

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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 276-228-5411

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 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 Growth Assessment

New for the 2021-22 school year. Growth Assessments will be administered in the fall of 2021.

Students will not receive a score, but performance will be used to determine growth throughout the course.

- Reading - Grades 6, 7, 8
- Mathematics - Grades 6, 7, 8 (excluding Algebra I)

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. Students will rotate through four STEAM courses during the year.

6th Grade Curriculum

Sixth grade schedules include 70 minute core classes and 45 minute PE, STEAM, band, choir, and enrichment. All classes are year-long, except STEAM which rotates. Sixth grade classes consist of the following:

- English 6
- Math 6
- Science 6
- History 6
- STEAM
- Band/Choir (if selected)
- Enrichment (select students)
- Physical Education & Health

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 include 70 minute core classes and 45 minute PE, STEAM, band, choir, and enrichment. All classes are year-long, except STEAM which rotates. Seventh grade classes consist of the following:

- English 7
- Math 7
- Life Science
- Civics & Economics
- Band/Choir (if selected)
- Enrichment (select students)
- Physical Education & Health

Math 7 students who meet all three of the following criteria will be eligible to enroll in Algebra I for eighth grade:

- A score of 480 or higher on the Math 7 SOL test
- A grade of 90 or higher for the year in Math 7
- The principal's recommendation (given based on academic data/performance and teacher comments)

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 may be 90 minute block classes or 70 minute classes for core subjects. PE, Exploratory 8, band, choir, and French are 45 minutes. Exploratory 8 rotates four times throughout the year. Eighth grade classes consist of the following:

- English 8 or Advanced English 8
- Pre-Algebra or Algebra I
- Global Studies 8
- Physical Science
- Health and Physical Education
- Enrichment or Academic Foundations (select students/may differ between middle schools)

In order to be eligible for Advance English 8, students must meet the all of the following criteria:

- Passing scores on both the Reading 6 and Reading 7 SOL tests
- A Passed Advanced score on either the Reading 6 or Reading 7 SOL tests (500 or higher)
- A grade of 86 or higher for the year in Reading 7
- The principal's recommendation (given based on academic data/performance and teacher comments)

Students may choose Exploratory 8 or Electives:

Exploratory 8 (9 week rotations)

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

Electives (high school credit)

- Band
- Chorus
- French I (To be eligible to enroll in French I a student must have at least a B (86 or higher) average in English 7 and a teacher/principal recommendation, A strong background in English grammar is recommended.)

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 instruction/investigation and career plan development as well as opportunities to examine career interests. Below is a link to investigate the career clusters.

http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/career_technical/career_clusters/

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 school will have that team.

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 passed a certain number of credits/classes:
 - 4 out of 6 credits/classes, **or**
 - 5 out of 7 credits/classes
- 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).

Along with maintaining eligible grades, students must also be in good standing at school. Good standing is defined as having no issues with truancy and no excessive and/or serious discipline infractions.

All students **must have a current** 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
- Coaches will select wrestlers as needed by weight class

Cheerleading (Fall and Winter)

- There will be a separate fall and winter squads
- 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

Notice of Non-Discrimination: Wythe County Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following persons have been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Director of Transportation and Food Services or School Social Worker: 1570 W. Reservoir Wytheville, VA 24382, 276-228-5411. You may also contact these individuals at:

<https://wythe.k12.va.us/cms/One.aspx?portalId=433983&pageId=2352681> For further information on notice of nondiscrimination, visit <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/index.html> for the address and phone number of the office that serves your area, or call 1-800-421-3481.