

Omaha Public Schools

Morton Middle School

4606 Terrace Dr.

Omaha, NE 68134

Course Catalog

2025-2026



Morton Middle School

Mission Statement:

Morton inspires all students to become lifelong learners.

Vision:

Morton engages all students in educational experiences that prepare them to excel in college, career and life in our ever-changing global society.

Administration Team

Dr. Matthew Williams- Principal

Katie Landstrom- Assistant Principal/Data Processor

Paul Zulkosky- Assistant Principal/Athletic Director

Breanna Bowers- Dean of Students

Chad Hayes- Dean of Students

Briana Valentine- Instructional Facilitator

Counseling Department

Taralyn Brown- 6th Grade Counselor

Liz Preston- 7th Grade Counselor

Kael Busing- 8th Grade Counselor

Sixth Grade Course Descriptions

Art

Art 6

This course examines artists' world views. Enduring understandings and ideas include: Art reveals aesthetic theories; Artists create art from multiple perspectives of time, place and culture revealing aesthetic theories; Artistic forms follow function throughout time; Critical processes identify aesthetic theories; and Art reflects the values and beliefs of a civilization/society. Students will play the role of artist, philosopher, historian, and archeologist to explore world art throughout time.

Language Arts

Language Arts 6

English Language Arts Grade 6 supports student mastery of sixth grade language arts standards and focuses on development and application of skills in grade level reading, writing, speaking, listening, and multiple literacies. Students will read a variety of literary and informational texts and write in a variety of modes using numerous tools and organizational frameworks. Students will also learn appropriate and safe use of digital tools related to research.

Speech 6

This course builds on the fundamentals of speech and debate that students were originally exposed to in Speech 5. This course continues to focus on higher level research and presentation skills and allows students additional hands-on experiences to polish their verbal presentation and listening abilities. Sixth grade students will recite poetry and plays with expression, and research and develop a persuasive speech.

Mathematics

Math 6

This course covers the 6th grade mathematics content standards. Students will work with integers, fractions, decimals, and percents, study metric and standard systems of

measurement, apply properties of geometry, use data analysis, and solve problems involving multiple-step equations.

Advanced Math 6

Advanced Math 6 takes a deeper dive into the content standards from Grade 6 with a focus on critical and creative thinking. Students are encouraged to participate in extended math activities such as math contests and clubs. Prerequisites: See middle school placement guidelines

**Prerequisite: Teacher recommendation based upon past mathematics achievement and assessment results.*

Physical Education

Physical Education 6

This course is designed to include a wide variety of sporting activities and teach the qualities of sportsmanship, competition and fitness. It includes learning the rules and regulations for the major sports of volleyball, wrestling, basketball, soccer, and track and field events. Students also participate in a variety of leisure and lifetime activities including badminton, aerobics and more. Students must wear appropriate attire for physical education courses (tennis shoes, T-shirts, sweats or shorts, etc.).

MS Lifetime Fitness 6

This course is designed to help the student understand and apply the concepts and skills of fitness activities while understanding the importance of conditioning and exercise. These courses will concentrate on improving strength, endurance, and knowledge of fitness concepts. This will be accomplished through instruction of the skills and concepts of fitness. The OPS Physical Education Content Standards encompassed in these courses will be #1, #2, #3, #4 and #5.

Dance

This is an introductory course that educates students in a range of dance techniques. Students will begin to develop and improve on technical strengths through basic skills of ballet, tap, jazz, ethnic-folk, and modern dance. Students will gain knowledge of movement in all cardinal directions and with varied tempos of music. Elements of dance history, genre, terminology, critical analysis and performance will be covered.

Reading

Reading Skills 6

This blended course is designed for readers who have a foundation in decoding skills but experience difficulty comprehending grade-level material, as well as students who need support with foundational literacy skills. Students in this course will improve reading proficiency with explicit, direct instruction in fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Strategies for phonemic awareness and phonics will be taught as needed. Students will read leveled, high interest literature for both academic and recreational purposes. Placement is based on standardized test scores and teacher recommendation.

Science

Science Grade 6

Science Grade 6 engages students in the three dimensions (science practices, disciplinary core ideas, and crosscutting concepts) of learning as identified by the Nebraska College and Career Ready Standards for Science. The topics include Earth's systems, weather and climate, energy, structure and function and information processing, growth, development, and reproduction of organisms.

STEAM

Students will engage in activities in the disciplines of Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics (STEAM). Students will develop skills necessary in these fields of study including but not limited to problem solving, critical thinking, innovation, and creativity.

Social Studies

Anthropology

This course will focus on projects based on Ancient Civilizations through Medieval Civilizations. This course will integrate the following content standards throughout the school year: maps/globes, culture, history and geography, economics, citizenship, and government. This course will integrate electronic media and communication skills in its content.

Social Studies 6

This course examines the ancient world by studying Western Europe, Egypt, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Latin America. Special attention is given to geography, history, economics, culture and the government in these regions.

Information Technology

College and Careers 6

Students learn how to effectively explore careers while using the Nebraska Career Education Model and related resources. Student will learn the vocabulary and expectations of effective academic and career planning. A focus will be to discover the relationship between personal-social qualities, interests, and skills to a wide variety of careers and post-secondary options to choose from. The Nebraska Career Readiness Standards will be introduced and connected to expectations in today's workplace.

Prerequisites: None

Computer Apps I

This course is designed to emphasize digital life, use business productivity applications, and explore career opportunities in the Business, Marketing, and Management and Communication and Information Systems Career Fields. Students will continue to develop efficient keyboarding skills and production skills. Students will learn to create, compose, edit, and format word processing documents; organize data in a spreadsheet; and prepare digital presentations. An introduction to basic principles in digital media and computer science will be included.

Music

Chorus Grade 6

In this course sixth grade students will continue to develop their skill for reading and singing two and three-part octavo music. This emphasis is on vocal ensemble performance. There will be required performances.

Strings Grade 6

This course is the string ensemble for sixth grade students who are continuing instruction on violin, viola, cello or string bass. Basic music concepts will be advanced as the student learns to read music and develop skill in playing their instrument of choice. A method book is used as the lesson guide. Performances will be required. Prerequisite: two years previous instruction (5th grade).

Band Grade 6

This course is a band ensemble for sixth grade students who are continuing instruction on a brass, woodwind, or percussion instrument. Basic music concepts will be advanced as the student learns to read music and develop skill in playing their instrument of choice. A method book is used as the lesson guide. Performances will be required. Prerequisite: one year previous instruction.

7th Grade Course Descriptions

Art

Art 7

Throughout this course, students will experience a wide variety of artistic materials and examine the artistic communication and expression of identity by several artists, past and present. Aesthetic theories of Expressionism and Imitationalism will also be studied in depth. As they do so, they will be creating their own artwork about personal identity.

CTE: Business, Marketing, and Management

Intro to College and Careers 7

Students will continue to explore careers using the Nebraska Career Education Model. A focus will be to make connections between personal aptitudes and interests to specific Career Fields and Clusters. Students will have opportunities to practice and develop skills in the Nebraska Career Readiness Standards of Practice. Students will draw from class learning, skill development and activities to begin a Personal Learning Plan to transition into high school with a broad career cluster focus. Prerequisites: None

CTE: Skilled and Technical Sciences

Tech and Living 7

This course is a unique exploratory course for 7th students. A blend of innovative units from both the Industrial Technology and Family and Consumer Science curriculum are taught by staff from either discipline. Students are provided an opportunity to investigate a number of activities based on learning units in a state-of-the-art laboratory. Pairs of students work cooperatively through a seven-day Technology and Living Unit. Students independently choose from areas such as computer-aided design (CAD), clothing, structures, foods, lasers, housing, electricity/electronics, consumerism, robotics, childcare, research and design, and family.

Gifted and Talented

H Special Projects 7

This course supports student mastery of seventh grade standards and focuses on developing and applying students' knowledge in language, literature, and composition and on developing students skills in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and multiple literacy as appropriate for this grade level. Students will write descriptive, narrative, literary, expository, persuasive, and technical pieces for various purposes and audiences using a variety of tools and strategies.

Language Arts

Journalism 7

This course focuses on introducing students to the print aspect of journalism. Students will take part in developing, writing, revising, editing and publishing print materials ranging from brochures to a school newspaper and yearbook. Based in the belief that the more one writes, the better one writes, this is first and foremost a lab for writing. Distinguishing between and among the different purposes one has for writing will be the primary basis for this class.

H Language Arts 7

This course supports student mastery of seventh grade standards and focuses on developing and applying students' knowledge in language, literature, and composition and on developing students skills in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and multiple literacy as appropriate for this grade level. Students will write descriptive, narrative, literary, expository, persuasive, and technical pieces for various purposes and audiences using a variety of tools and strategies.

Language Arts 7

This course supports student mastery of seventh grade standards and focuses on developing and applying students' knowledge in language, literature, and composition and on developing students skills in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and multiple literacy as appropriate for this grade level. Students will write descriptive, narrative, literary, expository, persuasive, and technical pieces for various purposes and audiences using a variety of tools and strategies.

Speech 7

This elective for 7th grade will prepare students for oral communication situations encountered in both daily life and in formal settings. Students will become acquainted with the communication process, develop and improve their public speaking skills and their oral interpretation skills. Instruction focuses on the teaching of the fundamentals of speech and requires students to perform various speaking activities.

Mathematics

Advanced Math 7

This course combines the major and most important work of the content standards from Grade 7 and Grade 8 in an accelerated manner so that students can be prepared for the option of taking Algebra the following year. This is the first semester course of advanced mathematics for seventh graders. Prerequisites: See middle school placement guidelines.

Math 7

This course covers the content standards for Seventh Grade Math. Students will perform operations with whole numbers, decimals, fractions, and integers, solve proportions and percent problems, convert measurements within systems, use plane geometry, and solve equations and real-life problems. This is the first semester of a year-long course.

Pre-Algebra 1-2

This course is designed to meet the needs of the student who will benefit from a transition course which bridges the similarities of arithmetic and algebra. This course will contain spiraling reinforcement of basic algebraic concepts and topics in order to prepare students for successful placement in Algebra 1-2. This course will cover the content standards for pre-algebra, including operations on real numbers, conversions among fractions, decimals, and percents, solving linear equations and inequalities, graphing linear equations, working with polynomials, and using measures of central tendency to interpret data.

Honors Algebra 1-2

This course is the honors section of Algebra 1-2. It covers traditional algebra topics including operations with signed numbers and polynomials, solving first-and second-degree equations, verbal problems, systems of linear equations, graphing and writing linear equations and inequalities, and simplifying exponential expressions. As an honors class, these topics will be covered in greater depth and with enrichment.

Algebra 3-4

This course covers the topics of a traditional second-year algebra course. Content includes solving polynomial equations as well as linear, absolute value, and quadratic equations and inequalities, and working with exponents and logarithms, complex numbers, systems of equations and inequalities, and simple probability. Appropriate technology will be used to assist in instruction and learning.

Honors Algebra 3-4

This is the honors section of Algebra 3-4. As such the topics and concepts will be covered in more depth, and additional content is present as well. This course covers the topics of a traditional second-year algebra course. Content includes solving polynomial equations as well as linear, absolute value, and quadratic equations and inequalities, and working with exponents and logarithms, complex numbers, systems of equations and inequalities, matrix algebra and matrix solutions to systems of equations, series and sequences, and compound probability. Appropriate technology will be used to assist in instruction and learning. This course is the first semester of Algebra 3-4. Students enrolling in this course will have successfully completed both semesters of Honors Algebra 1-2 with proficient or advanced grades, or Algebra 1-2 with advanced grades and teacher recommendation.

Geometry 1-2

This course is a complete study of geometry. Topics include congruence and similarity of figures, parallelism and perpendicularity, right triangle relationships, formal and informal proof, coordinate geometry, properties of polygons and circles, and perimeter, area, and volume of two- and three-dimensional figures. Students enrolling in Geometry 1-2 should have passing grades in both semesters of Algebra 1-2.

Physical Education

Physical Education 7

This course will use current Physical Education standards and Human Growth and Development pacing.

Lifetime Fitness 7

This course is designed to help the student understand and apply the concepts and skills of fitness activities while understanding the importance of conditioning and exercise.

These courses will concentrate on improving the strength, endurance, and knowledge of fitness concepts. This will be accomplished through instruction of the skills and concepts of fitness. The OPS Physical Education Content Standards encompassed in these courses will be #1, #2, #3, #4 and #5.

Reading

Reading Skills 7-8

This blended course is designed for readers who have a foundation in decoding skills but experience difficulty comprehending grade-level material, as well as students who need support with foundational literacy skills. Students in this course will improve reading proficiency with explicit, direct instruction in fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Strategies for phonemic awareness and phonics will be taught as needed. Students will read leveled, high interest literature for both academic and recreational purposes. Placement is based on standardized test scores and teacher recommendation.

Science

Science Grade 7

Science 7 engages students in the three dimensions (science practices, disciplinary core ideas, and crosscutting concepts) of learning as identified by the Nebraska College and Career Ready Standards for Science. The topics include structure and properties of matter, chemical reactions, interdependent relationships in ecosystems, matter and energy in organisms and ecosystems, Earth's systems, and history of Earth.

Honors Science 7

Honors Science 7 engages students in the three dimensions (science practices, disciplinary core ideas, and crosscutting concepts) of learning as identified by the Nebraska College and Career Ready Standards for Science. The topics include structure and properties of matter, chemical reactions, interdependent relationships in ecosystems, matter and energy in organisms and ecosystems, Earth's systems, history of Earth, heredity, and natural selection and adaptations. This course provides a foundation for other science courses. Students enrolled in honor courses have additional experiences that require a more rigorous program of study.

Social Studies

International Studies

Global Studies is open to students interested in examining countries, people, and issues that are shaping our contemporary world.

Service Learning

This course is a hands-on study of the practice and intent of service learning and the integration of community service. Students will spend one semester actively developing, planning, implementing, and evaluating service-learning experience. Principles of civic engagement will be added to provide students with a well-rounded learning experience.

Social Studies 7

This course examines the world we live in by studying Africa, Asia, and Eastern Europe. Special attention is given to the geography, history, economics, civics, and elements of culture within the regions studied. The course guides students in exploring the connection between historical developments and contemporary global issues. Students will have multiple opportunities to use geographic concepts and processes, develop economic reasoning, examine specific historical ideas, beliefs, and themes, and analyze how individuals and societies have changed over time to expand their understanding of the Eastern Hemisphere. This is the first semester of this course.

Speech 7

This elective for 7th grade will prepare students for oral communication situations encountered in both daily life and in formal settings. Students will become acquainted with the communication process, develop and improve their public speaking skills and their oral interpretation skills. Instruction focuses on the teaching of the fundamentals of speech and requires students to perform various speaking activities.

Information Technology

College and Careers 7

Students will continue to explore careers using the Nebraska Career Education Model. A focus will be to make connections between personal aptitudes and interests to specific Career Fields and Clusters. Students will have opportunities to practice and develop skills in the Nebraska Career Readiness Standards of Practice. Students will draw from class learning, skill development and activities to begin a Personal Learning Plan to transition into high school with a broad career cluster focus. Prerequisites: None

Computer Apps II

This course will expand on previous concepts of digital life, productivity applications and career opportunities. Students will go beyond fundamental creating and editing skills in word processing, spreadsheet, and presentation software to more advanced features applicable to workplace skills. Students will be introduced to the role of technology in society and specific career opportunities.

Music

Chorus Grade 7

Chorus 7 is available to seventh grade students who have special interests and abilities in choral singing. Vocal skills are introduced through appropriate unison, two and three-part singing. Musical independence is encouraged through increasing emphasis on musical notation. Performance opportunities are an extension of the classroom experience

Concert Choir

Concert Choir is an auditioned based ensemble intended for 7th and 8th grade students looking to further their musical understanding and choral singing. Choral music is introduced in two and three parts that include bass clef participation. Vocal emphasis is placed on the introduction of the male changing voice and greater extension of all voice ranges. Performance opportunities including the All City Music Festival are an extension of the classroom experience. Outside of school performances are an expectation for this class.

Intermediate Strings

This course is offered to seventh and eighth grade students who have successfully completed several years study. Instrumental technique and musical understandings focus

on standard string method studies and appropriate string orchestra selections. The instrumentation includes violin, viola, cello and string bass. Students with previous instrumental experience may begin changeover instruction on the low string instruments. Performance may be included as an extension of classroom activities.

Advanced Strings

This course is offered to eighth grade students who have demonstrated advanced ability in playing a string instrument. Technique studies and selected concert music advance both technical and musical understandings. The instrumentation includes violin, viola, cello and string bass. Membership is achieved by the recommendation of the instructor or successful completion of Intermediate Strings. Performance is included as an extension of the classroom activities outside of the school day.

Intermediate Band

This course is offered to seventh grade students who began instrumental music instruction in their respective elementary schools or for eighth grade students who began instrumental music in seventh grade beginning band. Instrumental technique and musical understanding focus on the second volume of standard instrumental studies and appropriate band arrangements. Performance is included as an extension of the classroom activities.

Advanced Band

This course is offered to seventh and eighth grade students with advanced abilities secured through several years of instrumental music participation. Music introduced includes technique studies and selected concert music with full instrumentation appropriate to the classes and ability. Membership is achieved by the recommendation of the instructor. Performance is included as an extension of the classroom activities.

8th Grade Course Descriptions

Art

Art 8

This course allows students to be innovative and reflect on their own experiences as many American artists have and do today. American artists were and are on the forefront of shaping America's identity through recording the human experience in innovative ways. Throughout this course, students will continue to develop their artistic voice and style and explore how they do and will play a part in society. Students will examine art and artists throughout American history focusing on America's diversity and influence. Aesthetic theories of Instrumentalism, Expressionism and Formalism will be studied as well.

CTE: Business, Marketing, and Management

Intro to College and Careers 8

Students will be using previous career exploration around the Nebraska Career Education Model and their understanding of the Nebraska Career Readiness Standards to complete independent and collaborative projects aligned with their aptitudes and interests. Additional opportunities for career readiness skill development will be incorporated. Students will review and add to their Personal Learning Plan to demonstrate personal responsibility for career preparation. Prerequisites: None

Communication and Information Systems

Computer Apps III

This course is designed for students to apply digital skills to real-life opportunities. Independent and collaborative projects will incorporate knowledge of digital citizenship, digital literacy, application software (word processing, spreadsheet, presentation), and workplace skills. Students will be able to explore and research career or technology areas of interest to design and create products for a specific purpose and audience.

CTE: Skilled and Technical Sciences

Tech and Living 8

This course is a unique exploratory course for 8th grade students. A blend of innovative units from both the Industrial Technology and Family and Consumer Science curriculum are taught by staff from either discipline. Students are provided an opportunity to investigate a number of activities based on learning units in a state-of-the-art laboratory. Pairs of students work cooperatively through a seven-day Technology and Living Unit. Students independently choose from areas such as computer-aided design (CAD), clothing, structures, foods, lasers, housing, electricity/electronics, consumerism, robotics, childcare, research and design, and family.

Gifted and Talented

H Special Projects 8

This course supports student mastery of seventh grade standards and focuses on developing and applying students' knowledge in language, literature, and composition and on developing students skills in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and multiple literacy as appropriate for this grade level. Students will write descriptive, narrative, literary, expository, persuasive, and technical pieces for various purposes and audiences using a variety of tools and strategies.

Language Arts

Journalism 8

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CTE: Information Technology

College and Careers 8

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singing. Musical independence is encouraged through increasing emphasis on musical notation. Performance opportunities are an extension of the classroom experience

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Intermediate Band

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