

**Venado Middle School
Course Descriptions**

7 th Grade Courses		8 th Grade Courses	
Advisement	Physical Education	Advisement	Physical Education
Elective	Science/Health	Elective	Science
ELD Program	Math	ELD Program	Math
English Language Arts – Embedded Honors	Intervention Classes	English Language Arts – Embedded Honors	Intervention Classes
Special Education Directed and Practical Classes		Special Education Directed and Practical Classes	
World History – Embedded Honors		U.S. History – Embedded Honors	

REQUIRED COURSES		
Course Title	Description	Grade
Advisement	All students are assigned an Advisement class. Advisement meets regularly to engage students in activities to support the school's Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and the Venado HONOR Code along with a variety of other lessons and activities throughout the year, including Social-Emotional Learning (SEL). Advisement is also a means of organizing the school in groups in case of an emergency, dissemination of information, and other school business, etc.	7-8
Directed Studies	Directed Studies is a Special Education class, consisting of specialized academic instruction, offered to support the general education curriculum. In this class, students review daily coursework, pre-teach and reteach concepts, organize and prioritize coursework, clarify directions, study for assessments, retake or finish assessments, learn organization and study skills, and receive assistance with long-term projects. Enrollment in this class is based on an IEP team recommendation, and the course focus is based on the student's individual needs (accommodations, modifications, and identified goals) agreed to by the IEP team.	7-8
ELD Program	<p>Students who are English Learners (ELs) will receive substantial, moderate, or light language support in all classes depending on their English language proficiency level.</p> <p>Novice Learners: Students who are novice English Language Learners (typically an ELPAC score of a 1 = beginning to develop) will be in a program designed with substantial support. Our integrated program for Novice Learners in both 7th and 8th grade includes a designated ELD English Language Arts class and an ELD 1 support class. This class will be in place of the students' elective class. Students who may wish to enroll in a second elective may choose to take Zero Period PE. See course description below.</p> <p>Here is a description of the ELD program for Novice Learners at Venado:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Coursework aligned with the CCSS English Language Arts Standards. ● Students receive substantial to moderate support through structured, integrated and designated academic language skills development based on the California English Language Development Standards (CA ELD Standards). ● With the integration of the CA ELD Standards, English fluency and content knowledge development are achieved simultaneously in the core curriculum to ensure English learners do not suffer academically as measured under the federal and state standards (Established in <i>Castaneda v. Pickard</i> [5th cir. 1981] 648 F.2d 989). 	7-8

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A variety of instructional strategies and specialized materials are used to facilitate conceptual understanding, language acquisition, and literacy skill development. ● Classroom populations may include English learners of varying ages and grades but whose level of English proficiency is similar (California Education Code Section 305). ● ELD Program participation for Novice English Learners is not normally intended to exceed one year, unless otherwise determined necessary to meet the identified instructional needs of a student (California Education Code Section 305). ● Once students participating in the Novice ELD Program have acquired a good working knowledge of English, as determined by established exit criteria, they will transition to English language mainstream classrooms with continued language support as needed (California Education Code Section 305). ● The ELD 1 support class is a companion course taught by a CLAD (Cross-Cultural Language and Academic Development) certified and credentialed teacher, offers a growth mindset ELD language development and study skills curriculum focusing on reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills and strategies. This class particularly promotes language development through instruction in reading skills and strategies, practice with grammar and writing genres, and demonstration of listening and speaking skills through discussion, debate, and skits. In addition, the course provides students with study skills curriculum offering homework support, strategies for test-taking and studying for tests, and assistance in goal-setting. This ELD 1 support class will be in place of the students' elective class. Students who may wish to enroll in a second elective may choose to take Zero Period PE. See course description below. <p>Intermediate Learners: Students who are Intermediate English Learners (typically an ELPAC score of a 2 = somewhat developed or 3 = moderately developed) will be enrolled in all core mainstream courses and will receive language support as needed. Intermediate English Learners will also be enrolled in a designated ELD 2 or ELD 3 support class. This class will be in place of the students' elective class. Students who may wish to enroll in a second elective may choose to take Zero Period PE. See course description below.</p>	
<p>English Language Arts (ELA) – Embedded Honors</p>	<p>All students will be enrolled in a grade-level English Language Arts course and will focus on the essential California Common Core Standards. Our Embedded Honors offers interested and highly motivated students enhanced learning experiences and enrichment opportunities within their existing English Language Arts class. Students pursuing the Honors option will follow the same curricula and will be held to the same learning outcomes of the English Language Arts Course. However, they will distinguish themselves by adding complexity or depth, exhibiting strong creativity and skill, contributing meaningfully to the class, and making connections of course content with the outside world. Upon successful completion of Honors criteria, which will be shared in the course syllabus at the beginning of the school year, students will receive an Honors designation on their school records on a trimester basis. Students who are English Learners will receive light, moderate, or substantial language support in the mainstream classroom setting as appropriate.</p> <p>In 7th grade English Language Arts, students will be developing their content knowledge and skills within the three domains of the California Common Core State Standards.</p> <p>Reading: Students are expected to:</p>	<p>7-8</p>

- analyze text construction and development.
- work with more complex levels of text and continue the reading strategies learned in sixth grade to comprehend texts independently.
- work with rigorous texts to analyze central ideas, look closely at an author’s word choice, and explore different points of views, and how they are developed.
- write objective summaries of text pieces, and cite multiple pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of a text.

Writing:

Students are expected to:

- continue to work on writing clear multi-paragraph argumentative and expository essays on more advanced topics.
- compare and contrast a historical account and fictional portrayal of the same event and how two or more authors write about the same event.
- gather credible and accurate information as support for their ideas without plagiarizing.
- support their claims and understanding with several pieces of textual evidence.

Speaking & Listening:

Students are expected to:

- engage with collaborative discussions in pairs and groups.
- ask questions that help make observations and work to bring conversations back to their purpose.
- acknowledge new information expressed by others and modify their own views when it is necessary.
- continue to present claims and evidence and plan and present a well-organized, logical argument.

In 8th grade English Language Arts, students will be developing their content knowledge and skills within the three domains of the California Common Core State Standards.

Writing:

Students are expected to:

- continue to work on multi-paragraph writing on advanced topics using textual evidence to support their claim, but now must use textual evidence that strongly supports their understanding. This means that students must scrutinize texts and evaluate their craft and authors, analyzing how an author might respond to conflicting viewpoints.
- Students are expected to acknowledge opposing claims of their own argument and use appropriate words and phrases to clearly transition from various ideas.
- In addition, eighth graders will conduct a short research project that includes a self-generated question that allows for multiple avenues of exploration.

Reading:

Students are expected to:

- continue to explore the development of a theme in relation to the characters, setting, and plot.
- analyze relationships between events, information, and examples when writing and reading.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● use sentence patterns and verbs in active and passive tone to portray a certain meaning when reading, writing, speaking, and listening. <p><u>Speaking and Listening:</u> Students are expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● engage in a range of collaborative discussions. ● ask questions that synthesize and propel the conversation, respond to classmates during discussions, and give feedback. ● use strategies that spark student inquiry and deeper comprehension of a text. Eighth graders must also acknowledge other perspectives and qualify or justify their own opinions when provided with new information. ● present their claims and findings with valid reasoning and well-chosen evidence 	
ELA - Directed	<p>Directed English 7 is a Special Education class, consisting of specialized academic instruction, focused on the essential standards of English 7. Enrollment in this class is based on an IEP team recommendation, and the curricular focus is based on the student's individual needs (accommodations, modifications, and identified goals) agreed to by the IEP team.</p> <p>Directed English 8 is a Special Education class, consisting of specialized academic instruction, focused on the essential standards of English 8. Enrollment in this class is based on an IEP team recommendation, and the curricular focus is based on the student's individual needs (accommodations, modifications, and identified goals) agreed to by the IEP team.</p>	7-8
ELA - Practical	<p>Practical English is a Special Education class, consisting of specialized academic instruction, focused on the principles of language: reading, writing, listening, speaking, and language. Students will read novels, short stories, and real-world documents to increase their reading comprehension, vocabulary development, and word analysis skills. Students will learn strategies to improve their written expression structure, coherence, and mechanics. Enrollment in this class is based on an IEP team recommendation, and the curricular focus is based on the student's individual needs (accommodations, modifications, and identified goals) agreed to by the IEP team.</p>	7-8
Math 7	<p>Instructional time in Math 7 focuses on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fluency in arithmetic with rational numbers ● Solving 2-step equations ($px + q = r$ and $p(x + q) = r$, where p, q, and r are rational numbers) using properties ● Understanding and analyzing the constant of proportionality and understanding proportional relationships in multiple representations (table, graph, equation, and scenario) ● Applying proportional reasoning to percent of change scenarios ● Knowing and applying the formulas for area and perimeter of 2-D figures ● Solving multi-step equations/inequalities using properties of rational numbers ● Manipulating algebraic and numeric expressions by applying order of operations ● Applying statistical models to samples in order to generalize their properties to a population ● Knowing and applying the formulas for volume/surface area of prisms and pyramids ● Interpreting, developing, and understanding probability models ● Describing the shapes of cross sections of 3D solids ● Using random sampling to draw inferences about a population <p>Math placement will be based on IUSD Math Pathways criteria: https://bit.ly/4umKBw7 Students who are English Learners will receive light, moderate, or substantial language support in the mainstream classroom setting as appropriate.</p>	7

Math 8	<p>Instructional time in Math 8 focuses on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Defining and comparing linear functions in multiple representations ● Evaluating and using linear functions as they model relationships between quantities ● Calculating and comparing rates of change of linear functions ● Solving single variable linear equations ● Understanding if data represents a function and if it is linear or nonlinear ● Comparing rational and irrational numbers which includes estimating irrational numbers ● Simplifying expressions with integer exponents ● Understanding and applying the Pythagorean Theorem to solve real world problems including the use and knowledge of radicals ● Understanding and solving systems of linear equations by graphing and algebraically ● Understanding congruence and similarity through rotations, reflections, translations, and dilations ● Recognizing patterns of association in bivariate data with scatter plots and informally fit a straight line ● Calculating volumes of cylinders, cones, and spheres ● Operations with scientific notation <p>Math placement will be based on IUSD Math Pathways criteria: https://bit.ly/4umKBw7 Students who are English Learners will receive light, moderate, or substantial language support in the mainstream classroom setting as appropriate.</p>	8
Math – Directed	<p>Directed Math 7 is a Special Education class, consisting of specialized academic instruction, focused on the essential standards of Math 7. Enrollment in this class is based on an IEP team recommendation, and the curricular focus is based on the student’s individual needs (accommodations, modifications, and identified goals) agreed to by the IEP team.</p> <p>Directed Math 8 is a Special Education class, consisting of specialized academic instruction, focused on the essential standards of Math 8. Enrollment in this class is based on an IEP team recommendation, and the curricular focus is based on the student’s individual needs (accommodations, modifications, and identified goals) agreed to by the IEP team.</p>	7-8
Math – Practical	<p>Practical Mathematics is a Special Education class, consisting of specialized academic instruction, focused on developing both procedural skills and conceptual understanding leading to the application of mathematical concepts. Course domains may include numbers and operations, algebra and algebraic thinking, measurement and data, and geometry. Students will solve real-life problems using a variety of mathematical operations and tools. Enrollment in this class is based on an IEP team recommendation, and the curricular focus is based on the student’s individual needs (accommodations, modifications, and identified goals) agreed to by the IEP team.</p>	7-8
Enhanced Math 7/8	<p>This course differs from the standard Math 7 and Math 8 courses in that it contains content from both Math 7 and Math 8 courses. This course is intended for the student who is able to move through mathematics quickly and still master the full range of mathematical practices, content, and skills. Instructional time in this course focuses on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fluency in arithmetic with rational numbers ● Solving 2-step equations using properties ● Understanding and analyzing the constant of proportionality and understanding proportional relationships in multiple representations ● Applying proportional reasoning to percent of change scenarios ● Knowing and applying the formulas for area and perimeter of 2-D figures 	7

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Solving multi-step equations/inequalities using properties of rational numbers. ● Comparing rational and irrational numbers which includes estimating irrational numbers ● Manipulating algebraic and numeric expressions by applying order of operations ● Applying statistical models to samples in order to generalize their properties to a population ● Simplifying expressions with integer exponents ● Knowing and applying the formulas for volume/surface area of prisms and pyramids ● Understanding congruence & similarity through rotations, reflections, translations & dilations ● Interpreting, developing, and understanding probability models ● Describing the shapes of cross sections of 3D solids, and calculating the volume of cylinders, cones & spheres ● Using random sampling to draw inferences about a population ● Operations with scientific notation <p>Math placement will be based on IUSD Math Pathways criteria: https://bit.ly/4umKBw7 Students who are English Learners will receive light, moderate, or substantial language support in the mainstream classroom setting as appropriate.</p>	
<p>Middle School Enhanced Math I</p>	<p>This course contains content from both Math 8 and the high school level Math I courses. This course is intended for the student who is able to move through mathematics quickly and still master the full range of mathematical practices, content, and skills. Instructional time in this course focuses on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Defining, evaluating, comparing, and using linear functions in multiple representations as they model relationships between quantities ● Calculating and comparing rates of change of linear functions ● Recognizing functions as linear, exponential or neither through attention to rate of change ● Solving systems of linear equations and inequalities ● Defining congruence through rigid transformations ● Interpreting linear models for real world data ● Justifying how to solve linear equations ● Understanding and applying the Pythagorean Theorem to solve real world problems including the use and knowledge of radicals ● Understanding and solving systems of linear equations & inequalities ● Recognizing patterns of association in bivariate data with scatter plots and formally fitting a line to a data set ● Proving geometric relations ● Fitting a line to a data set ● Arithmetic & Geometric sequences ● Functions (determining if data represent a function, comparing functions, using function notation) ● Interval notation ● Function families/ Transformation of functions ● Solutions to nonlinear systems graphically ● Two-way frequency tables ● Describing measure of shape, center and spread ● Geometric Proof 	<p>7-8</p>

	<p>Math placement will be based on IUSD Math Pathways criteria: https://bit.ly/4umKBw7</p> <p>Students who are English Learners will receive light, moderate, or substantial language support in the mainstream classroom setting as appropriate.</p>	
<p>Physical Education (PE) and Zero Period PE</p>	<p>Physical Education introduces students to team and individual sports, as well as circuit training and leisure activities. The program is co-ed and promotes sportsmanship, teamwork, and positive interactions with peers. Students will gain basic knowledge and skills for each activity, and will finish out the program with a well-rounded foundation for lifelong health and fitness. Students who are English Learners will receive light, moderate, or substantial language supports in the mainstream classroom setting as appropriate. Most students will take PE during their regular school day, periods 1-6.</p> <p>Some students may choose to take Zero Period PE, which will meet at 7:15 a.m. 4 days a week in order to allow room in their schedule for a 2nd elective class. This class has limited enrollment and students will be placed in the class using a lottery system. Priority enrollment for Zero Period PE is given to students enrolled in Directed Studies, ELD Support classes, AVID, or a Title I Intervention class.</p> <p>Please note that Zero Period PE offerings may be further limited or canceled due to enrollment, staffing, funding, and may change without notice during the scheduling process.</p>	<p>7-8</p>
<p>Science/Health 7</p>	<p>Science & Health 7 is designed to move beyond the textbook and get students "doing" science. We focus on real-world problems, hands-on experiments, and making healthy choices for the future.</p> <p>Here is a breakdown of what students and parents can expect this year:</p> <p>We use an integrated approach, meaning we mix Earth, Life, and Physical sciences together to see how the world actually works.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Earth & Environment: We explore how energy and matter move through our planet and how human activity impacts the world around us. ● Engineering & Innovation: Students won't just read about problems; they'll design solutions using the same steps real engineers use. ● The Big Picture: We focus on "Cross-Cutting Concepts". The big ideas that connect every branch of science, like cause and effect, patterns, and systems. <p>A major part of our year is dedicated to Health Science. Our goal is to give students the facts they need to make smart, lifelong decisions. Topics include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Nutrition and personal fitness. ● Safety and injury prevention. ● Understanding the risks of alcohol, tobacco, and drugs. 	<p>7</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Family life education and disease prevention. <p>We believe middle schoolers learn best when they are active. Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Engage in Projects: Solving "real-world phenomena" through project-based learning. ● Think Critically: We emphasize problem-solving over simple memorization. ● Feel Supported: For our English Learners, we provide tailored language support right in the classroom to ensure every student succeeds. <p>The goal is to help students walk away with a scientific mind, a healthy body, and the skills to tackle the challenges of the 21st century. Students who are English Learners will receive light, moderate, or substantial language support in the mainstream classroom setting as appropriate.</p>	
<p>Science 8</p>	<p>Science 8 is a course designed as a hands-on, lab-based journey through the forces and systems that shape our universe. Instead of just reading about science, students will act as scientists and engineers, investigating real-world "phenomena" to uncover the "why" behind how things work.</p> <p>Following the California Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), we integrate Earth, Space, Physical, and Life sciences to show how different fields of study overlap in the real world.</p> <p>What We Will Explore Our central theme is Change Over Time. We look at how the laws of physics and biology that govern our world today are the same ones that shaped the distant past.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Physical Science: Dive into the laws of motion, forces, and the hidden power of energy and waves. ● Life Science: Unlock the mysteries of heredity, genetics, and the evidence for evolution. ● Earth & Space: Journey through deep time to study geology, the birth of stars in astronomy, and our own human impact on the planet. ● Engineering: Solve complex problems by designing, testing, and refining your own prototypes. ● Human Impact: We will tackle the urgent question: <i>"How do changes in Earth's systems impact our communities, and what can we do about it?"</i> Students will analyze how rising global temperatures trigger extreme weather like droughts and floods and will work to design engineering solutions that make our communities more resilient. <p>How We Learn This isn't a "sit and listen" class. We focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Inquiry-Based Labs: Starting with a mystery and using experiments to find the answer. ● Project-Based Learning: Applying knowledge to build solutions for real-world problems. 	<p>8</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Critical Thinking: Developing the "investigator's mindset" to analyze data and argue from evidence. <p>Students who are English Learners will receive light, moderate, or substantial language support in the mainstream classroom setting as appropriate.</p>	
Science - Directed	Directed Science is a Special Education class, consisting of specialized academic instruction, focused on the essential standards of middle school Science. Enrollment in this class is based on an IEP team recommendation, and the curricular focus is based on the student's individual needs (accommodations, modifications, and identified goals) agreed to by the IEP team.	7-8
<p><u>Title I Intervention Classes:</u> Math Lab Reading Lab Study Skills</p>	<p><u>Based on an analysis of academic performance data, some students will be identified by our Venado Intervention Team and enrolled in one of the following Title I Intervention classes (Math Lab, Reading Lab, or Study Skills) to help remediate important academic skills.</u> Title I courses are designed to meet the educational needs of students who have yet to meet grade level proficiency in core subjects, and to build a stronger academic foundation for success in middle school, high school, and beyond. Students will be placed in the Title I courses and it will serve as the student's elective class for the school year. Students who would like a second elective class are encouraged to select Zero Period PE.</p> <p>Math Lab This intervention class will be taught by a Venado math teacher to support student's math critical skills. Over the course of a year students will focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mastering math critical skills ● Closing learning gaps ● Test preparation and test-taking strategies ● Math work habits and study skills (math growth mindsets, organization, goal setting, and time management) <p>Reading Lab This intervention class will be taught by a Venado English teacher to support your student's individual reading skills and grade level content knowledge. Over the course of a year students will focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reading comprehension and fluency ● Speaking and listening skills ● Writing and writing organization ● Closing learning gaps ● Growth mindsets <p>Study Skills This intervention class will be taught by a highly qualified Venado teacher to support your child's growth as a student. Students will learn various study skills techniques that will be helpful to them throughout their academic years and beyond. This class won't just be about homework completion. Over the course of a year students will focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Growth mindset strategies that support positive mental health ● Time management and organizational skills ● Executive Functioning ● Learning and personality styles ● Test preparation and test-taking strategies ● Goal setting and motivation strategies 	7-8

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Homework completion ● College and career readiness opportunities 	
United States History – Embedded Honors	<p>United States History covers the time period from Colonization to the Second Industrial Revolution (1914), and includes geography, economics, civics, famous historical figures, cultural and regional differences, as well as how historical events relate to the present. The study of these historical events will include the reading and analysis of various primary sources, ranging from the Constitution to personal letters from historical figures. While analyzing these primary sources, students will practice the skills of a historian: sourcing, contextualization, close reading, and corroboration. Students who are English Learners will receive light, moderate, or substantial language support in the mainstream classroom setting as appropriate.</p> <p>Our Embedded Honors offers interested and highly motivated students enhanced learning experiences and enrichment opportunities within their existing U.S. History class. Students pursuing the Honors option will follow the same curricula and will be held to the same learning outcomes of the US History Course. However, they will distinguish themselves by completing honors projects, which will require students to apply the skills of a historian: sourcing, contextualization, close reading, and corroboration through extensive research and inquiry projects and rigorous writing assignments. To enable students to complete the challenging demands of this course, students should take initiative and work well both independently and collaboratively. Upon successful completion of Honors criteria, which will be shared in the course syllabus at the beginning of the school year, students will receive an Honors designation on their school records on a trimester basis.</p>	8
World History – Embedded Honors	<p>World History emphasizes geography, civics, and social, cultural, and technological changes during the historical period from 500 to 1789 A.D. The primary focus of study involves the fall of the Roman Empire, Islam, Africa, the rise of the Aztecs, Incas, and Mayans, and a comparison of the civilizations of China, Japan, and Europe during the Middle Ages, Renaissance, Reformation, Scientific Revolution, and the Age of Exploration and Enlightenment. This course practices the skills of a historian that extend beyond the classroom such as sourcing, contextualization, close reading, and corroboration. Students who are English Learners will receive light, moderate, or substantial language support in the mainstream classroom setting as appropriate.</p> <p>Our Embedded Honors offers interested and highly motivated students enhanced learning experiences and enrichment opportunities within their existing World History class. Students pursuing the Honors option will follow the same curricula and will be held to the same learning outcomes of the World History Course. However, they will distinguish themselves by completing honors projects, which will require students to apply the skills of a historian: sourcing, contextualization, close reading, and corroboration through extensive research and inquiry projects and rigorous writing assignments. To enable students to complete the challenging demands of this course, students should take initiative and work well both independently and collaboratively. Upon successful completion of Honors criteria, which will be shared in the course syllabus at the beginning of the school year, students will receive an Honors designation on their school records on a trimester basis.</p>	7
History – Directed	<p>Directed World History is a Special Education class, consisting of specialized academic instruction, focused on the essential standards of World History. Enrollment in this class is based on an IEP team recommendation, and the</p>	7-8

	<p>curricular focus is based on the student’s individual needs (accommodations, modifications, and identified goals) agreed to by the IEP team.</p> <p>Directed U.S. History is a Special Education class, consisting of specialized academic instruction, focused on the essential standards of U.S. History. Enrollment in this class is based on an IEP team recommendation, and the curricular focus is based on the student’s individual needs (accommodations, modifications, and identified goals) agreed to by the IEP team.</p>	
History - Practical	<p>Practical History is a Special Education class, consisting of specialized academic instruction, focused on the elements of history: economics, politics, sociology, culture, and religion. Students will make connections between past and present, prompting real-world associations, and expanding their social and academic experiences. Through their study of history, students will work on their spatial and chronological thinking, points of view, historical research, and historical interpretation. Enrollment in this class is based on an IEP team recommendation, and the curricular focus is based on the student’s individual needs (accommodations, modifications, and identified goals) agreed to by the IEP team.</p>	7-8

ELECTIVES COURSES

Most students will be assigned one (1) elective course in the 2026-2027 school year. Some students who choose to take Zero period PE will have room in their schedule for a 2nd elective (see PE course description above). Elective courses are offered in two formats: elective wheels and year-long electives. The elective wheels allow students to experience three (3) different trimester elective classes over the course of a year. Year-long electives meet for the entire school year. Eighth grade students may not repeat an elective wheel or trimester elective class taken in their 7th grade year. Students in special programs may have one elective assigned to them to align with services or supports needed. All elective course offerings are limited due to enrollment, staffing, funding, and may be changed or canceled without notice during the scheduling process.

7 th or 8 th Grade	8 th Grade Only
Art Band – Concert & Symphonic Ceramics Chorus Elective Wheel #1 (3 Trimester Elective Classes): Introduction to Sign Language, Exploring Culinary Arts, and Drama Elective Wheel #2 (3 Trimester Elective Classes): Exploratory Computers, Speech & Debate, and STEAM Wheel Leadership Orchestra – Concert & Symphonic Photojournalism Study Skills	AVID Library Aide Office Aide Student Aide *World Languages: See San Joaquin School IVA catalog for Blended Learning classes <i>Please note that the maximum number of electives an IUSD middle school student can take is 2. Therefore, if a student is already taking 2 in-person electives at Venado, then he/she cannot take a World Language or other elective through IVA.</i>

ELECTIVES COURSE DESCRIPTIONS			
Course Title	Description	Grade	Recommendation Guidelines
<u>Aide:</u> Library Aide Office Aide Student Aide	<p>Aide positions are limited to 8th graders and are available only for students who are independent, responsible, and want to learn clerical and organizational skills.</p> <p>Library Aide Library aides assist in the operation of the library, including clerical tasks, shelving of books, assisting with the computerized checkout system, and delivery and retrieval of equipment. Students interested in serving as Library aides should obtain pre-approval from Mrs. Crammer, Librarian, before submitting this course request.</p> <p>Office Aide Office aides assist the office staff members and administrators in the operation of the front office, including clerical tasks, assisting with the phone and office reception duties. Please get pre-approval from Mrs. Saenz in the front office, before submitting this course request.</p> <p>Student Aide Student aides assist a specific teacher and help with clerical and classroom preparation duties. Students interested in serving as aides should obtain pre-approval from the teacher they would like to be an aide for before submitting this course request. Students may only get pre-approval from one teacher.</p>	8	Students must have Pre-approval from appropriate staff members. <u>Students who do not obtain pre-approval will not be enrolled in this class.</u>
Art	Students will explore and develop understanding of a variety of artistic techniques and mediums in this yearlong art class. These techniques will include drawing and painting, and 3D. Some mediums may include graphite, charcoal, tempera and acrylic paint, watercolor, and more. Students will also engage in developing academic literacy in the elements of art and principles of design, art history, careers, and criticism. Students with all levels of artistic skill are welcome to join this class to explore, experiment, and create an artistic voice.	7-8	None
AVID	AVID, <u>Advancement Via Individual Determination</u> , helps future leaders toward college success and beyond. This course will prepare students for the rigors of college preparatory classes by providing study and organizational skills, as well as tutorial help from college mentors. Students are taught study skills, note-taking, time management, writing skills, and research skills, while being immersed in a college-going culture. The class also includes tutoring sessions that may be led by college students and provide support for success in the academically rigorous curriculum. Additionally, the AVID class provides access to information about colleges and universities through field trips, guest speakers, college tutors, scholarship opportunities, and college admission requirement information. The profile of an AVID student is a 2.0-3.5 GPA, first generation student in a family to attend college, and highly motivated. This class is currently offered to 8th graders only and they may matriculate to the AVID programs at other IUSD high schools and continue their college-ready path.	8	<u>Application process. Students who are AVID approved will be enrolled in this course.</u>

	<p>Students who may wish to enroll in a second elective may choose to take Zero Period PE. See course description above.</p>		
<p><u>Band:</u> Concert & Symphonic</p>	<p>Concert band is an Introductory level wind instrument ensemble open to all students. Everyone is welcome & NO experience Required! Looking for a fun and supportive class to learn instrumental music? What can I expect to experience in CONCERT BAND?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Learn introductory level music literacy and wind or percussion skills ⇒ Develop wind or percussion technique and musicianship skills ⇒ Perform in band concerts ⇒ Make new friends ⇒ Express yourself creatively through classical, symphonic and pop music ⇒ Gain life skills that will transfer to other academic classes ⇒ Have a great time making life-long memories <p>Symphonic Band is an ADVANCED level wind ensemble open to all students. Are you ready for a fun and challenging class to learn instrumental music? What can I expect to experience in SYMPHONIC BAND?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Advance your music literacy and performing skills ⇒ Develop advanced wind or percussion technique and musicianship skills ⇒ Perform in band concerts, band festivals, and community performances ⇒ Make life-long friends ⇒ Express yourself creatively through classical, symphonic and pop music ⇒ Gain life skills that will transfer to other academic classes ⇒ Have a great time making life-long memories <p>Take a look at the Venado Music Department Video! Please contact Mrs. Venlet with any questions - rebeccavenlet@iusd.org</p>	7-8	<p><u>Requirements for Symphonic Band:</u></p> <p>Students must be recommended by their elementary or middle school winds teacher and have intermediate music reading and performance skills. Mrs. Venlet will receive these recommendations directly from music teachers.</p>
Ceramics	<p>This is a year-long, project-based course intended to develop personal expression and creativity using the medium of clay. Techniques include hand-building ceramics and limited wheel-thrown pottery. Emphasis is placed on design, form, function, and artistry. Students will develop the skills necessary to work with ceramics. They will demonstrate understanding and use of vocabulary associated with ceramic art as well as safe and proper use of tools and materials. Daily clean-up is an essential skill and an important part of learning to work in a ceramics studio.</p>	7-8	None
Chorus	<p>Chorus is an Introductory level singing ensemble open to all students. Everyone is welcome & NO experience Required! What can I expect to experience in CHORUS?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Learn introductory level music literacy and performing skills ⇒ Develop vocal technique and musicianship skills 	7-8	None

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Perform in choir concerts ⇒ Make new friends ⇒ Express yourself creatively through music ⇒ Gain life skills that will transfer to other academic classes ⇒ Have a great time making life-long memories <p>Take a look at the Venado Music Department Video! Please contact Mrs. Venlet with any questions - rebeccavenlet@iusd.org</p>		
<p><u>Elective Wheel #1:</u> Introduction to Sign Language, Exploring Culinary Arts, Drama</p>	<p>Students enrolled in this elective wheel will rotate and spend one trimester in each of these three classes.</p> <p>Introduction to Sign Language American Sign Language introduces basic conversational skills, as well as provides some insight into Deaf Culture. Students will learn basic signs, finger spelling, and sentence structures that would be useful when interacting with deaf students at Venado and in the community. Through teacher modeling, sign videos, sign games, structured dialogues, and deaf/hearing student interactions, students will develop both receptive and expressive American Sign Language skills.</p> <p>Exploring Culinary Arts In this class students will learn to create and eat delicious meals and desserts selected from a culturally diverse menu. In addition to learning the essential life skill of cooking, students will also learn about kitchen safety and sanitation, have opportunities to strengthen collaborative skills, and will gain an enriching and challenging “hands-on learning” experience.</p> <p>Drama Drama is the ideal class for imaginative students who would enjoy participating and collaborating in creative, fun, and highly kinesthetic activities during their school day, as well as becoming confident in public speaking. Drama skills include pantomime and improvisation, characterization, script-writing, and skit performance. In addition, students learn how to effectively deliver both humorous and dramatic readings, projecting, articulating, and communicating emotion: skills that translate beyond the theater into all aspects of life. A few new elements to the class include voice-overs, film study, and actor case studies. Drama is where learning and fun are synonymous.</p>	<p>7-8</p>	<p>None</p> <p>*If students were enrolled in all or part of this wheel in 2025-2026, they cannot repeat the courses.</p>
<p><u>Elective Wheel #2:</u> Exploratory Computers, Speech & Debate, STEAM Wheel</p>	<p>Students enrolled in this elective wheel will rotate and spend one trimester in each of these three classes.</p> <p>Exploratory Computers Exploratory Computers builds on each student’s current technology skills while introducing a variety of new concepts and applications for technology use at school and in the world in which we live. This course focuses on the fundamentals of computer science as well as some of the legal and ethical issues around technology, such as acceptable use. Skills may include advanced features of Microsoft Office, Google Applications, web page creation, programming, as well as keyboarding.</p>	<p>7-8</p>	<p>None</p> <p>*If students were enrolled in all or part of this wheel in 2025-2026, they cannot repeat the courses.</p>

	<p>Speech & Debate In this course, students will explore the various elements of speech and debate through various individual and collaborative formats. Students will learn public speaking strategies to help them deliver and write speeches on various topics and genres, such as informative, narrative, and persuasive, that can reach an audience. The class will also include a debating section that will allow students to collaborate with a team of their peers with the goal to prepare and deliver debates. By the end of this course, students will have further developed their critical thinking, speaking, listening, and research skills that will provide them with tools to better share their individual, unique voices confidently with others.</p> <p>STEAM Wheel STEAM is an introductory course designed to expose students to a variety of emerging technologies with an emphasis on collaboration and innovative technology. Students will have an opportunity to learn various coding languages, build and code various robots, and utilize CAD software to create and print designs on 3D printers. Skills may include learning to code in multiple computer languages, building robotics, and design and create objects with 3D printer. Students will develop their skills in computational thinking and problem solving, begin to become literate in multiple coding languages, and learn to program robotics and 3D printers to solve specific design challenges.</p>		
Leadership	Leadership is a yearlong class designed to help students develop leadership skills. Eighth grade elected Associated Student Body (ASB) officers are placed in this class. Emphasis is on the development of activities, which enhances self-esteem and school spirit within our school environment. Students learn about leadership styles and techniques, parliamentary procedures, budget planning and organizational skills. Leadership students work together to develop, plan, and implement a variety of student activities. Students who are successful in this course are motivated self-starters, willing to go the extra mile for the school, can work cooperatively and respectfully in committees, and have a positive attitude. Student leaders are required to demonstrate our HONOR Code at all times and be inspiring role models on campus. This class also has some time commitments during lunch and after school to support student events.	7-8	None
Orchestra: Concert & Symphonic	<p>Concert Orchestra is an Introductory level orchestral string instrument ensemble open to all! Everyone is welcome & NO experience Required! Looking for a fun and supportive class to learn instrumental music? What can I expect to experience in CONCERT ORCHESTRA?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Learn introductory level music literacy skills ⇒ Develop string technique and musicianship skills ⇒ Perform in orchestra concerts ⇒ Make new friends ⇒ Express yourself creatively through classical, symphonic and pop music ⇒ Gain life skills that will transfer to other academic classes 	7-8	<u>Requirements for Symphonic Orchestra:</u> Students must be recommended by their elementary or middle school strings teacher and have intermediate music reading and performance skills. Mrs. Venlet will receive these

	<p>⇒ Have a great time making life-long memories</p> <p>Symphonic Orchestra is an ADVANCED level orchestral ensemble open to all students. Open 7-8 grade.</p> <p>Are you ready for a fun and challenging class to learn instrumental music? What can I expect to experience in SYMPHONIC ORCHESTRA?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Advance your music literacy and performing skills ⇒ Develop advanced string technique and musicianship skills ⇒ Perform in orchestra concerts, orchestra festivals, and community performances ⇒ Make life-long friends ⇒ Express yourself creatively through classical, symphonic and pop music ⇒ Gain life skills that will transfer to other academic classes ⇒ Have a great time making life-long memories <p>Take a look at the Venado Music Department Video! Please contact Mrs. Venlet with any questions - rebeccavenlet@iusd.org</p>		<p>recommendations directly from music teachers.</p>
<p>Photojournalism</p>	<p>Photojournalism is a year-long course which will provide an introduction to the art and principles of digital photography and how to use original photography to tell a story in the style of video documentaries, media literacy projects, and the production of the annual school Yearbook. Students will learn to use different software applications, including Photo Shop, to enhance and manipulate photos. With the help of publishing software, students will use their photography and writing skills to create the design and layout of the Yearbook. Students should be proficient in writing and in using computers, and have some experience with or interest in using photo editing and/or publishing software. Because students in Photojournalism work collaboratively within groups and with the advisor to create the school Yearbook, this course requires that students are creative, work well in a self-directed classroom, and are able to meet established timelines for completion of work. Students are responsible for using digital cameras to take pictures at school events and for using computers to design the Yearbook, including layouts, photos, captions and more. Students enrolled in this class must be self-motivated and responsible for effectively managing their time. This class also has time commitments at lunch and after school to take pictures of students and school-wide events.</p>	<p>7-8</p>	<p>None</p> <p>If you a very interested in this class and would like to work on ideas this summer, please email jenniferengle@iusd.org</p>
<p>Study Skills</p>	<p>Study Skills</p> <p>This class will be taught by a highly qualified Venado teacher to support your child’s growth as a student. Students will learn various study skills techniques that will be helpful to them throughout their academic years and beyond. This class won’t just be about homework completion. Over the course of a year students will focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Growth mindset strategies that support positive mental health ● Time management and organizational skills ● Executive Functioning ● Learning and personality styles 	<p>7-8</p>	<p>None</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test preparation and test-taking strategies • Goal setting and motivation strategies • Homework completion • College and career readiness opportunities <p>Some students will be placed in the class as an academic intervention, and it is also open to students who would like to learn these skills for their own benefit.</p>		
*World Languages: Offered through San Joaquin School IVA Blended Learning Program	<p>San Joaquin School IVA offers blended learning opportunities for students and has many World Language class offerings for 8th graders: <i>Please note that the maximum number of electives an IUSD middle school student can take is 2. Therefore if a student is already taking 2 in-person electives at Venado, then he/she cannot take a World Language or other elective through IVA.</i> Please read the San Joaquin School IVA catalog for more information.</p>	8	Please email Ms. Garcia, School Counselor, to submit a request for one of these courses. eringarcia@iusd.org

Nondiscrimination Statement: The Irvine Unified School District is committed to equal opportunity for all individuals in education. District programs and activities including membership in student clubs shall be free from discrimination based on race, color, ancestry, nationality, ethnic group identification, immigration status, age, religion, actual or potential parental, family, or marital status, or the exclusion of any person because of pregnancy or related conditions, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity or expression, or genetic information; the perception of one or more of such characteristics; or association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics.

The District does not discriminate in enrollment in or access to any of the activities and programs available. Admission to these programs is based on age appropriateness, class space, interest, aptitude, and prerequisite coursework where applicable. The lack of English skills shall not be a barrier to admission to or participation in the District's activities and programs. The Irvine Unified School District also does not discriminate in its hiring or employment practices.

This notice is provided as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the California Code of Regulations Title 5, Chapter 5.3 Nondiscrimination. Questions, complaints, or requests for additional information regarding these laws may be forwarded to the District's designated compliance coordinators.

Section 504 Coordinator: Leslie Roach, Coordinator, Prevention and Intervention; 3387 Barranca Pkwy, Irvine, CA 92606, (949)936-7523

CTE Coordinator: Ulises Garcia, 5050 Barranca Pkwy, Irvine, CA 92604, (949)936-5000

Title IX, Title 5, CCR Coordinator: Christopher Krebs, Director of Secondary Education, 5050 Barranca Pkwy, Irvine, CA 92604, (949)936-5047

Title II, Title VI Coordinator: Timothy Tatum, Coordinator of Student Services, 5050 Barranca Pkwy, Irvine, CA 92604, (949)936-5000

For assistance in translating this document, contact Language Development Programs at (949)936-8500