

Renaissance Magnet Middle School



Scheduling Guide
2006 – 2007

Overview

Renaissance Magnet Middle School (RMMS) was established to serve as a choice for parents and students wishing a different educational structure for the middle school student. Students who attend are typically drawn to advanced studies in a magnet area and a smaller school population. The “magnet” classes are explored in depth and form a catalyst in the core subjects (English, Math, Science and Social Studies) providing a greater relevancy to learning. We are a family and provide a small middle school climate for the discriminating student.

The mission of RMMS is “Providing optimal educational opportunities for ALL students to prepare themselves for a productive future.” The school is comprised of core classes, the magnet emphasis noted above, an ASSURE class, and a homeroom program.

The organization of the school is unique within the district. Classes are multi-age, with 7th and 8th grade students in all classes together. The core classes consist of English, Math, Social Studies, and Science, and are block scheduled to assist instruction. These classes follow the district’s approved, standards based, middle school core curriculum. Core teachers have a daily common planning period, and during this time they coordinate and integrate the curriculum as well as plan strategies for the success of each student. Core classes are 90 minutes in length and follow an alternating schedule, while the ASSURE, Homeroom, and Magnet classes meet daily. The Homeroom class includes the use of a daily planner and instruction in life skills (taught at all FUSD middle schools) and a variety of other topics related to the middle school student.

The academic success of each student is the focus of the curriculum. The standard for success is consistent throughout the school, with 70% being the minimum standard for successful completion of an assignment or test. If the student falls below this minimum, the teachers meet to design strategies to assist the student in being successful. Time at lunch, during Homeroom, or during ASSURE is flexible and is used to provide time for assisting students needing additional help.

Parental involvement is a key to the success of any student in school. Parents are involved not only in developing plans for student success, but in volunteer activities at the school when their time permits.

Course Descriptions

ASSURE

The ASSURE Class will focus on rotations in the following areas: Beginning Chinese, Beginning Spanish, Journalism and Fitness Awareness. Classes incorporate information found in the Arizona Academic Standards and serve as pseudo “electives.”

Homeroom

In homeroom, students work on organization skills using a daily planner. Life skills and a variety of topics related to middle school students are emphasized. Time is allotted for both enrichment and remediation.

CORE CLASSES

ENGLISH

English is a 7/8 grade combined course that includes mastery learning in reading, understanding and use of The Writing Process using The 6 Traits of Writing, vocabulary, spelling, grammar, usage and listening/speaking skills. Literature studies include poetry, short story, drama, and historical and geographically based novels. There are opportunities for collaboration with other core and magnet classes utilizing library and research skills. State Reading and Writing Standards are emphasized throughout the course of the year.

SCIENCE

Students are introduced to scientific investigation and basic lab methods in the setting of active problem solving activities. The purpose of the course is to provide students with an understanding of scientific methods and philosophy to assist students in in-depth science investigations. Areas of instruction in a two-year revolving curriculum include: basic physics, geology, landforms, matter and energy, astronomy, oceanography, classification of life forms, ecological systems, and current trends in science application. Science texts rotate through life, physical, and earth sciences.

Family involvement is emphasized throughout the RMMS program. As a part of the science curriculum, students may be asked to participate in various community service projects that have been integrated into the curriculum.

MATH

Note: Math placement will be determined by a placement test, AIMS scores, and recommendations from previous math teachers.

Math 7/ 8 Skills is designed for students who need development in basic operations and problem solving before advancing to Pre-Algebra. Students develop math concepts through inquiry, discovery, manipulation, and investigation of topics.

Pre-Algebra is designed to prepare students for Algebra. The course is based on solving problems by observing patterns and their relationships. Students conjecture, test, discuss, verbalize, and generalize these patterns and relationships to develop an understanding of the underlying concepts. Areas of study include data analysis, graphing, comparisons, integers, volume and surface area, measurements, probability, number theory, and solving linear equations.

Algebra students must have a good working background in mathematics. Areas covered include set theory, equation solving, polynomials, factoring, graphing, functions, problem solving, negative numbers, and quadratic equations. Students are given a good foundation for any future mathematical study. Students must have successfully completed a Pre-Algebra course or obtain a teacher recommendation.

Geometry is offered only for qualified students in partnership with MEMS Geometry.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Areas of instruction in a two-year revolving curriculum include:

World Geography deals with world, U. S. and Arizona geography. An emphasis is placed on historical and cultural perspectives. Basic geographic skills and knowledge are presented. Units are thematic and interdisciplinary with a heavy emphasis on developing problem solving/critical thinking skills. Multiple learning styles are addressed.

