

Northwest Area

**Middle School Course Selection Guide
2024-2025**



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Northwest Area Learning Community Mission Statement

In collaboration with family and community partners, the Northwest Area School District provides a continuum of services that support ALL students to realize their fullest potential through academically rigorous and relevant programs of study.

Core Beliefs

We believe that student success is achieved by:

- Encouraging life-long learning
- Promoting effective communication
- Cultivating professional development opportunities
- Stimulating critical thinking skills
- Fostering character development
- Setting challenging academic expectations
- Providing a healthy social and emotional environment

Credited Courses

Northwest Area Senior High and Middle School provides a range of courses that enable students to attain academic standards. Credited courses consist of at least the following elements:

1. Credits will be aligned with post-secondary goals to be completed by all students prior to graduation.
2. Content, including materials and activities, and estimated instructional time to be devoted to achieving the academic standards. Credited courses, instructional units, or interdisciplinary studies of varying lengths of time may be taught.
3. The relationship between the credits, instructional unit or interdisciplinary studies and academic standards specified under *Section 4.12* (relating to academic standards) and to those determined in the school district's (including charter schools) or CTC's strategic plan under *Section 4.13* (relating to strategic plans).

School Profile

The Northwest Area School District is a small, rural district located in Shickshinny, Luzerne County approximately 16 miles southwest of Wilkes-Barre, PA. The district has been in existence since 1955 when several smaller schools combined to form Northwest Area. Northwest Area Senior High and Middle School is a comprehensive high school consisting of grades 7-12 with 430 students and 45 certified staff members. There is a Primary School with 245 students in grades Pre-K-2 and an Intermediate School with 300 students in grades 3-6.

Academic Program

Students are required to complete appropriate credits for graduation. In addition, all students are required to maintain a career-based portfolio to collect artifacts from career activities throughout all grade levels. Select juniors and seniors are permitted to enroll in a local college while still attending Northwest Area High School. They are permitted to take a maximum of 2 college courses per semester and must attend college both semesters. These courses are listed on their high school transcript and noted as "Col"

following the name of the course (Eng. Comp. Col). The colleges have provided conversion tables for their grading systems. Credit is given toward graduation requirements for these elective courses.

Grading System

Numerical grading based on 100% with 70% as a passing grade.

A = 100 to 93 **B** = 92 to 85 **C** = 84 to 76 **D** = 75 to 70 **F** = 69 to 0

Grade Point Average

Grade point average, based on a 100 point grading scale, is calculated quarterly by including all courses taken as well as the college courses noted above. Due to the additional time requirements for certain courses, they are listed as 1.5 or 2.0 credits. GPA is reported on the transcript as both current (this year) and cumulative (9-12).

Rank in Class

Class rank is calculated annually for students in grades 9-12 only. All courses are included in the calculation. Rank is reported on the transcript as current (this year) and cumulative (9-12).

Online Learning

Students will have the option of taking classes through online options from a variety of vendors. The only time students can enroll in electives is during course selection. If students change their mind after selecting an online course they and/or their parents will be assessed the cost of the class. All online grades are part of the grade point average and class rank. If the students fail to complete the class, they will receive zeros for all incomplete assignments.

Northwest Area School District Annual Notice of Gifted Support Services

The Northwest Area School District is committed to providing Gifted Support services to those students who are eligible and in need of these services.

The Northwest Area School District provides programming for students who are identified as Mentally Gifted. This term includes a person who has an IQ of 130 or higher or when multiple criteria as set forth in Chapter 16 regulations and in Department Guidelines indicate gifted ability. Determination of gifted ability will not be based on IQ score alone. Deficits in memory or processing speed, as indicated by testing, cannot be the sole basis upon which a student is determined to be ineligible for gifted special education. A person with an IQ score lower than 130 may be admitted to gifted programs when other educational criteria in the profile of the person strongly indicate gifted ability. Determination of mentally gifted must include an assessment by a certified school psychologist.

Identification (Child Find) Activities:

Building level teams meet regularly at the elementary, intermediate, middle school, and high school levels to monitor student progress, to develop intervention strategies, and to identify students who may need gifted services. The teams consider a variety of academic, behavioral, speech/language, and motor development information. Guidance counselors, working in collaboration with their district colleagues at all levels, are also important front line personnel in child find procedures.

The analysis of assessment results is an important child find strategy, and students may be referred to the school guidance counselor and/or school psychologist for additional assessment.

Initiating an Evaluation:

Parents who have questions about their child's academic or developmental growth and believe that their child may be Mentally Gifted should contact the appropriate building principal, school guidance counselor, or the Gifted Coordinator to request screening and/or evaluation. A parental request for a gifted evaluation should be made in writing.

Mathematics Progression

	7	8	9	10	11	12
Designed for students who want the most rigorous coursework offered or for students who plan to pursue a math or science related college major.	Introduction to High School Mathematics	Algebra I	Algebra II & Geometry Algebra II	Trigonometry Geometry	Calculus or Pre-Calculus Trigonometry	AP Calculus or Calculus Pre-Calculus or Calculus
Designed for students who plan to attend a 4 year college, most 2 year colleges or technical schools.	Introduction to High School Mathematics	Pre-Algebra	Algebra I	Geometry & Algebra II Geometry	Trigonometry Algebra II	Pre-Calculus or Calculus Trigonometry
Designed for students who plan to pursue a certificate or diploma program or enter the workforce directly from high school.	Introduction to High School Mathematics	Introduction to High School Mathematics II	Algebra IA	Algebra IB	Essentials of Geometry and Trigonometry	Intermediate Algebra II Topics in Algebra and Trigonometry

Students are responsible to work with their math teachers and their guidance counselors to determine their sequence through the math progression. At any point in which a student deviates from one of the natural sequences listed above, the team of guidance, former math teachers and the principal will work with the student for appropriate course placement. The principal will have the final say concerning course placement.

Grade 7 Course Selections

Required:

English 7 507

Grade Placement: 7 1 Credit *Must receive passing grade or retake*

Language Arts is a yearlong standards based course integrating language, writing, speaking and listening. Students will demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking, as well as capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing. Frequent writing by the students is of a critical nature and is directly related to the development of argumentative, informative/explanatory, narrative essays, and a formal research paper. An extensive study of vocabulary will be completed. Students will engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly. Students will present claims in a coherent manner and adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks.

Introduction to High School Math I 210

Grade Placement: 7 1 Credit *Must receive passing grade or retake*

This course is designed to review the basic operations of fractions, decimals, and percents. It also covers the basic topics from algebra, geometry, probability, and statistics. Topics include operations with signed numbers, solving equations, using geometric formulas for area and volume, applying properties of similar triangles, mean, median, mode, and applications of probability.

Introduction to High School Math I Advanced 226

Grade Placement: 7 1 Credit *By review of PSSA data and teacher recommendation*

Must receive a passing grade or retake

This course is designed to prepare students to enter Algebra I in grade 8. This course is designed to go more in-depth with topics at a faster pace and follows the PA Core math standards for grade 7 in preparation for the grade 7 PSSA. In this course, students will review the basic operations of fractions, decimals, and percents. It also covers the basic topics from algebra, geometry, probability, and statistics. Topics include operations with signed numbers, solving equations, using geometric formulas for area and volume, applying properties of similar triangles, mean, median, mode, and applications of probability.

Life Science 307

Grade Placement: 7 1 Credit *Must receive passing grade or retake*

Life Science involves the study of living things including cells, heredity, evolution, simple organisms, plants, animals and ecology. Students will use the scientific method to conduct classroom experiments and field studies. Students will dissect preserved specimens and make models to explore science. Student based activities reaching a conclusion will be generated through research and communication.

World Geography 710

Grade Placement: 7 1 Credit *Must receive passing grade or retake*

World Geography introduces students to the basic concepts and factual matter of world geography. It reviews the basic science of the earth and explores the various geographic areas of the world. In each area we will look at resources, culture, physical features, government and economics.

Reading 7 529

Grade Placement: 7 1 Credit *Must receive passing grade or retake*

Using multiple techniques such as read alouds, guided reading questions, and class discussions, students will participate in a study of classical and contemporary adolescent literature including the reading of novels geared to middle school interests. Assignments will focus on providing opportunities for students to master the rudimentary material required by the Pennsylvania State Standards Assessment and demonstrate their proficient use of higher order thinking skills.

Advanced Reading and Composition 581

Grade Placement: 7 1 Credit *By review of PSSA data and teacher recommendation*

Advanced Reading and Composition 7 is designed for students with diverse intellectual strengths and learning styles to use and develop their academic strengths to the full potential of their capabilities by utilizing the textbook augmented with supplemental novels and plays. The Advanced Reading and Composition student will develop the reading skills necessary for word recognition, comprehension, interpretation, analysis, evaluation, and appreciation of the written text. The Advanced Reading and Composition student will also develop the structural and creative skills necessary to produce written language that can be read and interpreted by various audiences. Additionally, the student will use, read, and view media/technology; analyze content and concepts accurately; express ideas clearly and effectively in a variety of oral contexts; and apply active listening skills in the analysis and evaluation of spoken ideas. This course affords the “advanced” student with an opportunity to engage in rigorous and in-depth examination of quality literary works, discuss them in depth, and cultivate written product related to the literature.

Electives: **Students in grade 7 can choose both Jr. Band and Chorus. Chorus is in the place of Related Arts and Jr. Band in place of the Study Hall.

Junior Band 801

Grade Placement: 7-8 1 Credit

Suggested Prerequisite: Elementary Band, school or private instrumental instruction.

This course is structured to provide a performance venue for instrumentalists.

Chorus 7 814

Grade Placement: 7 1 Credit

This course is structured to provide a performance venue for vocalists.

Grade 8 Course Selections

Required:

English 8 508

Grade Placement: 8 1 Credit *Must receive passing grade or retake*

Prerequisite: English Grade 7

Language Arts is a yearlong Pennsylvania State Standards and English-Language Arts Common Core Standards-Based course integrating writing, listening, speaking, and developing research skills. During the course of the year, students will write on a variety of topics. Listening, speaking and critical thinking are emphasized and skills such as grammar, spelling, vocabulary, punctuation, and usage are taught through writing. Students will develop their understanding of parts of speech, proper sentence structure, proper capitalization and punctuation, and the technique necessary to form a quality 5-paragraph essay. The students' understanding will be demonstrated through various types of assessment, including quizzes, tests and written essays. Students will complete an APA formatted research paper, which will be broken down into several smaller components, resulting in the completion of the final draft. Their research paper will prepare the students for future research assignments in all content area course work and will provide the foundation for the eventual Comprehensive Graduation Project.

Reading 8 530

Grade Placement: 8 1 Credit *Must receive passing grade or retake*

As part of the Core standards for 8th grade reading, students will meet the following goals: read and respond to a variety of texts and media; learn and apply a variety of reading strategies to interpret and analyze texts; expand vocabulary, think critically, and use various modes of expression to analyze and reflect upon readings, including writing, discussion, and presentation.

Advanced Reading 8 582

Grade Placement: 8 1 Credit *By recommendation only*

As part of the Core standards for 8th grade reading, students will meet the following goals: read and respond to a variety of texts and media; learn and apply a variety of reading strategies to interpret and analyze texts; expand vocabulary, think critically, and use various modes of expression to analyze and reflect upon readings, including writing, discussion, and presentation. *Students in the advanced reading section will be exposed to a more rigorous level of work such as independent reading of texts that may be written for students on a higher level. When interpreting and analyzing texts, students in the advanced class will be expected to convey their level of knowledge and understanding in a more in-depth manner.*

Introduction to High School Math II 216

Grade Placement: 8 1 Credit *Must receive passing grade or retake*

Prerequisite: Introduction to High School Math I

This course is designed to introduce algebraic concepts. Categories covered include the number system (real and irrational numbers, expressions and equations (solving equations and evaluating expressions), functions (linear and nonlinear functions, linear relationships), geometry (transformations, similarity and congruence, Pythagorean Theorem, volume), statistics and probability (scatter plots, best-fit linear models, and two-way tables).

Pre-Algebra 213

Grade Placement: 8 1 Credit *Must receive a passing grade or retake*

Prerequisite: Recommendation of teacher and satisfactory completion of Introduction to High School Math I

This course focuses on algebraic reasoning. Categories covered include the number system (real and irrational numbers), expressions and equations (solving equations and evaluating expressions), functions (linear and nonlinear functions, linear relationships), geometry (transformations, similarity and congruence, Pythagorean Theorem, volume), statistics and probability (scatter plots, best-fit linear models, and two-way tables).

Algebra I 201

Grade Placement: 8 1 Credit *Must receive a passing grade or retake*

Prerequisites: Recommendation of teacher

This course focuses on algebraic reasoning. Categories covered include operations with real numbers and expressions, the number system, expressions and equations, linear equations, linear inequalities, functions (linear and nonlinear functions, linear relationships), coordinate geometry, other geometry topics (transformations, similarity and congruence, Pythagorean Theorem, volume), statistics (scatter plots, best-fit linear models, and two-way tables, data displays and analysis, measures of dispersion and central tendency) and probability.

General Science 311

Grade Placement: 8 1 Credit *Must receive passing grade or retake*

This course will explain essential ideas about the composition of the universe, relate earth features and processes that change the earth, explain the sources and uses of earth resources, and interpret meteorological data.

American/Pennsylvania History I 709

Grade Placement: 8 1 Credit *Must receive passing grade or retake*

In this course, students will examine the history of Pennsylvania and the history of the United States from the 17th century through the 19th century. Emphasis will be placed on examining the causes and effects of specific events; identifying the contributions of individuals and groups; analyzing the influences of continuity, change, conflict, and cooperation; and exploring documents, artifacts and historic places.

Electives: Students in grade 8 can choose to take Jr. Band in place of a Related Arts period. Chorus, Spanish IB or Spanish I may be elected in place of a Study Hall.

Junior Band 801

Grade Placement: 7-8 1 Credit

Suggested Prerequisite: Elementary Band, school or private instrumental instruction

This course is structured to provide a performance venue for instrumentalists.

Chorus 804

Grade Placement: 8-12 1 Credit

This course is structured to provide a performance venue for vocalists.

Spanish 1B 533

Grade Placement: 8-9 1 Credit

Prerequisite: A passing grade in Spanish 1A

Spanish 1B completes the 2-year sequence begun in Spanish 1A. Spanish 1A and 1B cover the same material as the traditional Spanish 1 class, but in a slower, more relaxed manner. Students may then continue on to Spanish II in grades 9 or 10.

Spanish I 522

Grade Placement: 8-12 1 Credit

Prerequisite: Students must have a 90% average in 7th Grade English and Reading.

Spanish I introduces the student to the Spanish language and culture. Students develop basic skills in pronunciation and intonation with emphasis on the communication skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. The student will learn the basic rules of Spanish grammar in the present tense through stem changing verbs, along with basic communication expressions and sentence structure, and will discuss some of the customs, traditions and geography of the many Spanish-speaking countries.

7th & 8th Grade Related Arts

Career Explorations 117

Grade Placement: 7

Career Explorations is a quarter-long course to help students establish their career portfolios. In this course students will research careers within their interest areas, learn about the interests, skills, and values that are connected to their future careers, and learn about paychecks and tax deductions of income. Students will also plan their future education paths through high school and after in order to set themselves up for success upon graduation.

Physical Education 407

Grade Placement: 7

The physical education program facilitates development of skills and interest in fitness activities for all students.

Modern Technology 613

Grade Placement: 7

Modern Technology includes the study of technological processes, materials, as well as the history and future of technology. Each student will be required to create an original woodshop project. The course involves woodshop, robotics, graphic design, and web animation to develop technological products.

Computer Science Explorations I 219

Grade Placement: 7

CS Explorations I is an introductory computer science course based in the Scratch programming language that empowers students to create authentic artifacts and engage with computer science as a medium for creativity, communications, problem solving, and fun. In this course, students will learn foundational concepts and skills of computer science (CS) and programming, and students will explore using computers to solve problems and express themselves. Designed to be engaging and relevant to student life, students build, remix, and share their animations, games, stories, music, and art in an engaging and collaborative environment.

Exploratory World Language 592

Grade Placement: 7

The Exploratory World Language class is a quarter-long course designed to introduce students to the many languages and language families of the world. Students will be introduced to dead languages like Latin, and continue through a selection of more modern world languages, including Spanish, French, German and Russian. As students learn a few words of each language, they will also be exposed to the history and geography of the cultures where the languages are spoken, tying in with their 7th grade Geography course.

Family and Consumer Science 606

Grade Placement: 7

Family and Consumer Science is a course designed to help middle school students learn the life skills they need to be responsible, productive individuals, and family/community members.

STEM Exploration 300

Grade Placement: 7

Careers in science, technology, engineering, and math are on the rise. A STEM Explorations experience can help a student to build the teamwork, creativity, and problem-solving skills they will need in their future career. A STEM education program integrates all four STEM disciplines for use in real-life applications. Project-based learning and problem-solving are often big focuses with exercises, labs, and activities that involve various STEM disciplines. They will gain real-world skills through career pathways which include aerospace engineering, astronomy, biochemistry, biology, chemical engineering, chemistry, civil engineering, computer science, robotics, and coding to name a few.

Health 7 402

Grade Placement: 7

Our aim is to provide each student with the necessary knowledge to acquire and maintain good health habits, healthy attitudes about self and others, and interests which lead to an enjoyable and useful life. Throughout the year they are challenged to make responsible decisions about their personal health and wellness.

Introduction to Agriculture and Natural Resources 616

Grade Placement: 8

This course will provide students with an introduction to concepts and careers in natural resources. Areas of exploration include forestry, wildlife, aquatics and fisheries, animal science, plant and soil science, welding, small gas engines, woodworking and FFA. This is a prerequisite course for all other agriculture classes.

Introduction to Art 1 830

Grade Placement: 8

This course is an introduction to art with basics such as perspective drawing, color theory, painting and simple handbuilding techniques with clay.

Physical Education 408

Grade Placement: 8

The physical education program facilitates development of skills and interest in fitness activities for all students.

Health 8 404

Grade Placement: 8

Our aim is to provide each student with the necessary knowledge to acquire and maintain good health habits, healthy attitudes about self and others, and interests which lead to an enjoyable and useful life. Throughout the year they are challenged to make responsible decisions about their personal health and wellness.

Social Development 8 914

Grade Placement: 8

This course will focus on various social issues young people face today. Students will participate in educational activities regarding Bullying, Depression, Peer Pressure, Suicide Prevention, Substance Abuse, Juvenile Probation, Positive Communication Skills, Listening Skills and Diversity.

Family and Consumer Science 615

Grade Placement: 8

Family and Consumer Science is a course designed to help middle school students learn the life skills they need to be responsible, productive individuals, and family/community members.

Modern Technology 614

Grade Placement: 8

Modern Technology education is an interdisciplinary approach to learning which includes the study of technological processes and materials, as well as the history and future of technology. Students are exposed to demanding real world academic concepts as they apply science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) to discover connections between school and community as they develop STEM literacy.

Research Writing 591

Grade Placement: 8

Research Writing will explore the research process from the prewriting stage to the revision stage. Students will plan and develop one research report, practicing and mastering each step of the research process before moving on to the next step. At the end of the class, students will be able to plan, develop, draft, and revise a research paper with parenthetical citations and Works cited page, all utilizing APA style. This course will prepare students for writing research reports for school assignments.

Northwest Area Course Selection Worksheet

Student Name _____ **Grade: 7**

Student Cell # _____

Parent Name and Phone Number _____

All 7th grade students are required to take the courses listed below. The *only* choices for 7th grade students are Jr. Band, and/or Chorus. Students in 7th grade must pass all five core courses which are: World Geography, Life Science, Mathematics, Language Arts and Reading. If any one core course is failed, it must be taken in summer school or repeated the following year.

Example of your schedule:

<u>Period</u>	<u>Course Name</u>	<u>Course Selection No.</u>
Period 1	Reading 7	529
Period 2	Related Arts 1/Chorus 7	BLK7/814
Period 3	World Geography	710
Period 4	English 7	507
Period 5	Lunch	
Period 6	Related Arts	MOD7
Period 7	Jr. Band/Study Hall	801/STDYH
Period 8	Life Science	307
Period 9	Introduction to High School Math I	210

We encourage all parents and students to work on this schedule together to enable a smooth transition into the middle school environment.

**** Students in grade 7 can choose both Jr. Band and Chorus. Chorus will be in place of one Related Arts period, and Band will be in place of a study hall.**

Please circle your choice(s):

0801 Jr. Band

0814 Chorus 7

Northwest Area Course Selection Worksheet

Student Name _____ **Grade: 8**

Student Cell # _____

Parent Name and Phone Number _____

All 8th grade students are required to take the courses listed below. The *only* choices for 8th grade students are Jr. Band, Chorus, Spanish IA or Spanish I. Students in 8th grade must pass all five core courses which are Reading, Language Arts, American/PA History I, General Science, and Mathematics. If any one core course is failed, it must be taken in summer school or repeated the following year.

Example of your schedule:

<u>Period</u>	<u>Course Name</u>	<u>Course Selection No.</u>
Period 1	Reading 8	530
Period 2	American/PA History I	709
Period 3	General Science	311
Period 4	Related Arts 1	BLK8
Period 5	Lunch	
Period 6	English 8	508
Period 7	Related Arts 2/Jr. Band	MOD8/801
Period 8	Study Hall/Chorus/Spanish IB/Spanish I	STDYH/804/533/522
Period 9	Introduction to High School Math II, Pre-Algebra, Algebra I	216 213 201

We encourage all parents and students to work on this schedule together to enable a smooth transition into the high school environment.

**** Students in grade 8 can choose both Jr. Band and Chorus. Chorus, Spanish IB or Spanish I may be elected in place of a Study Hall. Jr. Band will be in place of one Related Arts period.**

- Students electing to take Spanish I must have the recommendation and signature of their English and Reading teachers.

English Teacher

Signature: _____

Reading Teacher

Signature: _____

Please circle your choice(s):

0801 Jr. Band

0804 Chorus

533 Spanish IB

522 Spanish I