

# 8th Grade

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### **COURSE DESCRIPTIONS**

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#### **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 at the back of this catalog.

##### **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 (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):**

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. Please be sure to read the qualification requirements for this course found at the back of this catalog. Students will **not** be enrolled in this course unless they meet **all requirements**.

Students must maintain an average of 80 or above for each marking period in order to remain in Algebra I. Upon successful completion of the class, students will receive one of the four math credits required for high school graduation, but this class is not included in the overall high school G.P.A. 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.

**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, but this class is not included in the overall high school G.P.A. Even though students receive a math credit for this course, they will still be **required** to take **three** full year math courses during their 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade years.

**Science (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 at the back of this catalog.

**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****Physical Education (Full Year):**

The Physical Education program provides students with opportunities to develop skill and sportsmanship through a variety of team and fitness activities.

## **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 CANNOT have reached their 15<sup>th</sup> birthday prior to September 1<sup>st</sup> 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 (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 semester 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 2<sup>nd</sup> semester. All players not chosen for the intermediate class will be placed in a PE class the 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 2<sup>nd</sup> semester based on the coaches' evaluations during the 1<sup>st</sup> semester Beginning Tennis class.

***Advanced Tennis (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.

## **Theatre Offerings**

### **Theatre Arts I (Full Year):**

Theatre Arts I is designed for any student who is interested in an introduction to acting and the theatre. 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.

### **Theatre Arts II (Full Year):**

Theatre Arts I is a prerequisite for Theatre Arts II. 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):**

Teacher approval is required for students to take Theatre Arts III. Theatre Arts III builds upon the skills learned in Theatre 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. Technical theatre will be involved. Students need to be mature with the ability to work independently.

## **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):**

Students must have completed 6<sup>th</sup> 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):**

Students must have completed Art II 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 a final average of 80 or above in Spanish 1A in 7<sup>th</sup> grade to enroll in Spanish 1B. Student success in core classes is essential to the acquisition of a foreign language. 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. This course has a challenging curriculum requiring extra time commitment from students as well as the ability to work independently. To obtain high school credit, students must complete both Spanish 1A and 1B with a final grade of 80 or above. However, this class is not included in overall high school GPA.

Please be sure to read the Spanish Maintenance Guidelines found at the back of this catalog.

### Exploratory Spanish (Full Year):

This elective course, available to 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students, will give students an introduction to the Spanish language and Spanish culture. 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 used for credit at the high school level, meaning this course does not count towards high school credit, and it is not a prerequisite for Spanish II. This course is a good option for a student who is not ready for the pace of Spanish IA and IB, but would like to begin learning Spanish at an earlier age to be better prepared to continue their study of Spanish in high school.

## Choir Offerings

### Concert Choir (Full Year)

Concert Choir is open to all 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grade students who would like to further their musical knowledge and sing in a performing ensemble. ***No prior singing 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. The Concert Choir will perform as

a non-varsity choir for adjudication at the Spring UIL Contest.

***NOTE: Students with previous choir 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 A Cappella Choir.***

### **A Cappella Choir (Full Year)**

A Cappella Choir is an **auditioned** choir open to 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students who seriously want to further their musical knowledge and performing skills in a middle school. Classes meet daily and focus on establishing and developing good vocal technique, reading musical notation, sight-reading skills and performance skills. A Cappella Choir will perform as a varsity choir for adjudication at the Spring UIL Contest. During the year, all choir students will combine on two or more occasions to present concerts for the parents and public.

## **Orchestra Offerings**

### **Beginning Orchestra (Full Year):**

Beginning Strings is open to all 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> or 8th grade students who would like to further their musical knowledge or begin instruction on violin, viola, cello 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 Intermediate Orchestra (Level II) or Symphonic Orchestra (Level III).***

### **Intermediate Orchestra (II) (Full Year)**

Intermediate Orchestra (Level II) is open to all students (primarily 7<sup>th</sup> 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 Intermediate Orchestra will combine on two or more occasions with other performing groups to present concerts for the parents and public. The Intermediate 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 8<sup>th</sup> 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):**

This course will introduce students to the basics of video production and multimedia. This course is recommended for students who would like a general overview of both multimedia and video production.

### **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 will learn to design, build, program and run NXT robotic brick using LEGO Mindstorms Kits for Schools. Students will download programs created in

an exciting program developed by Carnegie Mellon Robotics Academy. Students will 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 FLY-TV 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. **Prerequisite: In order to sign up for Animation, a student must have taken either a semester of Video Production or a semester of Multimedia in the previous school year.**

### **Keyboarding (One Semester) / Technology Applications (One Semester)**

**Keyboarding:** 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.

**Technology Applications:** 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 Living (One Semester) / Sewing (One Semester):**

**Skills for Living:** This course is designed to give students a comprehensive look at the field of family and consumer sciences. The students will have the opportunity to acquire knowledge and learn new skills for successful living. Course content emphasizes personal management skills, responsible decision-making, goal-setting, career exploration and organizational skills. This course helps prepare students to begin their journey toward becoming independent, productive citizens.

**Sewing:** This course is intended for students who are specifically interested in learning more about nutrition, food science, food preparation and using current kitchen technology. The class is designed to provide “hands on” experiences in content areas emphasizing proper nutrition, diet and health related issues, essential nutrients and healthy food selection. manners, napkin folding, meal service, grocery shopping and meal planning, the food guide pyramid and kitchen safety.

**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 I (One Semester) / Teen Leadership II – Service Learning (One Semester)**

**Teen Leadership I :** 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.

**Teen Leadership II – Service Learning:** Service Learning is a course designed to provide a comprehensive approach focusing on ethical, social and intellectual skill development. This course will assist students in developing personal integrity based on positive values. Students will explore the value of respect and responsibility in the context of citizenship in our schools and community. Service-learning is a form of experiential learning where students develop knowledge and critical thinking skills while addressing genuine community needs. Through direct service activities, students gain an understanding of human psychology, life skills, community needs and resources, civic responsibility, career options and human diversity.

**Student Aide (Full Year): APPLICATION REQUIRED**

Students will be assigned to assist in the main office, Counselors' office, Library 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; however, the grade earned will not be included in the overall high school G.P.A.

**Study Skills:**

This course provides students with strategies for becoming more effective learners. Students develop strategies for improving study skills. Topics include note-taking strategies, study methods, test taking and vocabulary building. Students work with their own learning styles to increase comprehension, build vocabulary, master listening and note-taking skills and minimize test anxiety.