

Required and Elective Course Guide

8th Grade
2010 - 2011



Wester Middle School
469-633-4800

All classes listed in this course guide are subject to change due to alterations in personnel or budget

Course Descriptions

Eighth Grade

Required Courses

Frisco ISD is considering high school classes taken at the middle school to count towards a student's high school grade point average. At this time, this has not been passed. We do encourage you to check the Frisco ISD Student Handbook for 2010-2011 for further information regarding this possibility. If this does pass, it would affect the following courses: Geometry, Algebra, Health, Spanish, and Keyboarding.

Pre-AP Classes, Algebra I and Spanish Expectation:

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, Algebra I and/or Spanish I is the appropriate placement.

AMI, ARI, Extensions - Students identified as needing extra math and/or reading instruction will be placed into an accelerated math and/or reading class.

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 capable students with skills designed to prepare them for the rigorous Advanced Placement program. Sophisticated research and writing processes will be introduced and applied extensively throughout the year. Students who elect to take this rigorous course should expect high standards and time demands as set by any higher level course.

NOTE: *There will be required reading and a project to complete over the summer break.*

Literature (*Full Year*)

Through this literature course, students will strengthen previously learned skills while coming to recognize and appreciate various genres. Students will learn to analyze the literature that they read using a variety of techniques, and they will be able to connect literature to the real world as they analyze the themes contained within. Vocabulary study, the study and application of literary terms, research, and written response to literature will be practiced regularly throughout the course of the year as students work to succeed in their educational goals as well as in life.

GT Language Arts (*Reading & English, Must Qualify for GT Program*)

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 a variety of literature 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: Pre-Algebra (*Full Year*)

To establish critical thinking skills, application problems are emphasized in each of the following concepts: mathematical operations with rational numbers, algebraic expressions and equations, probability and statistics, and geometric figures and their properties. This challenging class will prepare students for Algebra I.

Pre-AP Algebra I (*Full year, Prerequisite: Pre AP Seventh Grade Math, 1 High School Credit*)

PreAP Algebra I expands on the concepts covered in regular Algebra I with an intense focus on high level application and problem solving situations that require a solid foundation of skills associated with the following content areas: operations and properties of real numbers, linear equations and inequalities in one variable, linear equations and inequalities in two variables, polynomial and rational expressions, properties of roots, operations with radicals, and quadratic equations.

Pre-AP Geometry (*Full Year, Prerequisite: Algebra I, 1 High School Credit*)

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.

Upon successful completion of the class, students will receive elective credit toward high school graduation, however this class is not included in the overall high school G.P.A., nor does it count as one of the four required math credits. 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 Geometry for credit at the high school level.

Science 8 (*Full Year*)

Eighth grade science builds on the concepts that begin in Science 7. 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-Advanced Placement Science provides capable students with skills designed to prepare them for the rigorous Advanced Placement program. Emphasis will be placed on chemistry, physics and biology. Lab experiments will be taught using an integrated math/science approach. Students who elect to take this rigorous course should expect high standards and time demands as set by any higher-level course.

U.S. History (*Full Year*)

This American history course provides meaningful learning experiences, which 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 discovery through the Civil War/Reconstruction. This course provides the individual the opportunities to investigate and to inquire, to analyze and to evaluate, to make decisions, to challenge opposing views, and thus prepare the student for future participation in the American democratic process. Geography will be included, pointing out physical aspects of the U.S. and other countries, thereby enhancing an awareness of the world.

Eighth Grade Electives

Students identified as needing extra math and/or reading instruction will be placed into an accelerated math and/or reading class.

AMI-Accelerated Mathematics (*Full year*) This class will focus on the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Mathematics. Students will focus on objectives that were not mastered their previous school year. This class will also support and reinforce concepts that are taught in Grade eight.

ARI-Accelerated Reading (*Full Year*) This class will focus on the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Reading. Students will focus on objectives that were not mastered their previous school year. This class will also support and reinforce concepts that are taught in Grade eight.

Math and Reading Extensions (*Full year*) This class will focus on the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for both Reading and Mathematics. Students will focus on objectives that were not mastered their previous school year. This class will also support and reinforce concepts that are taught in Grade eight.

Full Year Electives: When a student signs up for a full year class, the expectation is that he/she will remain in the class for the entire year.

Animation / Digital Graphics (Full Year)

Animation / Digital Graphics is a course designed for students to incorporate art and technology. Students will learn drawing and design techniques on paper as well as on the computer. Students will create an original character, design comic strips, study the principles and history of animation, and draw daily in a sketchbook. In addition, students will work on Animation:Master, a state-of-the-art modeling, animation and rendering software program. Students will be asked to supply a sketchbook by the second week and modeling clay (or Model Magic™) by Thanksgiving for this course.

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, Prerequisite: Art I)

Art II will expand on the principles and elements of art 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. The second semester will include ceramics, printmaking, sculpture and weaving.

Art III (Full Year, Prerequisite: Art II)

Art III will follow the general outline of Art II except that different 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.

BOYS TEAM Athletics (Full Year)

FOOTBALL AND BASKETBALL ONLY!!!

Involves UIL competition and off-season conditioning. (Fulfills P.E. Requirement)

STUDENTS ARE REQUIRED TO MAINTAIN PASSING GRADES AND FOLLOW AN ATHLETIC CODE OF CONDUCT TO PARTICIPATE IN ATHLETICS. FAILURE TO FOLLOW THE CODE OF CONDUCT MAY LEAD TO REMOVAL FROM THE PROGRAM!!

Students who participate in Football and Basketball MUST ATTEND MANDATORY PRACTICES and GAMES (which may be scheduled during holidays).

All who sign up for Football are on the team, however, basketball is on a try-out basis. Those who do not make basketball go to football off-season.

IN ORDER TO SIGN UP FOR ATHLETICS, YOUR REGISTRATION CARD MUST BE SIGNED BY COACH REESE.

Off-season: The off-season program consists of daily running and weight training.

BOYS INDIVIDUAL Athletics (*Full Year*)

TRACK, CROSS COUNTRY & SOCCER

For those students who would like to be in athletics but do not play football or basketball, we have Individual Athletics. The purpose of this class is for students to work in an off-season type program to prepare them for the spring sports.

STUDENTS ARE REQUIRED TO MAINTAIN PASSING GRADES AND FOLLOW AN ATHLETIC CODE OF CONDUCT TO PARTICIPATE IN ATHLETICS. FAILURE TO FOLLOW THE CODE OF CONDUCT MAY LEAD TO REMOVAL FROM THE PROGRAM!!

Students who participate in a competitive sport, MUST ATTEND MANDATORY PRACTICES and GAMES (which may be scheduled during holidays).

Cross Country is open to everyone, while TRACK and SOCCER are both on a tryout basis.

IN ORDER TO SIGN UP FOR ATHLETICS, YOUR REGISTRATION CARD MUST BE SIGNED BY COACH REESE.

Off-season: The off-season program consists of daily running and weight training.

GIRLS TEAM Athletics (*Full Year*)

VOLLEYBALL AND BASKETBALL ONLY!!!

Involves UIL competition and off-season conditioning. (Fulfills P.E. Requirement)

STUDENTS ARE REQUIRED TO MAINTAIN PASSING GRADES AND FOLLOW AN ATHLETIC CODE OF CONDUCT TO PARTICIPATE IN ATHLETICS. FAILURE TO FOLLOW THE CODE OF CONDUCT MAY LEAD TO REMOVAL FROM THE PROGRAM!!

Students who participate in Volleyball and Basketball MUST ATTEND MANDATORY PRACTICES and GAMES (which may be scheduled during holidays).

Volleyball and basketball is on a try-out basis. Those who do not make the team will be in the off-season program.

IN ORDER TO SIGN UP FOR ATHLETICS, YOUR REGISTRATION CARD MUST BE SIGNED BY COACH FERNANDEZ.

Off-season: The off-season program consists of daily running and weight training.

GIRLS INDIVIDUAL Athletics (*Full Year*)

TRACK, CROSS COUNTRY & SOCCER

For those students who would like to be in athletics but do not play volleyball or basketball, we have Individual Athletics. The purpose of this class is for students to work in an off-season type program to prepare them for the spring sports.

STUDENTS ARE REQUIRED TO MAINTAIN PASSING GRADES AND FOLLOW AN ATHLETIC CODE OF CONDUCT TO PARTICIPATE IN ATHLETICS. FAILURE TO FOLLOW THE CODE OF CONDUCT MAY LEAD TO REMOVAL FROM THE PROGRAM!!

Students who participate in a competitive sport, MUST ATTEND MANDATORY PRACTICES and GAMES (which may be scheduled during holidays).

Cross Country is open to everyone, while TRACK and SOCCER are both on a tryout basis.

IN ORDER TO SIGN UP FOR ATHLETICS, YOUR REGISTRATION CARD MUST BE SIGNED BY COACH FERNANDEZ.

Off-season: The off-season program consists of daily running and weight training.

Tennis (Full Year)

An active participation course designed to help students work toward a higher competitive level. This offering can be taken **in place of P.E. or Athletics**. It *cannot* be taken in conjunction with either. Students are required to maintain passing grades, and exhibit above-average behavior in order to participate in tennis.

Following tryouts for the tennis program, students not making the team will be assigned to a P.E. class.

IN ORDER TO SIGN UP FOR TENNIS, YOUR REGISTRATION CARD MUST BE SIGNED BY COACH MAUPIN.

Band (Full Year)

Concert Band:

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. Addition in this group is by audition only.

(Students will furnish instruments.)

Symphonic Band:

Symphonic band is designed to meet the needs of the growing band student. The course covers the improvement of the individual musician as well as the development of ensemble skills. Students will have to prove a high level of musicianship to be accepted into the Symphonic Band. Weekly sectionals are also employed to strengthen instrument skills as music becomes increasingly more difficult. Addition in this group is by audition only.

(Students will furnish instruments.)

Honor Band:

Honor Band is the highest level of band and meets the needs of the advanced band student. The course covers the continued improvement of technical ability in preparation for All Region competition, Centennial High School Band advancement, and improved ensemble performance. Addition in this group is by audition only. ***(Students will furnish instruments.)***

*******All students will be placed into the appropriate section of band based on ability level determined by instructor.***

Broadcast (Full Year, Prerequisite: VP I, Application Required)**

Producing, directing, acting, writing and working a video camera...if these sound exciting to you and you want to be part of the KATZ Live News Crew for next year, this is the course for you! Students will create videos, compose scripts, and present weekly news shows for Wester MS and monthly videos for the Frisco community. Students will also deliver daily

announcements over the PA system. Students applying for Broadcast must have taken VPI in 7th grade, be self-motivated, be able to meet quick deadlines (typically every 1½ weeks), and able to film at least one outside event (such as sports, concerts, and plays) each six-weeks. Pick up an application from Mrs. Matos!

Career Investigations/Teen Leadership (Full year)

Career Investigation - Achieving proficiency in decision making and problem solving is an essential skill for career planning and lifelong learning. Students use self-knowledge, educational, and career information to set and achieve realistic career and educational goals.

Teen Leadership is a program in which students develop leadership, personal, and business skills. They learn to develop a healthy self-concept, healthy relationships, and learn to understand the concept of personal responsibility. Students will develop skills in public speaking and communication and an understanding of personal image. They will also develop an understanding of the effects of peer pressure and will develop skills to counteract those effects. Finally, they will develop an understanding of the need for vision in goal setting, personally, and professionally.

Choir (Full Year)

This course is designed to extend the fundamentals of beginning choir courses and to concentrate more heavily on the artistic and expressive qualities of choral singing. The goal of the Wester Choral Department is to develop student's knowledge and skills in music theory, music history, and music performance. Students will perform at least three concerts during the school year. At least one year of choral singing experience is helpful but not required.

7th and 8th Mixed Choir – This choir is for all 7th and 8th graders who may or may not have previously been involved in a choir. Both male and female singers are encouraged to participate in the mixed choir, as we sing music that includes parts for each voice. Music with more noticeable harmony is performed in the mixed choir. Students in this choir will have an opportunity to sing in a spring festival/competition and attend a year-end field trip.

7th and 8th Grade Treble Show Choir – This choir is our audition/competition choir comprised of female voices only. Students must audition with the choir teacher to be in this choir. Singing and choreography experience is required to be enrolled in this choir. The Treble Show Choir will compete in the UIL Choir Competition in the spring, which involves sight reading music and performing more challenging musical selections. Members of this choir will also be required to audition for the TMEA All-Region Choir which auditions in the fall semester. This choir will also be involved in a year-end field trip.

Health Education (Full Year, ½ High School Credit)

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 the successful completion of instruction, Health credit is awarded. Although the course will count towards high school graduation, the grade earned will not be included in

the overall high school G.P.A. ***Students who elect to take this rigorous course should expect high standards and time demands as set by any high school level course.***

HOPE – Helping Our Peers Excel** (Full Year, Application and Teacher Recommendation Required)

HOPE students will tutor and assist students in academic achievement by meeting with students on a one-to-one or small group basis to give learning assistance. HOPE students must work well with others and are expected to be sensitive to the problems that some students may face. Being a HOPE student is a privilege and also a great responsibility. Students will depend on you for academic assistance and you will gain valuable experience as a peer tutor. Confidentiality pertaining to any student is imperative. All HOPE students are required to maintain an above average discipline record and maintain a passing grade in all classes.

Orchestra – Beginning, Intermediate, and Advanced (Full Year)

The orchestra program provides instruction in violin, cello and bass. This class is open to any student who would like to further their musical knowledge and to begin instruction on a stringed instrument. These classes meet daily and focus on establishing and developing basic musical and performance skills. During the year, the string students will combine on two or more occasions to present concerts for the public. Instrument arrangements will be made upon instrument selection.

Advanced classes are also available for students who have completed at least a year of instruction and are ready to expand their orchestral knowledge. Students will be placed into the appropriate orchestra class based on ability level determined by the orchestra instructor. *All students will be placed into the appropriate orchestra class based on ability level determined by the orchestra instructor.***

Robotics (Full Year)

Pairs of students learn to design, build, program, and run an NXT robotic brick using LEGO Mindstorms Kits for Schools. Students download programs created in an exciting program developed by NASA scientists called NXT-G to make the “robot” perform specified functions. Students will learn basic programming concepts and apply them in successfully solving assigned, specific activities for their robots.

Skills for Independent Living (Full Year)

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, and human services.

Exploratory Spanish

This year-long course will give students an introduction to the Spanish language and to the diverse cultures of Spanish speaking countries. Through a variety of projects and activities, students will begin learning more about the Spanish-speaking world and some basics of Spanish, focusing on practical conversational Spanish and basic vocabulary necessary in today's world. This course would be an alternative to the 2-year Spanish program through which middle school students receive high school credit. While open to both 7th and 8th grade students, Exploratory Spanish would be an excellent choice for 8th graders who did not take Spanish IA in 7th grade but would like to be more prepared before starting Spanish I as freshmen.

Spanish I-B (Full Year, Prerequisite: Completion of Sp. I-A, 1 H.S. Credit upon completion of 1-B)

Spanish I-B 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 high school credit is awarded. ***Students who elect to take this rigorous course should expect high standards and time demands as set by any high school level course.***

Technology Applications & Keyboarding (Full year)**

Keyboarding^{1/2} High School Elective Credit (This does not fulfill the technology credit needed for graduation) is the course that prepares the student to operate the keyboard by touch and develop acceptable speed and accuracy levels that enables the student to achieve his/her speed and accuracy potential. This course includes the proper formatting of basic documents for personal and business use. **High School Credit (1/2)** will be awarded as a one semester elective; however, the grade earned will not be included in the overall high school GPA. ***Students who elect to take this rigorous course should expect high standards and time demands as set by any high school level course.***

Technology Applications is the course that gives students beginning training in computer applications including a working knowledge of the Microsoft Office Suite-Word, Excel, Access, and Publisher. There will be hands-on training in production of tables in Word, graphic design in Publisher, creating spreadsheets in Excel, and creating databases using Access. Various tasks will require the integration of these applications. Each student will have the opportunity to apply their keyboarding skills in a "real world" simulation.

Theater Arts I (Full Year)

Theatre Arts I is designed to introduce the student to the many performing and technical aspects of theatre. Acting is introduced through individual and group exercises in improvisational and memorized performances. Basic theatrical knowledge, play reading, and playwriting are emphasized. The primary objective is to develop the student's creativity and self-expression.

Theatre Arts II (Full Year, Prerequisite: Theatre Arts I)

Theatre Arts II builds upon the skills learned in Theatre 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.

Theatre Arts III (Full Year, Prerequisite: Theatre Arts II, Application, Teacher Recommendation, Grades, Past Performance)

Theatre Arts III builds upon the skills learned in Theatre Arts II. Students will continue to refine their acting skills in a variety of theatrical experiences. The focus will be on theatre production and performance. Students will be expected to be responsible and mature, as they will work independently on many assignments.

Video Production I and Multimedia I (Full Year: One Semester Each)

Video Production I introduces students to movie making using iMovie software on Macintosh computers. Students will learn the basics of what happens behind the scenes and will have the opportunity for in front of the camera experience while creating videos. Students will also learn successful operation and care of video equipment and framing techniques.

Multimedia I introduces the concepts of graphic design using the software, Adobe Photoshop Elements. The students will learn various types of animation, storyboarding techniques, and how to incorporate these skills into the production of an animated project using Microsoft PowerPoint. Adobe Photoshop Elements is used to manipulate text, graphics, create animated gifs, and create various design projects. Students will learn techniques needed to use digital cameras and scanners in graphic design.

Video Production II and Multimedia II

Prerequisite: Video Production I / Multimedia I

Video Production II is a continuation of Video Production I. Students will use more advanced video editing software, Final Cut Express, while creating videos incorporating the green screen, keyframe animation and integrating Multimedia elements. The final project is creating a video including special effects.

Multimedia II is a continuation of Multimedia II. Adobe Photoshop Elements is used to produce projects such as Movie Posters, Panoramas, Caricatures, and Soda Pop Art. Presentations will be done in PowerPoint where the advanced techniques of hyperlinks and graphs will be used.

Yearbook (Full Year, Application Required)**

Students will use the Jostens Yearbook Avenue software to design an all-digital, state-of-the-art yearbook for the 2009-2010 yearbooks. Combining journalism techniques, digital photography and Macintosh computers, students will learn a skill they can use in their high school years.

NOTE: COURSE OFFERINGS IN THE ELECTIVE AREAS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE AND/OR OMISSION DUE TO AN INSUFFICIENT AMOUNT OF STUDENT REQUESTS, LACK OF QUALIFIED PERSONNEL TO TEACH THE CLASS, OR FUNDING. THE STUDENT WILL BE PLACED IN THE NEXT ELECTIVE CHOICE ON THE SCHEDULE CARD FILLED OUT BY THE STUDENT AND PARENT.