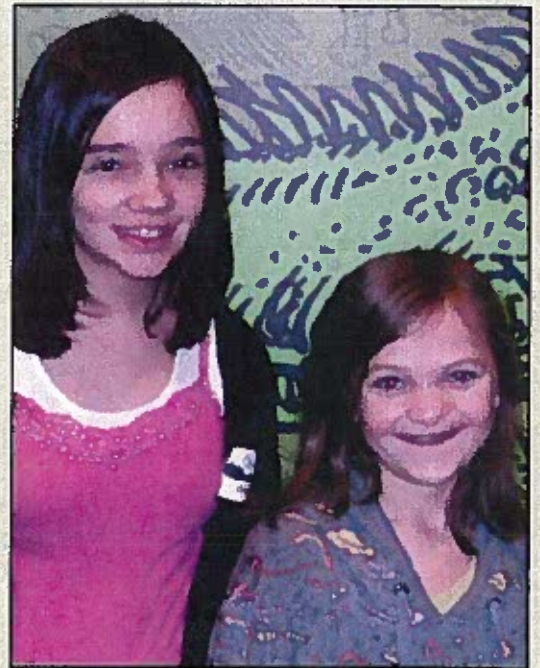
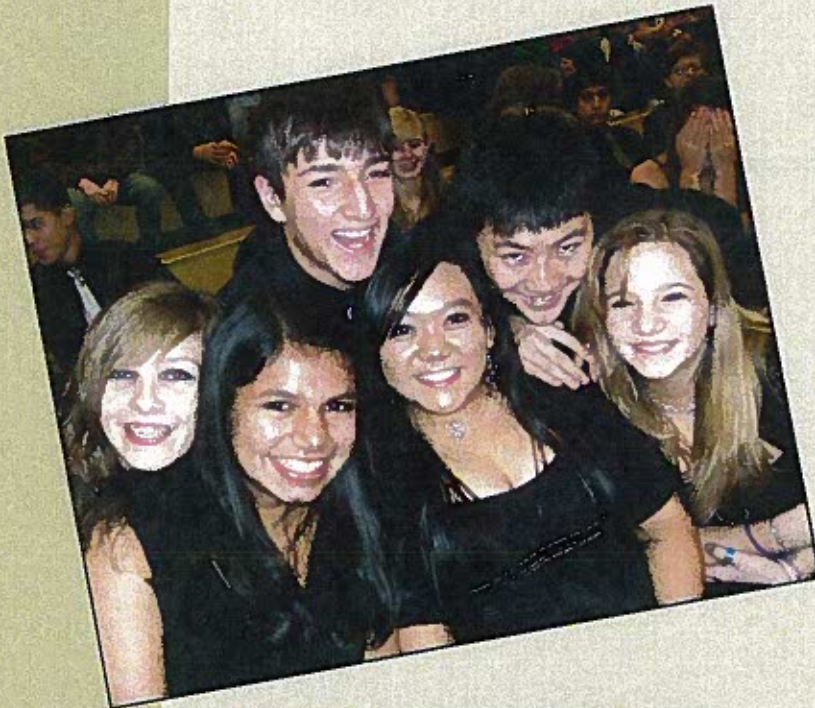


West Middle School

~ Course Guide ~

2011-2012



WEST MIDDLE SCHOOL

~ *A Bridge to the Future* ~

5151 South Holly Street
Greenwood Village, CO 80121

Mr. David Strohfus, Principal

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Contact Information:

Main Switchboard	720-554-5100
Main Office.....	720-554-5180
Counseling Office.....	720-554-5156
Attendance.....	720-554-5110
http://www.west.ccsd.k12.co.us/	



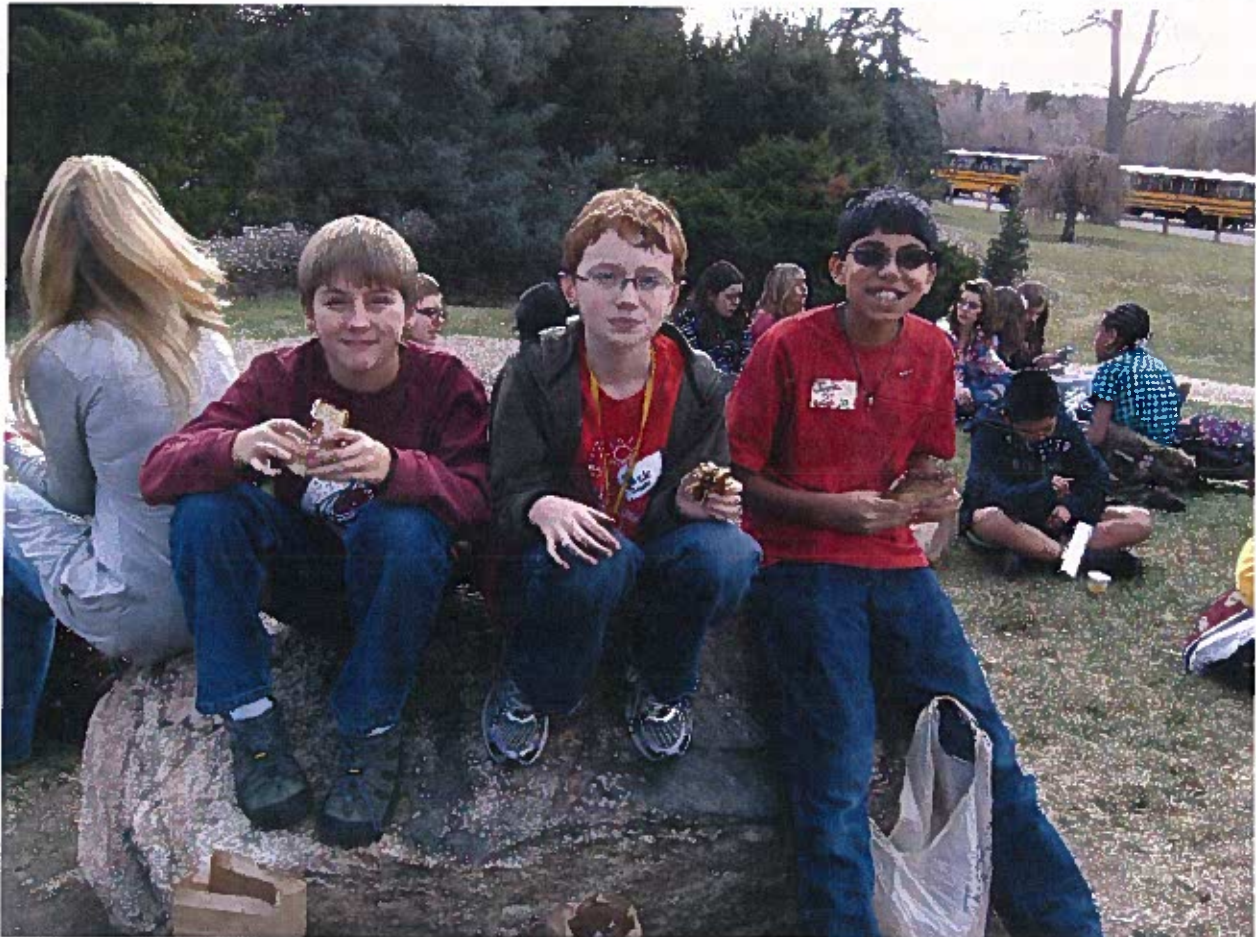
An Exemplary Education

The faculty and staff of West Middle School are passionate about academic achievement, personal growth, and equity. We are confident in every student's ability to maximize his or her potential, and the atmosphere at West is defined by mutual respect, connectedness, and confidence. We provide a foundation of academic excellence, a setting to explore individual creativity, and a safe place to develop a positive self-image and sense of belonging.

At West Middle, students gain a broad and thorough knowledge of reading, writing, math, science, history, and geography. These are the essential building blocks students will need in high school and in the world of work. To round out this foundation, students also learn about the arts, media skills, world languages, computer technology, physical education, and health.

Our teachers understand the differences in learning styles, brain development, social skills, and maturity levels at this age. Accordingly, a variety of instructional methods are used, with emphasis on those techniques shown to engage the middle school age group.

The three-year span of middle school is as profound a change in a child's development as the years from birth to three. West Middle School moves students forward in their academic and personal skills so that they are prepared and excited to step out into the world of high school and beyond.



A Typical Day

While schedules vary by grade level, a typical day at West Middle School is made up of:

- Core:** 4 class periods— 1 each in math, language arts, social studies and science
- Electives:** 2 class periods in a combination of subjects; including physical education, music, visual arts, computers and technology applications or world languages
- Lunch:** 30 minutes, including time outside with friends
- SSR:** Sustained Silent Reading period for 20 minutes



The four content areas of language arts, math, science, and social studies follow the Colorado State Standards. The elective courses enhance 21st century skills, cultural appreciation, and physical well-being. In addition, these courses provide the opportunity to build life-long interests.

The school day starts at 8:00 am, and students may enter the building at 7:45 am. Breakfast is served at 7:35, and students who need breakfast can access the building at that time. The class day ends at 3:10 pm. After school activities and clubs end at 4:00 pm, and late busses leave at 4:20. Late busses run every day except Wednesdays, unless otherwise announced.

Delayed start: Should school be delayed due to weather, the start time is delayed an hour and a half. Dismissal time and late bus schedule remains unchanged. Parents may access the snow delay and closure line at 720-554-4701. Information is also posted on the district website at <http://www.ccsd.k12.co.us/SchoolStatus/>.

The School Year

The academic calendar is organized into semesters. Semesters divide the school year in half; however, report cards are printed on a quarterly basis. Core classes last all year—two semesters. Some elective classes, such as yearlong foreign language, band, and orchestra also last all year. Other elective classes, such as art, computers and technology, and PE are a semester long.

The first day of school for the 2011-2012 school year is August 22, and the last day is June 6.

Parent teacher conferences are scheduled in the fall and the spring, so that any concerns can be addressed in a timely manner.



The Team Concept

Sixth and seventh grades are arranged in teams, so that a group of students share the same teachers for their math, language arts, social studies, and science classes. Students move from classroom to classroom with their teammates, offering them a chance to make friends and grow together. Teachers work closely with each other to provide connections to other subject areas, to monitor the academic progress of each student, and to make a large school feel smaller.

In eighth grade, classes are grouped by subject area. Students will experience this type of organizational

structure at the high school level.

After-School Activities

At the end of the school day students may choose to stay and participate in a variety of clubs, grade level activities, or competitive athletics. We encourage students to take advantage of these enrichment activities. Students who compliment their academic day with extracurricular experiences enjoy school more and make stronger connections with both peers and teachers.

- **Athletics**—The athletic program at West encourages participation and emphasizes teamwork and sportsmanship. No previous experience is needed, and skills are taught to athletes with varying ability levels. Physicals are not required. Transportation after meets, matches, and games is not provided, and there is a registration fee. Track, basketball, girls' volleyball, and wrestling are offered at all grade levels.
- **Activities**— West offers a variety of extracurricular clubs and activities. These may include art club, earth club, drama, a literary magazine, jazz band, math activities and leagues, international club, spelling bee club, instrumental and vocal music groups, student council, National Junior Honor Society, yearbook, and Destination Imagination. Announcements and parent bulletins convey when clubs are held and how to join. Some activities do involve an additional fee to cover the cost of materials.
- **Academic Intramurals**—Every teacher is available after school for forty minutes on Mondays. Students are encouraged to stay and ask questions, work on homework, and make up missing work. Students may also make appointments to meet with teachers before or after school on other days of the week.

Sixth Grade

~ Great Beginnings ~

Yearlong Core Courses

Language Arts—1 period: Students study a variety of literary works, including novels, short stories, poems, pieces of non-fiction, and plays. Students gain expertise in narrative, expository, and technical writing styles. Writing content, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, and conventions are emphasized during the revision and editing stages of the writing process. Spelling, grammar, and vocabulary are also formally taught.

- Advanced Language Arts —All components of the grade level curriculum are included but at a faster pace and higher level.

Mathematics—1 period: West Middle School offers four levels of mathematics at sixth grade. Students are placed at an appropriately challenging level, based on class performance and formal assessments.

- Math 6 is sixth grade core curriculum.
- Enriched Math is an accelerated sixth grade course with some seventh grade curriculum.
- Advanced Math Honors is seventh grade curriculum.
- Algebra 6 Honors is a full-year algebra course.

An additional placement test is required for both Advanced Math and Algebra 6 Honors.

Science—1 period: The sixth grade science curriculum explores life, earth, and physical sciences through the following topics: ecology and ecosystems; astronomy; matter and chemical reactions; electricity and magnetism. Students will use the scientific method to perform experiments and write formal laboratory reports.

Social Studies—1 period: The sixth grade curriculum focuses on the geography, history and culture of Latin America and Canada. Each unit of study includes the region's location in the world; physical and human interaction including climate regions; history, population and other current issues; native traditions.



Sixth Grade Electives

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There are two elective periods each day, and students may choose from yearlong and semester classes. Availability of elective classes is based on enrollment, and student preference is not guaranteed.

Yearlong electives:

Beginning Band: The beginning band program is open to all sixth grade students interested in learning how to play a woodwind, brass, or percussion instrument. This class requires a full-year commitment. Students wanting to begin as percussionists must have previous piano experience.

Beginning Orchestra: This class is for any student who would like to learn to play a stringed instrument: violin, viola, cello, or string bass. This class requires a full-year commitment.

Band 6 & Orchestra 6: These courses are for students who have been playing their instrument for at least one year. Depending on enrollment this may be a yearlong class, or students may join their peers second semester. Students at this level are encouraged to join West's after-school instrumental program.

Please note—6th grade is the only year students may begin an instrument. Students in all levels of band and orchestra must provide their own instruments, available through music store rental programs.

Spanish 1A & French 1A: Spanish 1A and French 1A begin the fundamentals of sentence composition and grammar skills, in addition to spoken vocabulary. Students must be proficient in English and have strong study skills and test scores to select this path.

Semester Electives:

Fitness PE: Students learn and play cooperative games, traditional sports, non-traditional sports, and fitness activities. Students will understand the benefits and commitment required for lifetime fitness. One semester of Fitness PE is required for all students not enrolled in two yearlong courses.

Sports & Wellness PE: Sports PE is an optional PE class, which can be taken in addition to Fitness PE. This class focuses on team/individual sports and lifelong wellness.

General Music: This class contains a wide range of experiences, including units on choral music and music history. This class has something for everyone — from the beginning musician to the advanced.

Art: Sixth grade students work with a variety of art media, including clay, computer art, tempera and watercolor painting, drawing, printmaking, and collage. Students critique and analyze works of art, study art history, as well as work with the elements of design.

Computers & Technology: Students are introduced to many computer applications, including graphics, word processing, spreadsheets, and keyboarding. Activities may include building and flying a balsa wood airplane and manufacturing a sheet metal locker box. There is a material fee for this class.

French/Spanish Introduction: Students experience nine weeks of French and nine weeks of Spanish in this class. Students learn vocabulary and basic conversational questions and responses. Cultural units are woven into the lessons.

Advanced Problem Solving: An enhancement course designed to explore critical thinking and logical skills. Topics will include the science of the brain, global relationships, learning theory, and creative problem solving.

Seventh Grade

~ *The Middle Bridge* ~

Yearlong Core Courses

Language Arts—1 period: Students read and study a variety of literary works, including novels, short stories, and non-fiction chosen to fit themes relative to coming of age, the Holocaust, Shakespeare, and mythology. Students write using different formats in response to the literature, including narrative, expository, and technical.

- Advanced Language Arts—All components of the grade level curriculum are included but at a faster pace; literary selections are more challenging and writing assignments more complex.

Mathematics—1 period: West Middle School offers four levels of mathematics at 7th grade. Students are placed at an appropriately challenging level, using a variety of assessments.

- Math 7 is seventh grade core curriculum.
- Algebra 1-A is an accelerated seventh grade curriculum and beginning Algebra.
- Algebra 7 Honors is an honors level Algebra course.
- Topics Honors includes Geometry, Algebra II, and Trigonometry.

Science—1 period: The seventh grade science curriculum addresses the life, earth, and physical sciences. Topics of study include heat and thermal energy; cells and mitosis; classification and evolution of organisms; earth history, processes, and systems; meteorology. Process skills learned include use of the metric system; the use of laboratory glassware, triple beam balances and microscopes; graphing and data analysis; scientific inquiry.

Social Studies—1 period: The seventh grade curriculum is a yearlong regional studies course of the Eastern Hemisphere focusing on **Africa, Asia, and Europe**. Emphasis is placed on the historical and cultural background of the people of these areas.



Seventh Grade Electives

There are two elective periods each day, and students may choose from yearlong and semester classes. Availability of elective classes is based on enrollment, and student preference is not guaranteed.

Yearlong Electives:

Band 7: This is the band for experienced (one or more years) student willing to make a yearlong commitment. Students will study instrumental skills, scales, and techniques, and perform all styles of music, from classical to rock. Concerts will be scheduled throughout the year.

Orchestra 7: Orchestra is open to all seventh grade students who have played a violin, viola, cello, or string bass for at least one year. Basic string skills and advanced skills such as vibrato, positions, and bowing techniques will be studied.

Please note—Students in band and orchestra must provide their own instruments, available through music store rental programs. Students are encouraged to join West's after-school instrumental program.

Spanish & French: Students in these classes gain comprehension of culture, vocabulary and grammatical structures. Teacher approval is required to enroll.

- *Spanish 1A & French 1A:* Spanish 1A and French 1A begin the fundamentals of sentence composition and grammatical skills, in addition to spoken vocabulary.
- *Spanish 1B—*Prerequisite is Spanish 1A in sixth grade.

Semester Electives:

Fitness PE & Health: In Fitness PE students learn cooperative games, speedball, high rock walls (depending on class size), lacrosse, fitness, floor hockey, volleyball, and badminton. Health education encompasses tobacco use, refusal skills, human sexuality, nutrition, and fitness. One semester of Fitness PE is required for all students not enrolled in two yearlong courses.

Sports & Wellness PE: Sports PE is an optional PE class, which can be taken in addition to Fitness PE. This class focuses on team/individual sports and lifelong wellness.

Art: Students explore sculpture, clay, drawing, tempera, watercolor painting, computer art, printmaking, and collage. Students continue to critique and analyze works of art and study art history.

Computers & Technology: The computer portion of this class covers graphics, word processing, spreadsheets, databases, keyboarding, and multimedia software. In the technology lab, students design a bridge and build a balsa wood bridge. Students are exposed to electronics, electronic components, and soldering while building a small electronic kit. There is a material fee for this class.

Choir: Students learn and perform a variety of musical choral singing styles, with emphasis placed on proper music techniques, including breathing, articulation, posture, and stage presence. Sight-reading and note-reading skills are taught.

Music Adventure: This seventh grade music class contains a wide range of experiences, which may include units on keyboard synthesizers, percussion instruments, and musical genre studies.

Guitar: Students learn the basics of playing, including chords, tablature, and note reading. Guitars are provided by the school. This class is designed for **beginners**.

Eighth Grade

~ *Crossing to the Future* ~



Yearlong Core Courses

Language Arts—1 period: Literature study is divided into student-selected works and teacher-selected works, which may include novels, short stories, poems, non-fiction, and plays selected to illustrate universal themes. Students build a portfolio of writing, including narrative, expository, and technical writing. Writing content, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, and conventions are emphasized during the revision and editing stages of the writing process. Spelling, grammar, and vocabulary are formally taught.

- Advanced Language Arts—All components of the grade level curriculum are included but at a faster pace and a more complex and challenging level.
- Honors Language Arts—Students are placed in this accelerated course based on demonstrated academic ability.

Mathematics—1 period: There are five levels of mathematics at eighth grade. Students are placed in an appropriate mathematics level based on assessments and teacher recommendations.

- Pre-Algebra is a grade level core curriculum with emphasis on the skills needed for Algebra.
- Algebra 8 is a full-year Algebra course.
- Algebra 1-B is a continuation of Algebra 1-A in 7th grade and completes the Algebra program.
- Topics Honors is for students who have mastered Algebra. It includes Geometry, Algebra II, and Trigonometry content.
- Geometry Honors is an honors level Geometry course.

Science—1 period: The eighth grade science curriculum explores life science and physical sciences. Topics include, but are not limited to, human systems, chemistry, force, and motion. Students will focus on developing systems thinking, experimental design, data and graph analysis, conclusion writing, use of equations, analysis of trends, and correct equipment usage.

- Honors Science—Students are placed in this accelerated course based on demonstrated academic ability.

Social Studies—1 period: Students study the American political system. Units of study include the historical foundations of government, the U.S. Constitution, the Bill of Rights, Federalism, the Constitutional Convention and the framework of government. The American Revolution, Continental Congress, Declaration of Independence, the Articles of Confederation, and the expansion of rights are also studied.

Eighth Grade Electives

There are two elective periods a day, and students may choose from yearlong and semester classes. Availability of elective classes is based on enrollment, and student preference is not guaranteed.

Yearlong Electives:

Band: This band studies and performs more difficult music in all styles, and is for experienced students. Concerts will be scheduled throughout the year.

Orchestra: Orchestra is open to eighth grade students who have played a violin, viola, cello, or string bass for at least two years. Basic string skills and advanced skills such as vibrato, positions, and bowing techniques are studied. Concerts, contests, solos, and the elementary school tour are included.

Please note—Students in band and orchestra must provide their own instruments, available through music store rental programs. Students are encouraged to join West's after-school instrumental program.

Yearlong Choir: Choral groups perform a wide variety of music. Emphasis is placed on improving vocal technique and learning to sight read. Groups perform in concerts, at a choral festival at Cherry Creek High School, and in the community.

World Language: Students have the opportunity to either continue or start their study of French or Spanish. Students develop proficiency in all five areas of the Colorado State Foreign Language Standards: listening, speaking, reading, writing, and culture. Teacher approval is required to enroll at all levels.

- *Spanish 1*—Full-year beginning course.
- *Spanish 1B*—Prerequisite is Spanish 1A in seventh grade.
- *Spanish 2* — Both Spanish 1A and Spanish 1B must be satisfactorily completed.
- *French 1*— Full-year beginning course.
- *French 1B*— Prerequisite is French 1A in seventh grade.

Peer Counselor— Peer counseling gives students an opportunity to help other students become more successful in the school setting. After several weeks of training, the peers will work with students in the Counseling Office and assist teachers and/or tutor students in the classroom. Peer counselors are trained to mediate peer conflicts. **Peer counselors are selected through a formal application and interview process. Applications are available in the Counseling Office.**

Semester Electives:

8th Grade PE, Spring and Fall- Many activities and sports are covered in Spring and Fall PE, including pickleball, floor hockey, cooperative games, fitness, weight lifting, archery, volleyball, ropes course (depending on class size), flag football, and softball, to name a few. Different units are covered in each class, and students may register for **both** Spring and Fall PE.

Eighth Grade—Electives (continued)

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Semester Electives—continued:

Semester Choir: Choral groups perform a wide variety of music. Emphasis is placed on improving vocal technique and learning to sight read. Groups will perform in school and community venues.

Art I and Art II: Eighth grade Art I and Art II are exciting, hands-on studio experiences. Students will explore a variety of art media such as ink, pastels, acrylic paint, watercolors, charcoal, conte' pencil, ceramics, and others. Students will also research famous artists. The goal of these classes is to give students a greater understanding and appreciation of art for a lifetime of enjoyment. Different projects will be created in each class. Students may register for **both** Art I and Art II during the year.

Guitar: Students learn the basics of playing, including chords, tablature, and note reading. More advanced techniques such as accompaniment, composition, and improvisation may be studied as well. Styles of music include folk, rock, blues, jazz, and classical. Guitars are provided by the school. This class is designed for beginners. Students will be encouraged to explore independently and in ensembles.

Advanced Computer & Video Production: Students develop a website with many different elements, using web programs, page design, graphics, virtual reality, video editing, and computer animation. In the video production portion, students create different types of computerized videos and video podcasts. Students use the iLife programs (iMovie, GarageBand, iTunes, iPhoto) along with the Internet to create video documentaries, commercials, movie trailers, news stories, and personal videos. There is a material fee for this class.

Applied Industrial Technology: Computers are used for the instruction and design of projects that include rocketry, CO₂ cars, a plastic clipboard, and alternative transportation. Students explore manufacturing, construction, energy, and transportation industries. There is a materials fee for this class.

Architectural Design & Modeling: Students use computer-aided drafting techniques to design and build a model of a building. Areas of study include architectural history, styles, and characteristics. Use of computer software and 3-D modeling is taught. Students must have strong technical reading and computer skills. There is a material fee, and teacher approval is required for registration.

Student Aide: Aide positions are available in the Main Office, Library, Counseling Office, Attendance Office, or as an aide to a grade-level team. Students chosen to be a student assistant need to be responsible, conscientious, and able to maintain confidentiality. **Interested students must obtain an application from the Counseling Office.**

Special Programs

AVID—Advancement Via Individual Determination

AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) is a college-readiness system designed to increase the number of students who enroll in four-year colleges. These students receive support in an academic elective class - called AVID - taught within the school day by a trained AVID teacher. For one period a day, they learn organizational and study skills, work on critical thinking and asking probing questions, get academic help from peers and college tutors, and participate in enrichment and motivational activities that make college seem attainable. AVID targets students in the academic middle - B, C, and even D students - who have the desire to go to college and the willingness to work hard. These are students who are capable of completing rigorous curriculum but are falling short of their potential.

English Language Acquisition (ELA)

Students who enter West Middle School with a language other than English as their first language can receive services through the ELA program. The purpose of this program is to help students better their understanding and use of the English language, become familiar with the American culture, and develop a sense of how American schools operate. Beginning English language learners have two ELA classes per day and practice listening, speaking, reading, and writing of English vocabulary. The advanced English language learners focus on academic vocabulary acquisition as well as the reading and writing skills needed to function well in core classes. They attend one ELA class per day.

Gifted and Talented Programming

Gifted and talented programming at West Middle School can be accessed in our core curriculum and in our elective courses. We offer advanced and honors programming in language arts, mathematics, and science. We also provide pull-out enhancement courses during elective times. These advanced options classes provide information on subjects beyond traditional curriculum, such as brain processing, advanced problem solving, and global relationships.

Student Support

West Middle School is committed to providing quality instruction to students with disabilities and to those who struggle making consistent progress in their academics. Students who have learning, speech/language and or emotional challenges receive preventative services, IEP specialized instruction, specialized assessments and enhanced monitoring of their academic progress. Our staff partners with parents to make decisions on how best to support students with ongoing needs. Course options include: reading and writing skill support, affective education and math skills remediation classes.

Notes



