

# Junior High Scheduling And Music Offerings for 6th Grade Students and Families



This is the time of year when Jenison's 6th Graders are asked to begin selecting their Jr. High courses. This can be an exciting time for the student as he or she looks forward to a new school, but can also be a little confusing due to all the new offerings available to the student. As music staff members, we are frequently asked lots of questions each spring about course offerings, requirements, and sign-ups. In an effort to make this process as clear as possible for 6th Grade families, we are offering you the answers to many of the frequently asked questions we hear. We hope this information makes the process easier for you and your student. If you should find that you still have questions, please do not hesitate to contact any of the music staff members. We look forward to having you be a part of our Jr. High music programs next year!

## 1. What does the schedule look like in Jr. High?

The Jr. High operates on a six-hour day. Each student fills four of those hours with the "core" subjects: Math, Science, Language Arts, and Social Studies. The other two hours may be filled with a variety of 9-week or year-long "elective" classes, some of which are specified by the district and/or state. Four elective classes (9-weeks each) fit into each elective hour of a student's schedule. (A year-long elective like music would fill four nine-week slots.)

## 2. What classes am I required to take in Jr. High?

Your four (year-long) core classes are required each year. These are Math, Language Arts, Social Studies, and Science. Each year of Junior High, one 9-week elective class is required. This is "Directions" in 7<sup>th</sup> Grade and "Challenges & Choices" in 8<sup>th</sup> Grade. (Directions and Challenges & Choices both have summer online options and zero hour options, if needed. Just ask if you are interested!)

## 3. How do the elective classes work, especially if I take music?

Each student will take the equivalent of eight 9-week elective classes each year. Band, choir, and orchestra are each full-year classes, and therefore serve as four of those eight classes. Consequently, non-music students will select eight elective classes each year. Music students will select band, choir, or orchestra, plus four elective classes each year.

## 4. If I take music, can I take the same electives as the non-music students?

YES! All elective classes are offered to all students, regardless of their music participation. Non-music students will need to fill more 9-week elective slots than music students. The only difference is that some music students may need to wait until their 8<sup>th</sup> Grade year to include all their elective preferences.

## 5. What is "Zero Hour" and how does it help my schedule?

Zero Hour classes are offered to Jr. High and High School students in order to allow them to take more elective classes. These classes are largely filled with music students, wishing to expand their schedule. The class meets from 7:00-7:50am each morning, giving students seven (not just six) hours in their school day. The zero hour classes offered are core classes, allowing more elective classes (including two music classes) to be taken during the normal six hours. In addition to the full-year zero hour options, a 9-week zero hour option is usually available, to take the required Directions class.

## 6. What are my elective choices, and which elective courses have prerequisites?

Listed on the back of this paper are the typical offerings. However, course offerings do change occasionally due to enrollment. Please consult your Junior High Scheduling materials for the most recent elective offerings for 7<sup>th</sup> Graders.

OVER ->

**Unless otherwise noted, these elective offerings are nine weeks long.**

**7th Grade: Directions** - REQUIRED

**8th Grade: Challenges & Choices** - REQUIRED

**Additional Elective Offerings:**

**Orchestra** - (full year elective)

**Band** - (full year elective)

**Choir** - (full year elective)

**Spanish 1&2** - (full year elective)

**French 1&2** - (full year elective)

**Cooking**

**Performance Arts/Communication**

**Art Classes**

- Ceramics & Sculpture
- Drawing & Painting

**Technology Classes**

- Technology Education and Design
- Applied Technology

**Physical Education Classes**

- Team Sports
- Individual Sports
- Weight Training

**STEM Classes**

- Coding
- Everyday Engineering

## **7. When should I start taking a Foreign Language?**

The state of Michigan requires that all students have two years of secondary foreign language classes in order to graduate. Foreign language instruction in Jenison can begin in the elementary, junior high, or high school level. Due to incredible administrative support, music students do NOT need to give up their music classes in order to take foreign language classes at any level. The music staff members would be happy to discuss all available schedule options with you if you'd like. Just ask if you have questions!

## **8. Can I take two music classes?**

YES! Our music department loves to have "doubblers" in our programs because we believe that it makes all of our programs stronger. There are MANY students who choose to take two music classes at the Junior High and High School. The best way to do this is to enroll in a Zero Hour class, or take Directions online over the summer. (See Question #5.)

## **9. Can I take three music classes?**

Due to the number of state and district requirements for each student, it is not possible to accommodate three music classes in a Junior High schedule.

## **10. Can I change my schedule after I turn in the scheduling form?**

We prefer that all scheduling decisions be carefully considered before turning in the scheduling forms. However, if circumstances do change, it is possible to amend your request. Just contact a music teacher or your counselor.

## **11. When I get to High School, will I be able to fit my music classes into my schedule?**

YES! Even with the State of Michigan's Graduation Requirements, our students are finding that they have plenty of room in their schedule for all of the courses they wish to take. Our High School music students are able to take all the music, foreign language, and other elective classes they desire, especially if they are willing to participate in Zero Hour.

## **12. If I have more questions, who do I ask?**

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