

8th Grade

Course Descriptions

Required Courses

English (Full Year):

Instruction in grammar, composition and spelling in the eighth grade language arts program is intended to help students communicate more accurately and effectively by strengthening both oral and written language skills. Students will use the study of classic and contemporary novels as a springboard for writing. All students will study a variety of research techniques and complete a formal paper.

Pre-Advanced Placement English (Full Year):

Pre AP English provides qualified students with skills designed to prepare them for the rigorous Advanced Placement program. Emphasis will be on literary analysis of classic and contemporary selections. Sophisticated research and writing processes will be introduced and applied extensively throughout the year. Students should expect an additional time requirement for this class and be willing to work independently. Student admission will be based on previous academic performance, standardized test scores and teacher recommendation. Please be sure to read the Pre AP Guidelines found on the back of the scheduling card.

Literature: (Full Year):

Through this literature based reading program, students will strengthen previously learned skills while coming to appreciate and recognize a number of types and styles of literature. A variety of authors and genres will be covered during the year.

Gifted and Talented Literature and English (Full Year):

Eighth grade students who are currently identified in the Frisco ISD Gifted and Talented program (Quest) will be guided through a challenging course that will expose them to various literary genres. Students will be required to read and analyze both classic and contemporary novels, participate in thematic units, conduct in-depth research, complete individual and group projects and write extensively throughout the year. Critical thinking skills will be emphasized to prepare students for future advanced classes.

Math 8 (Full Year):

Introduction to Algebra will involve study in the following concepts: the number system and its development, geometric figures and their properties, math operations on whole numbers, fractions and mixed numbers, Algebraic expressions, probability and statistics and the conversion of US customary and metric systems of measurement. This challenging class will prepare students for Algebra I.

Algebra I (Full Year): (Pre-requisite: Pre-AP Math 7)

Algebra I will include the following concepts: operations with real numbers and properties of real numbers, linear equations and inequalities with one variable, linear equations and inequalities with two variables, skills associated with polynomials and rational expressions, properties of roots and operations with radicals and quadratic equations. Student admission will be based on previous academic performance and standardized test scores. A student will be enrolled in Algebra upon successful completion of PAP Math 7.

A student who earns below a 70% in two consecutive six week grading periods will be placed on academic probation and a committee including the student, parent and teacher will convene to develop a plan for future success. If at the conclusion of the six weeks of probation the student again earns below a 70%, the committee will reconvene to determine if Pre-AP is the appropriate placement. Students who elect to take this high school level course designed to prepare students for an advanced math program should expect high standards and an additional time requirement. Students may **not** retake Algebra I for credit at the high school level.

If a student was in 7th grade Math (not Pre-AP) immediately prior and is requesting Algebra 1 in Grade 8, the following MUST be completed: (Note – this is so that the district has documentation that the child has earned mastery of the 8th grade TEKS without the benefit of instruction and remain in compliance with the legal requirements of providing instruction in all the TEKS)

- Score of 90% on both parts to a Credit-By-Exam for Grade 8
- Final average Math grade in 7th grade regular math > 92%

Geometry (Full Year): (Pre-requisite: Algebra I)

Geometry will include the following skills: deductive reasoning, lines and angles, basic postulates and theorems, congruent triangles, inequalities, parallel lines, quadrilaterals, area, polygons, circles and geometric solids. Students who elect to take this high school level course designed to prepare students for an advanced math program should expect high standards and an additional time requirement. Geometry credit is given towards graduation requirements. Even though students receive a math credit for this course, they will still be **required** to take **three** full year math courses during their 9th through 12th grade years.

Science 8 (Full Year):

Eighth grade science builds on the concepts that begin in seventh grade science. Additional topics such as geology and meteorology are introduced. The interdependence of the sciences is stressed and analyzed throughout the year.

Pre-Advanced Placement Science (Full Year):

Pre AP Science provides qualified students with skills designed to prepare them for the rigorous Advanced Placement program. Emphasis will be placed on chemistry, physics and biology. Lab experiences will be taught using an integrated math/science approach. Students should expect an additional time requirement for this class and be willing to work independently. Student admission will be based on previous academic performance, standardized test scores and teacher recommendation. Please be sure to read the Pre AP Guidelines found on the back of the scheduling card. In accordance with advanced scientific thinking, students will be required to conduct an independent science project reflecting their interest in the sciences.

US History (Full Year):

This American History course provides meaningful learning experiences that will promote a better understanding and appreciation of American democracy and the American way of life. The content of this course deals with the United States from its origin through the Civil War/Reconstruction. This course provides students the opportunity to investigate and to inquire, to analyze and to evaluate, to make decisions and to challenge opposing views, and thus prepares the student for future participation in the American democratic process. Geography will be included, pointing out physical aspects of the US and other countries, thereby enhancing an awareness of the world.

Elective Courses

Athletic Offerings

Athletics (Full Year):

UIL Athletic Competition and Off-Season Conditioning are the focus of our Athletics program. Participation sports for boys include Football, Basketball and Track; participation sports for girls are Volleyball, Basketball and Track.

Students are required to maintain passing grades and above average behavior to participate in these programs. Additionally, in order to meet UIL age requirements, students in Athletics CAN NOT have reached their 15th birthday prior to September 1st of the current school year.

Tennis

The Tennis program is designed to help students acquire and improve the skills needed for competitive tennis.

Beginning Tennis/PE Rotation (One Semester) will give students a chance to rotate into a tennis class from PE the 1st semester to focus on the basics and begin to build a foundation of fundamental skills. Our goal is to create an atmosphere of enthusiasm and interest for the sport for those who desire to make a serious effort to be a part of an athletic tennis program and potentially work towards becoming a competitive player. Beginning tennis is a 6 week long class. At the end of the first semester the tennis coach will evaluate all the beginning students and choose those that have shown ability and interest in going to intermediate tennis the 2nd semester. All players not chosen for the intermediate class will be placed in a PE class the 2nd semester. This system will allow the tennis coach to spend time with the intermediate group and also allow the other students to go back to PE and work on their basic athletic skills.

Intermediate Tennis (One Semester) will consist of athletes who have demonstrated the skill level of a potential intermediate player in the beginning basics. The top 15 – 20 students will advance to the Intermediate class for the 2nd semester based on the coaches' evaluations during the 1st semester Beginning Tennis class.

Advanced tennis class (Full Year) will consist of a more diligent, higher skill level workout, focusing on competitive play. The athlete needs to be completely dedicated to a full year of tennis workouts and elevated ambitions. They should also be constantly broadening their skill level not only through school tennis but also outside competitions and lessons. Advanced athletes need to be able to demonstrate a forehand, backhand, volley and a serve or be a very versatile athlete setting themselves apart as far as coordination, anticipation and agility.

The advanced players are chosen by the tennis coach the previous spring during a tryout. The basic guide in choosing these advanced players is experience level. Any player not chosen for the advanced class will be placed in beginning tennis.

Band Offerings

Beginning Band (Full Year):

This course is designed to introduce students to the basic fundamentals of band instruments (Brass, Woodwind and Percussion.) The course covers selection and care of instruments, correct playing position, reading music and awareness of rhythm and pitch. Students will be placed into appropriate band classes upon taking an instrument test.

Concert Band (Full Year):

This course is an extension of beginning band. The course covers selection and care of instruments, correct playing position, reading music and awareness of rhythm and pitch. Weekly sectionals are also employed to strengthen instrument skills as music becomes increasingly more difficult.

Symphonic Band (Full Year):

Symphonic Band is designed to meet the needs of the advanced band student. The course covers selection and care of instruments, correct playing position, reading music and awareness of rhythm and pitch. Weekly sectionals are also employed to strengthen instrument skills as music becomes increasingly more difficult.

Theater Offerings

Theater Arts I (Full Year):

Theater Arts I is designed for any student who is interested in an introduction to acting and the theater. The course is designed to introduce the student to acting through exercises in body control, concentration and relaxation. The student will work on improvisation skills both individually and in groups. The primary objective is to develop the student's creativity and ability for self-expression.

Theater Arts II (Full Year):

Theater Arts I is a prerequisite for Theater Arts II. Theater Arts II builds upon the skills learned in Theater Arts I. Students will continue to strengthen their acting skills in a variety of theatrical experiences including reading and writing plays, as well as memorized and improvisational performance.

Theater Arts III (Full Year):

Teacher approval is required for students to take Theater Arts III. Theater Arts III builds upon the skills learned in Theater Arts II. Students will continue to strengthen their acting skills in a variety of theatrical experiences including reading and writing plays, as well as memorized and improvisational performance. Higher order thinking skills will be emphasized. Students need to be mature with the ability to work independently.

Theater Production (Full Year): AUDITION REQUIRED

This course is for the student who has a strong desire to excel in the theater arts. The students will have the practical, hands on experiences of producing various forms of theater production. Students will write, direct and act in their own productions. Theater Production students will also promote PHMS to the various feeder elementary schools by performing for them at least once a year. This class will assist in the production of all after school productions, and will be responsible for the Middle School One-Act Play.

An audition is required for admission into this course. Auditions will take place in the spring of 2010.

Art Offerings

Art I (Full Year):

Art I will emphasize drawing techniques and design principles while studying the elements of art and various artists. Students will also work with clay, paper collage and various painting media.

Art II (Full Year):

Teacher approval is required for students to take Art II. Students must have completed a semester of 6th grade Art or Art I to take Art II. Art II will expand on the principles and elements of Art I, while spending more time on art history and techniques of drawing and painting. The focus for the first semester will be two-dimensional work and design; second semester will include ceramics, printmaking, sculpture and weaving.

Art III (Full Year):

Teacher approval is required for students to take Art III. Art III will follow the general outline of Art II except that difference projects will be assigned and different artists will be studied. Also, perspective drawing and art criticism will be taught in depth. Higher order thinking skills will be emphasized. Students need to be mature with the ability to work independently.

Foreign Language Offerings

Spanish 1B (Full Year):

Students must have successfully completed Spanish 1A with a final grade of 70% or above in 7th grade to enroll in Spanish 1B. Spanish 1B continues with the development of the four basic language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing through the use of oral drills, vocabulary building, simple composition and reading assignments, dialogue and creative writing. The course also stresses cultural awareness and understanding of the Spanish-speaking world and its impact on the United States. Following the successful completion of two years of instruction, Spanish I credit is given toward high school graduation requirements. A student who earns below a 70% in two consecutive six week grading periods will be placed on academic probation and a committee including the student, parent and teacher will convene to develop a plan for future success. If at the conclusion of the six weeks of probation the student again earns below a 70%, the committee will reconvene to determine if Pre-AP is the appropriate placement. Students enrolled in these courses should expect high standards and an additional time requirement.

Choir Offerings

Girl's Choir (Full Year)

Girl's Choir is open to all 7th or 8th grade female students who would like to further their musical knowledge and sing in a performing ensemble. ***No prior choir experience is required.*** Classes meet daily and focus on establishing and developing good vocal technique, reading musical notation and performance skills. During the year, all choir students will combine on two or more occasions to present concerts for the parents and public. Members of the Girl's Choir may perform in the Spring UIL Contest.

Boy's Choir (Full Year)

Boy's Choir is open to all 7th or 8th grade male students who would like to further their musical knowledge and sing in a performing ensemble. ***No prior choir experience is required.*** Classes meet daily and focus on establishing and developing good vocal technique, reading musical notation and performance skills. During the year, all choir students will combine on two or more occasions to present concerts for the parents and public. Members of the Boy's Choir may perform in the Spring UIL Contest.

Orchestra Offerings

Beginning Orchestra (Full Year):

Beginning Orchestra (strings) is open to all 6th, 7th or 8th grade students who would like to further their musical knowledge or begin instruction on violin, viola, cello, harp or bass. No prior experience is necessary. (Students with prior string experience read NOTE below.) These classes meet daily and focus on establishing and developing basic musical and performance skills. During the year, all string students will combine on two or more occasions to present concerts for the parents and public. The students will also perform at one music contest. Students will be placed in classes according to instrumentation (i.e. violins/violas or cellos/basses). Prior to enrollment, a "try the instrument night" is scheduled to allow the student to have a "hands on" trial time. The director is always available to answer questions on instrument selection, instrument sizing, rentals, reconditioning of previously owned family instruments, instrument purchase and scholarship opportunities. (It is strongly recommended that parents meet with the director prior to purchasing an instrument.)

NOTE: Students with previous string experience or those students with previous musical experience (i.e. piano, band instrument) may elect to study privately during the summer and audition in early August for placement in Concert Orchestra (Level II) or Symphonic Orchestra (Level III).

Concert Orchestra (II) (Full Year)

Concert Orchestra (Level II) is open to all students (primarily 7th grade students) who would like to further their musical knowledge and continue instruction on violin, viola, cello or bass. This orchestra meets daily and focuses on continuing the development of musical skills in an ensemble setting. During the year, the Concert Orchestra will combine on two or more occasions with other performing groups to present concerts for

the parents and public. The Concert Orchestra will perform as a non-varsity orchestra for adjudication at the Spring UIL Contest. NOTE: Students *may* be placed in this orchestra according to ability or scheduling conflicts rather than grade level.

Symphonic Orchestra (III) (Full Year)

Symphonic Orchestra (III) is an **auditioned** ensemble of serious middle school string students (mostly 8th grade students who study privately) who understand and are able to demonstrate correct bowing, hand positions, intonation, scales, shifting & sight-reading skills. Symphonic Orchestra meets daily and focuses on continuing the development of musical skills using a repertoire ranging from the classics to Broadway. The Symphonic Orchestra will perform as a varsity orchestra for adjudication at the Spring UIL Contest. During the year, the orchestra will combine on two or more occasions with other performing groups to present concerts for the parents and public. NOTE: Students *may* be placed in this orchestra according to ability or scheduling conflicts rather than grade level.

Technology Offerings

Multimedia I (One Semester) and Video Production I (One Semester):

Multimedia I: Students will use Photoshop Elements photo editing software to create and manipulate digital graphics. Their graphics will then be integrated with PowerPoint to produce advanced animation techniques. VR Worx software will be utilized to create virtual reality tours of various locations.

Video Production I: This is a course designed for students to investigate and increase their understanding of producing a broadcast quality video. Using hands-on problem solving, the students will produce special edition videos over various topics, as well as acquire “in front of the camera” broadcasting experience. Students will learn to operate video equipment and iMovie editing software, utilize proper lighting techniques, and video/audio enhancements while sharpening their communication skills.

Multimedia II (One Semester) and Video Production II (One Semester):

Students will utilize basic video editing concepts learned in entry level Video Production and Multimedia. Students will learn higher level video editing with Final Cut Express. Projects will include music videos, documentaries, silent films, morphing, and flashbacks. Projects will be integrated with Multimedia applications to encompass all aspects of still and video photography editing. Higher level movie editing techniques and multimedia curriculum will be used. Students will enhance their skills with the Mac & PC computer and video equipment; enhance their understanding of camera presence, and script writing.

Robotics (Full Year):

Students learn to design, build, program and run an RCX robotic brick using LEGO Mindstorms Kits for Schools. Students download programs created in an exciting program developed by NASA scientists called ROBOLAB. Students make their “robot” perform successfully solving assigned, specific tasks.

Broadcast (Full Year): APPLICATION REQUIRED

Students must apply for admission to this course. Successful completion of Video Production I and Multimedia I are prerequisites for Broadcast. Using the software applications Adobe Photoshop Elements and Final Cut Express, students will learn how to integrate digital graphics with video segments to create their projects. Students will be responsible for producing the weekly live broadcast as well as completing independent projects. Higher level movie editing techniques and multimedia curriculum will be used. Students will enhance their skills with the Mac computer and video equipment; enhance their understanding of good journalism techniques such as interviewing, camera presence, and script writing.

Animation (Full Year):

Animation is a course designed for students to investigate and increase their understanding of creating digital graphics and animation. Using Animation Master, a state of the art modeling, animation and rendering software, students will learn basic animation and design techniques and terminology. It is recommended that students take a semester of Video Production or a semester of Multimedia prior to enrolling in animation.

Keyboarding (One Semester) / Computer Applications (One Semester)

Keyboarding (One Semester)

Students will learn the “touch keyboarding skill” and the proper formatting of documents for personal and business use. There will be opportunities for students to apply their keyboarding skills in “real life” situations. Students will be helped to achieve their potential in speed and accuracy.

While not a mandatory requirement for advanced computer and business classes, keyboarding provides essential skills for success in these areas.

Following successful completion of this course, high school credit will be awarded as a one-semester elective.

Computer Applications (One Semester)

By using technology as a tool that supports the work of individuals and groups in solving problems, students will select the technology appropriate for the task, synthesize knowledge, create a solution, and evaluate the results. Students communicate information in different formats and to diverse audiences. A variety of technologies will be used with emphasis on the Microsoft Office Suite of Software. Students will analyze and evaluate the results.

Other Elective Options

Skills for Independent Living (formally Skills for Living/Food and Nutrition):

Skills for Independent Living: This laboratory course will enable students to investigate concepts and career areas in clusters such as: early childhood development, family and consumer sciences, hospitality, business, culinary arts, personal finances,

Yearbook (Full Year): APPLICATION REQUIRED

Students must apply for admission to this course. Students enrolling in Journalism should exhibit a high degree of responsibility, tenacity and maturity. As a part of the curriculum, students will be required to attend and cover events before and after school. A strong English and/or Art background will be helpful as this course involves production of the school yearbook. This course teaches basic journalism and printing terms, layout designs and copy preparation.

Teen Leadership (One Semester) / Career Investigations (One Semester)

Teen Leadership: This course offers a leadership development curriculum designed to provide young people with essential life skills. It is a dynamic experience that empowers teens to be the leaders of tomorrow through highly interactive activities conducted by a specially trained teacher. The class activities revolve around lessons in goal setting, developing relationships, public speaking, skills in affirmation, actions of personal responsibility and conflict resolutions skills.

Career Investigations: Career Investigations is designed to provide students with the ability to make informed decisions concerning the world of work and how it relates to the world of learning. Students will compile a portfolio of their work, take assessments to better guide them in their career development, investigate 16 different career clusters, complete their high school graduation plan, discover the job hunting process, and learn how to succeed at work.

Teacher Aide (Full Year): APPLICATION REQUIRED

Students will be assigned to assist in the main office or in classrooms. An application process will be used in the selection of the students.

Health (Full Year):

Health Education stresses concepts and skills that foster individual personal health and safety, health-related concepts and skills that invoke interaction between individuals and health-related concepts and skills that affect the well-being of people collectively. Following successful completion of this course, high school credit will be awarded as the one-semester health requirement.