical activity.</p>	

<b>Multimedia &amp; Wellness</b>	<b><i>Full Year, Every Other Day</i></b>
<p>In Media Production &amp; Application, students merge technology with holistic wellness. This class covers the 8 dimensions of well-being through interactive activities and multimedia projects, exploring topics such as nutrition, mental health, and relationships. In addition, students gain practical life skills through Infant/Child First Aid and CPR training. This course not only fosters media production skills but also empowers students to make informed choices for a lifetime of health and community responsibility.</p>	

<b>Family and Consumer Science (FACS)</b>	<b><i>Full Semester, Every Day</i></b>
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In this course, students will study many aspects of the Family and Consumer Sciences content areas to prepare for the life skills necessary for independent living, including: an introduction to foods through cooking (i.e. cooking and food preparation terms, reading a recipe, measuring and equivalents, equipment and utensils, etc.)an entrepreneurship unit (The Food Truck Unit), and other essential life skills that will help them now and in the future.

<b>Exploratory Spanish 7</b>	<b><i>Full Semester, Every Day</i></b>
Exploratory Spanish is designed to give students a positive Spanish Language experience. This exploratory Spanish class will focus on culture and beginning level Spanish expressions 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 investigated. This class will be an excellent foundation for those choosing to enroll in the high school credit Spanish course as an elective in either eighth grade or high school.	

### **ELECTIVE COURSES**

Elective courses at Jordan Middle School are taught with the goal of providing student choice to expand and explore student interests. These courses include choices such as band and choir and classes to support individual student needs. Students not meeting grade level standards in reading and/or math will be scheduled into a class to address this need. These students will have the option of choosing an elective once they are meeting standards.

<b>Band 7</b>	<b><i>Full Year, Every Other Day</i></b>
Band 7 students continue learning and developing instrumental musical skills. Students will explore a variety of music genres and styles and perform at three concerts throughout the year. In addition to participating in the class as part of the full band, students will receive small-group lessons on a regular basis. Students will be expected to practice on their own outside of school.	

<b>Choir 7</b>	<b><i>Full Year, Every Other Day</i></b>
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Choir 7 students continue to learn about singing and music literacy in a group setting. There will be an additional focus on the mechanics of the singing voice, including the changing male voice. Students will prepare literature for three-part voices. Students will continue to work on cooperation, dedication, and self-discipline with this performing group. There are three evening performances per year.

### **Drama**

***Semester, Every Other Day***

Drama 7 is an introduction to fundamental acting and technical skills. Off-stage, students explore sound effects, makeup, costuming, and lighting. On stage, students learn movement and characterization skills. Students will participate in various activities that may include reader's theater, improvisation, and short scenes. Through these activities, Drama 7 students will learn physical and vocal presentation skills and develop basic knowledge of theatre arts. Near the conclusion of this course, students will perform what they have been working on for the semester.

### **Foods and Nutrition**

***Semester, Every Other Day***

Do you like to cook, eat, and be healthy? This class is for you! This course will focus on living a healthy lifestyle by incorporating nutritional planning, cooking, and eating in your everyday life. In this class, we will learn about how proper nutrition positively affects our bodies, essential nutrients, how to understand your body's needs, and how to apply this to your life. We will spend time in the kitchens learning how to prepare healthy meals and snacks!

### **Media Arts**

***Semester, Every Other Day***

In Media Arts students will become proficient using Pixlr to edit photographs and create advertisements. They will learn about the importance of logos, branding, marketing, and sales. This course has the potential for cross-disciplinary applications, especially in conjunction with the FACS entrepreneurship unit, as well as real-world applications with school events. The culminating project will have students working in teams to earn a company's advertising business.

### **STEM 7**

***Semester, Every Other Day***

This hands-on inquiry based course includes concepts and skills from Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math. Students solve problems while utilizing engineering skills to design and construct solutions. The course will cover multiple scientific topics ranging from physical, earth, and life science.

<b>Law &amp; Order</b>	<b><i>Semester, Every Other Day</i></b>
<p>Here is a great way to mix a middle school student's natural love for a good argument and civic education. In this hands-on, activity-based class, students will have the opportunity to act as a witness, judge, attorney, and jury as they judge cases constructed around real and fictitious events. The activities will teach students critical analysis, persuasion, questioning skills, character development, logical thinking, and principles of the law.</p>	

<b>Drawing and Painting</b>	<b><i>Semester, Every Other Day</i></b>
<p>If you have a passion for creating, this hands-on course is for you! In this course, students will explore different drawing and painting media to include graphite, colored pencil, charcoal, pastel, watercolor, and acrylic paints. The first half of the course will be spent on skill development, technique, and exploration. During the remainder of the course, students will create artwork using the media and subject matter of their choice.</p>	

<b>Ceramics and Sculpture</b>	<b><i>Semester, Every Other Day</i></b>
<p>Want to get your hands dirty? This course is focused on three-dimensional art. Students will spend the first half of the course exploring different methods of making sculpture to include clay, plaster, wood, and found objects. During the time students are working with clay, they will create various hand-built pieces, both functional and decorative. During the second half of the course, students will create work using the media and subject matter of their choice.</p>	

<b>Fitness &amp; Recreation</b>	<b><i>Semester, Every Other Day</i></b>
<p>The goal of this course is to motivate and teach students how to live a healthy lifestyle. Students will be given the opportunity to try many types of fitness activities. Also covered in this course will be the areas of nutrition, stress management, personal fitness plans, and goal setting.</p>	

<b>Study Hall</b>	<b><i>Semester, Every Other Day</i></b>
<p>Study Hall is an opportunity for students to complete their academic work during the school day.</p>	

#### **ACADEMIC SUPPORT COURSES**

<b>Multilingual Learners (ML)</b>	<b><i>Full Year</i></b>
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Only students whose first language is not English are eligible for this course. The level of coursework is based on the previous year's ACCESS scores. Students will have the opportunity to increase English language skills in reading, writing, speaking, and listening with the goal of fluent academic and social language proficiency. Students will be given support in their core classes as needed. Final grades will be posted on a pass/fail basis on student report cards.

<b>Math Intervention 7</b>	<b><i>Based on Student Need</i></b>
<p>The purpose of this course is to give students a boost in their basic math skills. As a large group, students will review the math lesson when needed and pre-teach upcoming lessons. The majority of time will be spent in small groups. In small groups, students will work on math skills that develop their basic math knowledge. Students will get extra math help for classroom assignments and extra practice on the Minnesota State Math Standards. This class is in addition to the students' core math class. Final grades will be posted on a pass/fail basis on student report cards.</p>	
<b>Entrance Criteria</b>	<b>Exit Criteria</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Review of past data.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ <b>MCA:</b> Partially Meets Standards or Does not Meet Standards</li> <li>◦ <b>FAST:</b> 25th percentile or below</li> <li>◦ Teacher Recommendation</li> <li>◦ Universal Screening Data</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>MCA:</b> Meets or Exceeds</li> <li>• <b>FAST:</b> Three consecutive progress monitoring points above the 40th Percentile for Spring</li> <li>• Teacher Recommendation</li> <li>• Universal Screening Data</li> </ul>

<b>Reading Intervention 7</b>	<b><i>Based on Student Need</i></b>
<p>The purpose of this course is to give students a boost in their reading skills. In large group and small group settings, students will be supported on individual skills to assist in the progression toward grade level standards. This class is in addition to the students' core reading class. Final grades will be posted on a pass/fail basis on student report cards.</p>	
<b>Entrance Criteria</b>	<b>Exit Criteria</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Review of past data.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ <b>MCA:</b> Partially Meets Standards or Does not Meet Standards</li> <li>◦ <b>FAST:</b> 25th percentile or below</li> <li>◦ Teacher Recommendation</li> <li>◦ Universal Screening Data</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>MCA:</b> Meets or Exceeds</li> <li>• <b>FAST:</b> Three consecutive progress monitoring points above the 40th Percentile for Spring</li> <li>• Teacher Recommendation</li> <li>• Universal Screening Data</li> </ul>

<b>REACH</b>	<b><i>Full Year, Every Day</i></b>
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REACH is an in-school program designed to help students academically, socially, and/or emotionally. The REACH Program not only supports these students academically, but also works to help them build life skills necessary for the future.

**Relationships:** A safe place for students to belong, connect, and cool off if needed.

**Education:** Individualized academic assistance and assignment modifications as needed.

**Accountability:** A support network with staff committed to helping students succeed while nurturing student responsibility.

**Character:** Skill-building activities that encourage positive academic and personal growth.

**Hard work:** Students rise to the level of expectations.

Entrance Criteria	Exit Criteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Review of past data.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Student failing core subjects</li> <li>○ Multiple missing assignments</li> <li>○ Organizational needs</li> <li>○ Attendance needs</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consistent grades C or above</li> <li>• Student-Teacher conference</li> <li>• Staff recommendation</li> <li>• Mandatory semester WIN monitor</li> </ul>

## SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

Applied Skills	Based on IEP Minutes
<p>Applied Skills is designed for students who have an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP). They have been identified as a student with a deficit in reading, writing, listening skills, math, oral expression, social, or study skills. Instruction is developed based on individual student needs. It is designed to teach students strategies to enable them to become successful in academic, social, and community settings. The students receive direct instruction in their identified skill area.</p>	

Positive Learning Understanding Self (PLUS)	Based on IEP Minutes
<p>PLUS class is designed for students who have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Students identified for this class have demonstrated a need for organizational skills, stress management, goal setting, test taking, social skills, self-advocacy, study skills, and problem solving skills. The instruction is developed based on each student's individual needs and will support students in their educational, emotional, and behavioral growth. It is designed to teach students strategies to enable them to become successful in academic, social, and community settings. The students receive direct instruction in their identified skill area.</p>	

<b>Communication Strategies</b>	<b><i>Based on IEP Minutes</i></b>
<p>This class is designed for students who have an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP). Students identified for this class have demonstrated a need for communication skills, organizational skills, stress management, goal setting, test taking, social skills, self-advocacy, study skills, and problem solving skills. The instruction is developed based on each student's individual needs and will support students in their educational, communication, emotional, and behavioral growth. It is designed to teach students strategies to enable them to become successful in academic, social, and community settings. The students receive direct instruction in their identified skill area.</p>	

<b>Life Skills</b>	<b><i>Based on IEP Minutes</i></b>
<p>This class is designed for students who have an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP). Students identified for this class have demonstrated a need for functional skills, communication skills, organizational skills, stress management, goal setting, test taking, social skills, self-advocacy, study skills, and problem solving skills. The instruction is developed based on each student's individual needs and will support students in their educational, functional, communication, emotional, and behavioral growth. It is designed to teach students strategies to enable them to become successful in academic, social, and community settings as well as gaining independent skills. The students receive direct instruction in their identified skill area.</p>	

<b>Speech and Language</b>	<b><i>Based on IEP Minutes</i></b>
<p>This service is designed for students who have an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) due to their communication and language needs. Scheduling is done on an individual basis.</p>	

<b>Developmental Adapted Physical Education (DAPE)</b>	<b><i>Based on IEP Minutes</i></b>
<p>DAPE is for students who qualify for the services through an assessment process. This class is for students who need to work on extra skills that are used in physical activities. We focus on lifelong health activities and skills the student would be doing in their General Physical Education class. As a whole, we want the student to have more practice time to work on skills, so they can have more inclusion in their General Physical Education class.</p>	

## **Scheduling Appeals Process**

### **Math Appeals**

- Students must test out of the pre-requisite course using an end of course assessment in order to advance.
- Follow [District acceleration criteria](#)

### **Appeals in ALL Other Disciplines**

- If not initially invited into the course by initial identification, the student and parent(s) must:
  - Complete the written Appeal Request Form
    - Available from the building administration or counselors
  - Building Administrator(s) and school staff review the student's file including:
    - Core Data (as described above in Identification)
    - Other Supplementary Data, such as:
      - Subject-specific scores on standardized tests
      - Subject-specific grades and GPA (i.e. Math GPA, Science GPA, etc., NOT overall GPA)
      - Work samples
  - Building Administrator(s) reviews the student's file and supplementary data with parents
    - The Building Administrator will be the final authority on ALL appeals.

## **Schedule Change Process**

In order for a schedule change to be approved, your student needs to complete the following steps:

1. Speak with the teacher of the class wishing to be dropped.
2. Fill out the "Schedule Change Request" form, located in the main office with Mrs. Kochlin or Mrs. Meyer.
3. Mr. Bakeberg and Mrs. Meyer make the final approval of the schedule change request.
4. Requests are not considered after the course has been in session for one week.

Please note schedule changes will be considered up to the final day of the second week of the semester.