



**Twin Falls School District  
O'Leary Middle School**

**8th Grade  
Course Offerings  
2024-2025**



**Vera C. O'Leary Middle School**



# **This guide is to assist you in registering for classes at O’Leary Middle School**

## **Required Classes**

Mathematics  
Language Arts  
Physical Science  
History  
Health (semester)  
Career Explorations (semester)

## **Elective Classes**

**In addition to required classes, 8th graders take 2-4 elective classes**

Band  
Orchestra  
Choir  
Physical Education  
Clerk: Library, Office or Teacher (application required)  
Drama  
Art  
Young Living (application required)  
STEM  
Media Tech  
Web Design  
Robotics  
Television Productions (application required)  
Publications/Yearbook (application required)

## **Middle School Credit System**

Please be aware that the Twin Falls School District adopted a Middle School Credit System in accordance with Idaho Law. A student must pass 75% of their courses and have 90% attendance each semester.

## **Extra Help/Intervention**

Students with ISAT scores basic or below may lose their electives and be placed in an

intervention class for Math, Reading, and/or Language Arts.

**Advanced opportunities:** (formerly called the 8 in 6 program)

See the following web page for more information: <https://www.sde.idaho.gov/student-engagement/advanced-ops/>

Advanced Opportunities allow for students to individualize their high school learning plan and get a jump start on their future. These options include dual credit, technical competency credit, Advanced Placement, and International Baccalaureate programs. [Beginning in the summer of a student's 6<sup>th</sup> grade year they may enroll in high school credits to get a head start on their high school Career.](#) Most high school courses are taken through IDLA although there are other providers available.

The Fast Forward program can provide funding for students who participate in Advanced Opportunities.

### **Fast Forward**

The Fast Forward program provides every student attending an Idaho public school an allocation of \$4,125.00 to use towards Advanced Opportunities in grades 7-12. The program was expanded by the Legislature in 2016 through the passing of [House Bill 458](#). The fund can be used for:

- **Overload Courses**

An overload course is a high school level course that is taken in excess of the student's regular school day. These courses are offered online, during the summertime, and after school. In the event that a student incurs a cost for such courses, the Fast Forward program can pay up to \$225.00 for the cost of the course. Overload courses must be above and beyond the full course load offered by the student's local school.

- **Dual Credits**

Dual credits are courses taken by high school students that are transcribed on their high school and college transcripts. The Fast Forward program can pay for up to \$75.00 per credit, and in most cases, the cost of these credits is \$65.00. Dual Credit courses can also be taken online, by virtual conferencing, or in some cases students can go directly to the college/university campus. *More information on specific Idaho colleges and universities can be found in the [Links](#) tab.*

- **Exams**

Students can utilize Fast Forward funds to pay for a variety of college-credit bearing or professional technical exams. These include Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), College Level Examination Program (CLEP), or Career & Technical Education (CTE) exams. A full list of qualifying exams is available in the [Resource Files](#).

If you are interested in pursuing Advanced Opportunities, you may be overwhelmed with the application process and college-level lingo. Here are some helpful tips to set you up for success:

- **Meet with your school counselor**

Your school and district will have Advanced Opportunities available locally. By meeting with your counselor, you can learn more about their Career Development plan, as well as course options that are at the high school campus, college campus, or online.

- **Develop a four to six year learning plan**

Having a preliminary course plan sketched out is critical to effectively take advantage of the possibilities available through Advanced Opportunities. The learning plan should include courses that will be taken for dual credit. This should be a fluid document because long term goals are likely to change. Thoughtful and intentional planning will help ensure that the credits you earn will apply toward the certificate or degree you intend to attain.

- **Reach out to Colleges/Universities**

Idaho institutions have personnel available to assist you in planning for the transition between high school and college. Reach out to the dual credit offices across the state to learn about the options available for high school students. Do not feel limited to just your local institutions. Many colleges/universities have both online and satellite campuses.

- **Create a Fast Forward account**

By creating an account, you will be able to track where your funds are, request payment for courses and exams, and view the status of payments. Accounts must be activated by your school before funds are allocated. Check with your local school district to learn more about your local application process for Fast Forward funding.

## **IDLA (IDAHO DIGITAL LEARNING ACADEMY)**

This is an on-line learning and instructional program. It allows students to take courses that are not offered as a part of the regular course offerings at the middle school level, for example, world language courses. IDLA may also be used for remediation or enrichment of student learning. IDLA teachers are not on-site. These classes require a student to be self-motivated and to stay on schedule.

- Placement in an IDLA course requires a parent/student meeting with the school counselor prior to a student being placed in an IDLA course.
- IDLA may not be used to replace a course that is offered as a part of the middle school general curriculum.
- There may be a tuition fee associated with a middle school level IDLA course.

## **REQUIRED CLASSES**

### **MATHEMATICS**

#### **MATH – 8**

This course is designed to prepare the student for first-year Algebra. This is a critical bridge between elementary mathematics and Algebra 1. Math 8 focuses on three critical areas: (1) formulating and reasoning about expressions and equations, including modeling an association in bivariate data with a linear equation, and solving linear equations and systems of linear equations; (2) grasping the concept of a function and using functions to describe quantitative relationships; (3) analyzing two- and three dimensional space and figures using distance, angle, similarity, and congruence, and understanding and applying the Pythagorean Theorem.

#### **ALGEBRA 1**

The purpose of this course is to better prepare students to be successful in the next sequential math class. First semester, the course focuses on expressions, functions, rational numbers and solving, graphing and analyzing linear equations and inequalities. Second semester, the course focuses on operations with polynomials, factoring, quadratic equations, rational expressions, radical expressions and the quadratic formula. Students have the option to receive high school credit for this course.

### **LANGUAGE ARTS**

The main focus of this course is to immerse eighth grade students into the art of language: oral, written, and spoken. The study of grammar, usage, sentence structure, writing skills, effective communication skills, and library usage (media and reference materials) for research is included in this course. Students will experience the development and maintenance of basic reading skills (word attack, comprehension, and vocabulary development). The course will include a study of the elements of literature and will adapt to different genres of reading. Reading will extend the students' skills in functional, recreational and critical reading. The Accelerated Reading program

will create growth in student reading ability and help students become independent and self-directed readers.

## **PHYSICAL SCIENCE**

The course covers the basic fundamentals of chemistry and physics – structure and properties of matter, force and motion, and forms of energy – in a variety of laboratory and classroom activities. This information is vital for success on the Idaho ISAT and future science classes.

## **HISTORY**

This course will include the study of American History with an emphasis on the “Manifest Destiny” theme. Topics include geography, government/civics, immigration, migration, conflict, and compromise.

## **HEALTH – Semester**

8<sup>th</sup> grade Health is a semester class. During the semester, we will stress the importance of a healthy lifestyle. In this class, we will talk about total health (physical health, social health, and mental/emotional health). We will do this through the following topics: decision making skills, goal setting, personal safety, conflict and conflict resolution, disease prevention, nutrition, substance abuse, and human sexuality. To enhance the topics we will have guest speakers, video clips, class discussions, group activities, presentations and other activities.

## **CAREER EXPLORATIONS – Semester**

This course covers the 16 Career Clusters and occupations within them, as well as employability skills such as time management, communication and decision-making. Students will learn about their personality, dependable strengths and career options, as well as how to grow their personal network. Students will use a variety of tools, including the junior version of Idaho’s Career Information System (CIS Junior), and will complete a final portfolio that includes their 8<sup>th</sup> grade plan, their interest inventory results and a summary of their future goals. Students may transfer their CIS Junior portfolio to their local school at the conclusion of the course.

## **ELECTIVE CLASSES**

### **7-8 BEGINNING BAND**

Beginning Band is for any student in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade who wants to learn to play flute, oboe, clarinet, alto saxophone, trumpet, french horn, trombone, euphonium, tuba, or percussion. Students are strongly encouraged to supply their own instruments; students can use a school instrument for the year, free of charge if needed. The availability of school instruments is limited. Through the Band Instrument Scholarship program you are able to purchase a flute, clarinet, trumpet or trombone for \$400.00.

### **8-ADVANCED BAND**

Students who have completed intermediate band and are in the 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grade should take Advanced Band. Students will further develop their technical and expressive skills and musical knowledge. Advanced band is a performance-oriented ensemble and will perform for daytime and evening concerts, festivals, and may perform in other events. A wide variety of music is studied. Students are strongly encouraged to provide their own instrument. However, school-owned instruments are available to use for free. Through the Band Instrument Scholarship program you are able to purchase a flute, clarinet, trumpet or trombone for \$400.00.

### **BEGINNING ORCHESTRA**

This course is for students who are interested in the study of the violin, viola, cello or bass. NO PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE IS NECESSARY. Instruments are provided. Beginning techniques and music will be studied. Students will learn basic fundamentals of reading music, counting rhythm and performance techniques. Performance opportunities will be provided.

### **INTERMEDIATE ORCHESTRA**

This course is a continuation of Beginning Orchestra and is for students who are interested in further mastery of technique. Students will also be introduced to more advanced techniques and will study concert music for performance. Students participate in several concerts, clinics and festivals.

## **7-8 CUB CHOIR**

Cub Chorus is a grade 7-8 course designed to teach beginning choral/singing techniques. The various methods used include music reading, 2 (SA) part singing, vocal training, choral blending, basic music theory, music history, music appreciation and the opportunity to sing many styles of music literature. Students will also learn and practice proper concert and performance etiquette. The choir will have 4 required evening performances.

## **CONCERT CHOIR**

Concert Choir is a select mix voice vocal ensemble for grades 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>. Students must have a **minimum of one previous year of choral experience or the permission of the instructor to enroll.** Emphasis is on great choral singing in two, three and four-part harmony, and continued growth in music theory, music history and music appreciation. This class will have several required performances throughout the year.

## **CHANTAIRE CHOIR**

Chantaire is an elite girls vocal ensemble for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades. **Entrance is by audition only and is limited.** Emphasis in this course is on masterful singing from each individual singer, as well as from the entire group. Students participating in Chantaire develop an excellent understanding of the language, structure of music and knowledge of proper concert etiquette. This class will have several required performances throughout the year.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

The primary goal of this course is to provide students with a physical fitness program. This will be accomplished through exercise, conditioning and a variety of activities. A well-rounded education is vital to all students and a healthy body produces a healthy mind.

## **TV PRODUCTIONS – Year Long**

Students in this course will be introduced to the operation of a television studio experiencing live and prerecorded formats. Students will have the opportunity to participate in various aspects of television production, learning the stages of broadcast production, teamwork, basics of camera



usage, lighting, sound, set design, linear and digital video editing, interviewing skills, and talent techniques. Students will produce the Cub News Show for the O'Leary student body.

## **PUBLICATIONS/YEARBOOK – Year Long**

Students in the course will create and design all aspects of the school's yearbook. Students take digital pictures of school activities, edit images with editing software, and design the yearbook using an online program. Students also learn how to procure a record of the year via photojournalism and written work. Students develop a concept of meeting deadlines. Students in this class must be responsible workers and be able to work without constant supervision from the teacher.

## **MEDIA TECHNOLOGY - Semester**

This course takes a wide lens on computer science by covering topics such as programming, physical computing, HTML/CSS, and data. Students engage with computer science as a medium for creativity, communication, problem solving, and fun. Students will build their own websites, apps, games, and physical computing devices. Finally, students will build on coding experience while programming animations, interactive art, problem solving and fun!!!

## **WEB DESIGN – Semester**

This course curriculum is an introduction to the design creation and maintenance of web pages and websites. With it, you will learn how to critically evaluate website quality; learn how to create and maintain quality web pages; learn about web design standards and why they are important; and learn to create and manipulate images.

## **STEM – Semester**

### **DESIGN & MODELING**

Students discover the design process and develop an understanding of the influence of creativity and innovation in their lives. They are then challenged and empowered to use the design process for something important to their life and those around them.

### **INNOVATORS & MAKERS**

This unit allows students to discover computer science concepts and skills by creating personally relevant, tangible, and shareable projects. Throughout the unit, students will learn about programming for the physical world by blending hardware design and software development. They will design and develop a physical computing device, interactive art installation, or wearable, and plan and develop code for microcontrollers that bring their physical designs to life.

### **AUTOMATION OF MECHANICAL SYSTEMS**

Students learn about and use automation, mechanical systems, energy transfer, machine automation, and computer control systems and trace their history, development, and influence. Students use robotics platforms to design, build, and program real-world objects such as traffic lights, toll booths, and robotic arms.

### **MAGIC OF ELECTRONS**

Through hands-on projects, students explore electricity, the behavior and parts of atoms, and sensing devices. They learn knowledge and skills in basic circuitry design, and examine the impact of electricity on the world around them. They will have the chance to create their own functional circuit board.

## **ROBOTICS AND INTEGRATED MATHEMATICS – Semester**

This is a robotics course that teaches students to program robots while utilizing math standards from grades 6-9. Students will analyze problems, identify important information, create a solution, program the solution, and test the solution before presenting a viable solution to a real world task. Math topics covered include solving one and multivariable equations, inequalities, linear equations, and geometric transformations, including translations, rotations, and reflections. Robotics gives students a chance to utilize their mathematical skills with robotic technology.

## **ART- Semester**

8<sup>th</sup> grade Art is designed to challenge the student by a continuous in-depth study of the elements of art: line, space, form, shape, texture, color and value; introduce the principles of art: contrast, rhythm, movement, balance, pattern, emphasis and unity. The student will apply his/her knowledge

of drawing concepts, perspective, shading techniques, graphic design, composition development and be exposed to various media. The student will connect the importance of art and how it relates to other fields of study, such as math, science, language arts, social studies, and the community. Where applicable, references to historical art masters will be studied.

### **ART- Year Long**

8<sup>th</sup> grade Art is designed to challenge the student by a continuous in-depth study of the elements of art: line, space, form, shape, texture, color and value; introduce the principles of art: contrast, rhythm, movement, balance, pattern, emphasis and unity. Throughout the year, the student will apply his/her knowledge of drawing concepts, perspective, shading techniques, graphic design, composition development and be exposed to various media, such as paint. Basic pottery processes will be introduced. The student will connect the importance of art and how it relates to other fields of study, such as math, science, language arts, social studies, and the community. Where applicable, references to historical art masters will be studied. 8<sup>th</sup> grade Art is highly recommended if the student wants to continue at a secondary level.

### **YOUNG LIVING – Semester**

Build upon the knowledge you have learned in previous FACS courses. Here in Young Living we will learn skills to help make the teen years and life beyond full of self-confidence, food preparation, and positive relationship skills. In this semester course we will study some subjects such as nutrition and wellness, advertising, sewing construction, hand-sewing techniques, food preparation and kitchen safety just to name a few!

### **YOUNG LIVING – Year Long**

Dive in even deeper here in the yearlong Young Living course. Over the course of the year, students will learn skills to help make the teen years and life beyond full of self-confidence, food preparation and positive relationship skills! We are excited to offer a yearlong class this year for an in depth study of nutrition the first semester with some personal development study. The second semester we will focus on sewing skills as well as some additional personal development study.

### **DRAMA – Semester**

The 8<sup>th</sup> grade drama class is a semester long and will allow students to get a basic overview of the subject as well as participation in a main stage production. Exploring history, terminology, stagecraft and the many aspects of theatre will take a hands-on approach. Students will also be exposed to the aspects of production skills such as acting (vocal & physical), improvisation, lights, sound, costumes, makeup, building props, directing and theatre critiques. We will also focus on

lifelong skills such as positive work ethic, organization, developing responsibilities that come with freedom, developing cooperative and supportive teams and increasing self-confidence. Some after school hours may be required for this class.

## **DRAMA – Year Long**

*(Prerequisite: Students with at least one quarter of drama or equivalent private study, may request this class)*

In this theatre course, we will review the basics of drama and then go more in-depth while taking on many types of production, which will include a full-length play. This is a hands-on class and all students will be required to participate and attend all productions, which may include after school hours. Exploring history terminology, stagecraft, and the many aspects of theatre, will take a hands-on approach. Students will also be exposed to the aspects of production skills such as acting (vocal & physical), lights, sound, costumes, makeup, building set and props, directing, and theatre critique. We will also focus on lifelong skills such as a positive work ethic, organization, developing responsibility that comes with freedom, building cooperative and supportive teams while increasing self-confidence.

## **STUDENT CLERK – Year Long**

*(Teacher, Office or Library)*

This class is designed for mature, responsible students interested in providing service to others. Participating students will become assistants in the classroom, office or library. Applicants are carefully screened for acceptability by the staff and faculty of O’Leary Middle School. Students taking this class will receive a pass/fail grade. Students can lose this class for not fulfilling requirements of duties.

## **OMS LIBRARY CLERK**

Student library clerks are a vital part of the OMS Library. Clerks check in and out books, maintain a specific section of the library, shelve books, help fellow students find resources, and assist librarians with many tasks. Clerks complete a small project each quarter to promote reading and to improve the library. OMS clerks must be friendly, ambitious, and be able to work independently.

# Honors Opportunities

Each year, there is an opportunity for honors/advanced coursework. Every core class will have an honors component within the course that will require students to extend (go deeper) into their class project/assignment as assigned by their teacher.

Honors Opportunities will be made available in all core subjects (with the exception of math, which will accelerate students based on established criteria in order to identify students that would most likely be successful in an upper level class). All students are eligible without application for Honors classwork. Each teacher will specify the particular requirements for students to earn the “Honors” designation for that class. The intention is to include more students in the honors program and to base the honors status on a student’s willingness and ability to do the depth of work and maintain high expectations for themselves.

## **Requirements for Honors Opportunity Language Arts and Reading:**

1. No more than 1 late assignment in the semester
2. No missing work
3. All test scores at or above a 90%
4. Completed honors work at a satisfactory level (minimum of one assignment per quarter). This will be the same for all teachers at that grade level.
5. Students must meet A.R. goal
6. Students must have a minimum cumulative grade of at least 85% at quarter and semester
7. Must complete requirements for both quarters in order to have honors status for semester
8. Students will be responsible for tracking their own progress towards meeting the honors status

## **Requirements for Honors Opportunity Science and Social Studies:**

1. No more than 1 late assignment in the semester
2. No missing work
3. All test scores at or above a 90%
4. Completed honors work at a satisfactory level (minimum of one assignment per quarter). This will be the same for all teachers at that grade level.
5. Must complete requirements for both quarters in order to have honors status for the semester.
6. Students will be responsible for tracking their own progress towards meeting the honors status
7. Students must have a minimum cumulative grade of at least 85% at quarter and semester