

Oxbow High School



Middle School Program Of Study 2009-2010

**Oxbow High School
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Bradford, VT 05033**

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**Chuck Brown, Principal
Tom Marshal, Assistant Principal**

The Oxbow Guidance Department is available to help with questions about enrollment and course registration. Please contact your child's counselor at 802-222-4320.

**Lomond Tougas, Guidance Coordinator – Grades 9-12
Mark Pichette, Counselor – Grades 9-12
Kathy Garone, Counselor – Grades 7-9**

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ACADEMIC INFORMATION

Requirements

Middle school students are required to enroll in both core classes and enrichment courses. Core classes are math, science, English, and social studies, which meet daily for the duration of the year. All students rotate through enrichment courses in art, music and Family and Consumer Sciences on a trimester basis. In addition, middle school students are also required to take Physical Education.

Electives

Seventh and eighth grade students may elect to enroll in band and/or chorus. However, both classes meet during the same period on an every other day basis. Eighth grade students choosing both band **and** chorus are unable to take physical education because of scheduling conflicts. Students choosing to take one, band **or** chorus, will take physical education on the opposite days of the course that they choose. (ex. M/W/every other F) Eighth grade students also have the opportunity to enroll in a level I French or Spanish course that meets daily. Taking French or Spanish gives students a seventh class in a seven period day and takes up what would otherwise be a study hall.

Extra-Curricular Activity Eligibility

Students must receive a passing grade in every course during the preceding marking period for eligibility during the next marking period. **(An average grade of 65 is considered passing for the quarter.)** The fourth marking period of the preceding year will determine eligibility for the first marking period of the following year. All students enter 7th grade eligible for fall sports. A student participating in any extracurricular activity becomes ineligible and eligible on the day report cards are issued. A grade of "I" (incomplete) does not make a student ineligible. The student with an incomplete grade has two weeks from the close of the marking period to make up the work, unless extenuating circumstances exist (i.e. an extended illness). If the incomplete grade is not made within two weeks, the teacher will record the grade of record at that time. Incomplete grades may only be assigned in cases of extreme duress.

The following extra-curricular activities are available to middle school students.

soccer	basketball	cross-country running
nordic skiing	softball (girls)	baseball (boys)
golf	track & Field	drama
student council	cheerleading	

Criteria for Entrance to Challenge Classes

Challenge classes are designed for **self motivated students who achieve academic excellence**. The classes emphasize depth of discussion and intensified reading and writing. Please refer to the individual course descriptions for more information. Placement in challenge classes takes into account student performance and teacher recommendation. Students with grades below an average of C- in a challenge class may be asked to transfer from the course at the teacher's discretion and in consultation with family. Students need not participate in challenge courses at the middle school level in order to be recommended for honors classes in ninth grade. In math, however, a student should take Math 8 Challenge in order to be prepared for Honors Geometry in the ninth grade, keeping in mind that restrictions in our master schedule require that students take all four challenge classes. Important factors considered for participation in honors courses are academic performance, motivation, and work habits.

Middle School Guidance

Ms. Garone serves as Guidance Counselor for all middle school students and remains with our eighth grade students throughout their ninth grade year. Any questions regarding placement or course selection should be directed to her in the Guidance Office, 802-222-4320.

GRADE 7

CORE

English 7 Challenge - With Vermont Grade Expectations as its basis, this course begins with an immersion experience in Shakespeare, culminating with a performance in early November. The second quarter addresses parts of speech and parts of sentences, as well as writing constructed and extended responses. The third marking period addresses writing instruction and prescriptive vocabulary study. Students are asked to self-select appropriate fiction and to conference on those works twice a month. Compared to English 7, the challenge class demands additional line memorization in the Shakespeare unit, accelerated reading and an increased volume of prescriptive vocabulary, and additional writing opportunities.

English 7 - With Vermont Grade Expectations as its basis, this course begins with an immersion experience in a Shakespeare, culminating with a performance in early November. The second quarter addresses parts of speech and parts of sentences, as well as writing constructed responses and extended responses. The third marking period addresses writing instruction and prescriptive vocabulary study. Students are asked to self-select appropriate fiction and to conference on those works twice a month.

Reading 7/8 - This class is offered to students in the 7th Grade who need to concentrate on improving reading skills. Classroom instruction includes spelling, grammar, phonics, vocabulary, comprehension, reading and writing skills. This course replaces English 7. **Placement in this course is determined by the student's team.

Social Studies 7 Challenge - The same themes are covered as in the regular 7th grade class. This course includes additional map facts, additional readings, particularly in the literature of each country studied, more in-depth study of the current political situations, and a higher level of reading required for daily homework assignments. Writing assignments assume students have already mastered basic writing skills and research techniques, and are ready for higher-level analysis and research papers.

Social Studies 7 - The seventh grade social studies curriculum covers mapping and other basic geography skills. The cultural component focuses on Europe, Central America and the Middle East. Students learn about these regions' geography, economy, history, belief systems, and lifestyles through readings, group work, projects, and research papers.

Life Skills 7/8 - This course provides an introduction to basic daily living skills, individualized to the needs of the student. Functional academic skills related to daily living are also addressed. **Placement in this course is determined by the student's team.

Math 7 Challenge (Pre-Algebra) - This class is designed to bridge concrete math to the abstract concepts of algebra. It emphasizes new terminology and concepts. Math 7 Challenge is for those students who have mastered the basic operations with respect to whole numbers, fractions and decimals. The use of calculators will be allowed in this course. Students will be using formulas, and through discovery will be writing their own formulas as well as solving one and two step algebraic equations. Successful completion (C- or better) of this course is a prerequisite for eighth grade challenge math.

Math 7 - Essential math class is designed to teach students how to manipulate whole numbers, decimals, and fractions using the four basic operations. Students will be creating a math portfolio and will learn how to write up math problems using state guidelines. Students will also be involved in several projects throughout the year, designed to relate math to the “real world”. Essential math is back to basics and much more!

Focus Math 7 - This course will reinforce and teach basic math skills. The intent is to increase confidence in math skills. This course will teach new approaches to solving basic computation. Students will be encouraged to solve problems mentally, rather than using pen and paper. Students will move through curriculum units and will be quizzed after the completion of each unit. The successful student will complete a skills inventory test at the end of the course.

Science 7 Challenge - This course supplements the seventh grade curriculum with additional information, in-depth projects and more detailed lab work. Basic concepts will be covered at a quicker pace, more written work will be done at home, and students should be prepared to engage in classroom discussions on a regular basis.

Science 7 - This is an introductory life science class, which will expose students to the world of living things, large and small. They will use a variety of science equipment including extensive use of the microscope. Lab experiences are provided regularly and students have the opportunity to design and carry out their own experiments towards the end of the year. Students will be expected to conduct research throughout the year, and present their findings to the class either orally, as a written research paper, or by focusing on the use of visual aids to get their information across. Students sponsor several events during the year to raise money for their end of the year field trip.

Job Skills 7/8 - This course involves an introduction to pre-vocational skills, individualized to the needs of the student. Functional academic skills are also addressed.
** Placement in the course is determined by the student’s team.

ENRICHMENT

Physical Education 7 - In this coed course, emphasis is placed on skills, knowledge, and

the development of coordination through team sports and recreational activities. Supplemental to the physical education curriculum, 7th grade students will participate in a semester long group guidance program. The group, which meets once per week during first semester, is facilitated by the middle school guidance counselor and focuses on personal and social growth through activities and discussion.

Art 7 - All students study visual art for one twelve- week term in the 7th grade. Students have the opportunity to develop their artistic skills by working with a variety of materials to create both 2- dimensional and 3-dimensional pieces. Each project provides the opportunity for students to learn how other people, in different times and places, have worked with the same materials to create works of art.

Music 7 – This is a twelve-week course designed to strengthen students’ existing skills in music and introduce new ones. The curriculum includes a blues unit, a Garage Band composition unit, and shorter mini-units involving keyboard, guitar and other topics.

Family and Consumer Science 7 - This course follows a very traditional Home Economics course outline. Students work on individual projects and team or cooperative projects in the areas of clothing and textiles, foods and nutrition, and adolescence. Students will have the course for one twelve-week term in 7th grade.

ELECTIVES

Band MS – Band is an ensemble course that focuses on performance skills. Students will work to develop individual instrumental technique, ensemble/listening skills, musicianship skills, and general knowledge of instrumental music. Band is open to all students who play a band instrument. Piano players, guitar players, or other non-traditional concert band instrumentalists may sign up, but will be expected to play with the ensemble and complete the same assignments. There will be two performances throughout the year. Band meets every other day. (M/W/ every other Friday.)

Chorus MS - Basic choral techniques and musicianship are studied and practiced through a variety of choral literature in various styles, languages and cultures. The class meets every other day. (T/Th/every other Friday) There will be two performances given throughout the year.

** Due to restrictions in our master schedule PE is offered during the same period as band and chorus. Students signing up for **both** classes are not able to be scheduled into PE.

GRADE 8

CORE

English 8 Challenge - Challenge English students follow the same quarterly themes as English 8, but are asked to produce more writing and reading. Students should expect one major writing assignment a week as well as regular weekly assignments. All writing assignments are typed and the students should plan extra time after school for this requirement if a computer is not available at home. Once a quarter, students are asked to attempt to publish outside of school. Requirements for outside reading are raised to 30 books during the year.

English 8 - The class focuses on four different themes that rotate on a quarterly basis; fiction, drama and poetry, careers and the future, and journalism. Each theme is matched with a class novel and writing forms that are collected for completion for the Vermont Writing Portfolio at the end of the year. All students take the National Writing Reference Exam and are asked to meet the Vermont Reading Framework goal of reading and logging 25 books during the year in a variety of genres.

Reading 7/8 - This class is offered to students in the 8th Grade who need to concentrate on improving reading skills. Classroom instruction includes spelling, grammar, phonics, vocabulary, comprehension, reading and writing skills. This course replaces English 8. Team recommendation required.

History 8 Challenge - This course is designed for the self-motivated student who is willing to be challenged. The class introduces students to the issues and themes in US History from the late colonial period in North America through the Civil War. Focus themes involve intolerance, racism, and the development of democracy. Skill development is also stressed. Each student must expect to write constructed and extended response pieces, read historic literature, and do independent research.

History 8 - This course is designed to introduce students to some of the basic issues and themes of American History. The course covers material from the late colonial period in North America through the Civil War. Emphasis is placed on founding concepts of American government and society. Units will include an emphasis on social studies skills that can be applied in dealing with information beyond that being studied. These skills include reading a range of text, using graphic organizers and writing constructed and extended response piece.

Life Skills 7/8 - This course focuses on basic daily living skills, individualized to the needs of the student. Functional academic skills are also addressed. ** Placement in the course is determined by the student's team.

Math 8 Challenge (Algebra 1) - The course follows a traditional Algebra I curriculum. This course requires students to have previously mastered basic math skills. Successful completion of the 7th grade challenge math curriculum (C- or better) and the algebra readiness test are pre-requisites for this course. Strong organizational skills and problem solving skills are highly recommended. Work requirements are more intense and require a high level of self-discipline.

Math 8 (PreAlgebra) Math 8 is a prealgebra course designed to give students a strong foundation in mathematics. It follows a "problem solving" approach to mathematics,

stressing mastery of traditional skills while introducing abstract concepts such as open sentences, algebraic operations, and basic geometric relationships.

Science 8 Challenge - In the science portion of the Challenge Program there is room for more in-depth lab exercises involving more math-oriented skills. There is more contract time for independent work. The class is geared to physical science, the study of matter and energy. Concepts in chemistry and physics are used to help explain the world around us.

Science 8 - The focus of 8th grade science will be to develop skills necessary to foster a positive and rewarding outlook for future scientific endeavors. Students will be prepared to enter high school science with skills involving the scientific method, measurements, scientific reporting and research, experimentation, and scientific reading. The content area will be physical science and the study of matter and energy. Students will be exploring topics in physics such as motion, light, sound and energy. In chemistry, students will be investigating matter and its classifications, patterns, and changes involved with matter.

Job Skills 7/8 - This course provides and introduction to pre-vocational skills, individualized to the needs of the student. ** Placement in this course is determined by the student's team.

ENRICHMENT

Physical Education 8 - In this coed course, emphasis is placed on skills, knowledge, and the development of coordination through team sports and recreational activities. All students are expected to participate unless a physician excuses them. Supplemental to the physical education curriculum, 8th grade students will participate in a semester long group guidance program. The group which meets once per week in the second semester is facilitated by the middle school guidance counselor and focuses on personal and social growth through group activities and discussion.

Art 8 - The focus of arts study in the 8th grade year is on the artistic and "heroic" individuals and traditions in our families and how these influence our art. Artistic concepts and skills include hand building with clay, working with pattern, experimenting with box camera photography, drawing represent figures in motion and using those figures to illustrate stories. Art 8 is an everyday course for one twelve week term.

Music 8 - This is a twelve week course designed to continue building upon and encouraging students' existing skills in music and introduce new ones. The curriculum includes elemental music theory concepts such as: Rhythm, Melody, Composition, Singing, Performance, Lyric Writing, and a Garage Band composition unit. All are taught through a variety of games based on small group activities.

Family and Consumer Science 8 - The 8th grade program for Family and Consumer Sciences continues on the basics of the 7th grade program. It focuses on the issues of family living and relationships, child development, consumer management, housing and home environment. Students have the course for one twelve week term during the 8th grade.

ELECTIVES

Band MS - Band is an ensemble course that focuses on performance skills. Students will work to develop individual instrumental technique, ensemble/listening skills, musicianship skills, and general knowledge of instrumental music. Band is open to all students who play a band instrument. Piano players, guitar players, or other non-traditional concert band instrumentalists may sign up, but will be expected to play with the ensemble and complete the same assignments. Band meets every other day. (M/W/every other Friday)

Chorus MS - Basic choral techniques and musicianship are studied and practiced through a variety of choral literature in various styles, languages and cultures. The class meets every other day. There will be two performances given throughout the year. (T/Th/every other Friday)

French/Spanish - This is a high school Level I course for **motivated** Middle School students. Classroom activities include oral repetition and drills, oral presentation of dialogues and skits, memorization and vocabulary practice, workbook exercises designed for reinforcement and retention of material learned, and some cultural activities. Speaking and understanding are emphasized. Reading skills are developed and writing is limited to structured or directed activity. The goal of this course is to complete Level I of foreign language instruction, or to give a solid foundation for students who feel they need further instruction in Level I when they reach 9th grade. **Students must be motivated and willing to do a small amount of homework daily.**