

# FISD Middle School Academic Guide and Course Catalog

2024-25



Seahawks



**FRISCO ISD**

Frisco Independent School District

5515 Ohio Drive | Frisco, TX 75035

469.633.6000 PH | 469.633.6050 FAX | [www.friscoisd.org](http://www.friscoisd.org)



Designed by CTEC Graphic Design Student, Anisha Reddipalli.



# Table of Contents

## **Frisco Independent School District Overview**

[Mission, Vision, Beliefs, and Motto](#)

[Future Ready Focus Areas](#)

[College, Career, Military Readiness](#)

[CCMR Indicators](#)

[FISD Programs](#)

## **Academic Guidance & Advising**

## **Instructional & Academic Overview**

[Academic & Elective Information](#)

[Middle School Career & Technical Education](#)

[Advanced Academics](#)

[Advanced Courses](#)

[Gifted and Talented](#)

[Core Courses](#)

[Reading and Math Lab Courses](#)

[Special Education](#)

[World Languages](#)

[Physical Education](#)

[Off-Campus PE](#)

[Health](#)

[Fine Arts](#)

[Athletics](#)

[General Academic Information](#)

[Changing Class Schedules](#)

[High School Courses in Middle School](#)

[STAAR](#)

[Grading](#)

[UIL Athletic Eligibility](#)

[Alternative Methods for Earning Credit](#)

[Recovery of Failed Courses Required for Promotion](#)

[Credit Through Testing](#)

[World Language Distance Learning and Correspondence Credit](#)

[Addendums](#)

[Math Course Pathways](#)

# Frisco Independent School District

## Mission, Vision, and Beliefs

### Mission

Our mission is to know every student by name and need.

### Vision

Students will be empowered to pursue their passion and purpose.

### Beliefs

Education is a shared responsibility of students, school, home and community. With that as an essential principle, we believe the following to be true for students, staff, families and the community:

- Everyone has equal inherent worth and deserves to be treated with respect and dignity.
- Everyone needs challenge, opportunity and encouragement.
- Each person is unique.
- Meaningful relationships have profound lifelong impact.
- Integrity is essential.
- Imagination and creativity are vital.
- A safe environment is necessary for learning.
- Every person can learn.
- Each person is ultimately responsible for his/her own learning.
- Learning is lifelong and unlimited.
- There is always room for improvement.
- All students must graduate with the skills they need to pursue their aspirations.

### Motto

Pride. Tradition. Excellence.

*Frisco Independent School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, sex or disability in providing education or providing access to benefits of education services, activities, and programs, including career and technology programs, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act.*

*The Texas Education Agency and the Texas State Board of Education often update information, especially in the areas of assessment, accountability, and graduation plans. The information in this guide is accurate as of the time it was published. This document is updated as information becomes available.*

**This guide is intended as a reference and does not replace policy. Any extenuating circumstances are determined at the discretion of the principal.**

## Future-Ready Focus Areas



Frisco ISD is committed to developing students who are ready for whatever lies beyond high school – whether that’s college, a career, or the military. In a rapidly changing world, students need skills that can be easily transferred from one employer or job sector to another as well applied in any aspect of their life.

The term “Future Ready” defines student achievement beyond test scores, grades and class rank to encompass a broader picture of what students need to be successful, both in the classroom and following high school graduation. From developing grit to persevere through challenges and identifying solutions to real-world problems, FISD seeks to create authentic and relevant learning experiences that go beyond the required curriculum standards and foster

transferable skills that can be applied to a wide variety of life and career paths. To do that, FISD must reimagine education, empower students to take an active role in their learning and tailor instruction to meet their unique needs and interests.

The Future-Ready focus areas guide the work of Frisco ISD campuses in accomplishing these goals. Our Future-Ready Profiles detail the traits FISD seeks to develop in its students, as well as the attributes cultivated in employees tasked with helping them become future ready.

- [Future-Ready Leaders](#)
- [Future-Ready Educators](#)
- [Future-Ready Learners](#)

## College, Career, and Military Readiness (CCMR)

Frisco ISD's [Future-Ready Learner Profile](#) highlights the skills necessary for students to be successful in their chosen postsecondary pathway. FISD equips students for their exciting futures by offering a wide variety of courses, programs, services and competitions that appeal to many interests, educational goals, and academic abilities while preparing students to be [College, Career, Military, and Life Ready](#) when they graduate high school. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) developed indicators to determine whether or not a student exited high school as College, Career, or Military Ready. The following is a summary of TEA's indicators that students may meet as part of one or more programs available in FISD.

### CCMR Indicators\*

#### College Ready\*\*

- Must meet one of the following Texas Success Initiative (TSI) criteria in both ELA/Reading and Math
  - ELA/Reading
    - TSIA - 351 or higher on TSI 1.0 OR 945 or higher on TSIA 2.0 & 5 or higher on Essay
    - ACT - 19 or higher on English & 23 or higher composite score
    - SAT - 480 or higher
    - Earned credit for an English college prep course
  - Math
    - TSIA - 350 or higher on TSIA 1.0 or 950 or higher on TSIA 2.0
    - ACT - 19 or higher on math & 23 or higher composite
    - SAT - 530 or higher
    - Earned credit for a Math college prep course
- AP/IB Examination
  - Earn a 3 or higher on any AP Exam
  - Earn a 4 or higher on any IB Exam
- Dual Course Credit
  - Earn 3 credit hours in ELA or Math OR 9 hours in any subject
- Associate's Degree
  - Earn an associates degree while in high school

#### Career/Military Ready

- Industry Based Certification (IBC) - Earn an IBC and complete TEA's required accompanying course(s)
- Level I or Level II Certificate - Earn a Level I or Level II certificate
- Special Education students who graduate with a completed IEP and Workforce Readiness
  - Graduation type code of 04, 05, 54, or 55
- Special Education students who graduate with an Advanced Graduation Plan
  - Students on an IEP who complete Foundation High School Program with Distinguished Level of Achievement (FHSP-DLA) or Endorsement (FHSP-E) graduation plan
- Military - Enlist in the U.S. Armed Forces
  - FISD must obtain a completed DD Form 4 "Enlistment/Reenlistment Document-Armed Forces of the United States" from a student who has enlisted.

\*Students may meet CCMR criteria on more than one indicator, but it is not required.

\*\*While meeting one or more of the College-Ready Indicators signifies a student's academic achievement, students must still apply and meet admittance criteria at colleges of interest.

### **FISD Programs to Support College, Career, and Military**

- AVID - The Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program and courses are currently available to Hunt, Staley, Memorial, and Frisco High students.
- [Advanced Placement Courses & Assessments](#)
- Academic Programs of Choice - available to all students but require an approved transfer for participation
  - [International Baccalaureate Program](#) - offered at Frisco High School
  - [Navy National Defense Cadet Corps \(NNDCC\)](#) - offered at Lebanon Trail High School
- [Career and Technical Education Programs of Study](#)
- [Dual Credit Courses/Programs](#)
  - Collin College Dual Credit
    - [CTE Dual Credit Courses](#)
    - [Core/Elective Dual Credit Courses](#)
  - University of North Texas Dual Credit
    - [UNT Now!](#)
    - [UNT Online Courses](#)
- [School Day Assessments](#)
  - PSAT\* - administered, at no cost, to all 10th & 11th grade students each Fall
  - SAT\* - administered, at no cost, to all 11th grade students each Spring
  - TSIA - available, as needed, at each FISD high school
  - ASVAB - available, as needed, at each FISD high school
  - [AP Testing](#) - offered at all high schools, reduced cost available to students who qualify for free/reduced cost lunch
  - IB Testing - available for IB students at Frisco High School

\*Students are encouraged to link their College Board accounts to Khan Academy after taking PSAT for free and individualized SAT preparation.

**This information is included in the Middle School Academic Guide so students and parents can utilize it to inform academic planning for their high school experience.**

# Academic Guidance & Advising

## Academic Advising Approach, Resources, & Overview

Effective academic advising supports students' decision-making during the middle and high school years as well as planning for college and a career after high school. Students reap the most benefits when parents/guardians, counselors, teachers, and administrators provide cohesive support as students make decisions for themselves. The goal of FISD's academic advising process is the empowerment of all students to make informed academic decisions in grades 6-12 so they graduate prepared to enter college, start a career, or join the military.

### Frisco ISD Academic Guide and Course Catalog

Frisco ISD provides two important tools, which work in tandem with one another, to guide students, parents/guardians, and school staff with consistent information through academic decision making at the secondary level in FISD.

- The **Frisco ISD Academic Guide** supports students, parents, administrators, counselors, and teachers with common understanding and application of FISD's academic expectations, practices, procedures, and board policies. The Academic Guide provides additional information and context beyond course descriptions and titles found in the Course Catalog. It also assists students and families in making wise, informed decisions concerning programs and course choices leading up to and throughout your high school years.
  - The [Table of Contents](#) provides an overview of all topics covered in the Academic Guide, but it is not a comprehensive coverage of all school policies, procedures, and rules that may be included in Board Policies, the Student Code of Conduct, and other FISD documents.
  - Students and Parents/Guardians are encouraged to utilize the Academic Planning Tools section of the FISD High School Academic Guide to complete 4-Year Planning and course selection.
  - Campus administrators and counselors provide additional campus-specific information as needed.
- The **Course Catalog** is a comprehensive listing of all courses available for students to choose as part of their annual course selection process and 4-year planning for high school. Beginning with the 2023-2024 Course Catalog, the course offerings can be found in an online searchable database [found here](#). Students in specialized courses due to academic needs and/or an Individualized Education Plan will need support from their counselor for course selection.
  - Courses are subject to change or cancellation based on available space and/or low course enrollment. Campus counselors and administrators will provide additional information for campus-specific course offerings and availability.

### Frisco ISD Academic Advising

Comprehensive Academic Guidance is provided through the FISD Counseling Department and each team of campus counselors to support students in making good academic choices as well as communicating the information in the Academic Guide and Course Catalog. College and career exploration begins in elementary school and continues through high school. The Frisco ISD Guidance and Counseling department is available to help students and families navigate multiple sources of



information and experiences to support informed academic and postsecondary decision making. Individual academic advising and guidance is provided as needed.

### What to Expect in Elementary School

While academic advising begins in kindergarten, guidance through the course selection process and eventually graduation planning begins in 5th grade and continues through selection of students' courses for their senior year. The transition from elementary school to middle school is a significant time of change for students so the focus of academic advising is simple and narrow. Students are introduced to the idea and process of choosing courses for the first time in a scenario with limited choices. Students only have two advanced options in their core classes and one elective choice to make.

- [6th Grade Course Selection Card](#)

### What to Expect in Middle School

Middle school is a wonderful, exciting adventure. During these years, students typically begin to experience more responsibilities, more freedom, and more fun! They will also learn a great deal about preparing for high school. It's ok for them to not know exactly what they want to do later on in life, but now is the time for many students to begin identifying their interests and skills. Most students tend to like (or love) what they are skilled in. Middle school academic advising efforts focus on helping students begin to identify and improve current skills, to pursue and connect interests to future courses and careers, and to begin high school planning.

- [7th Grade Course Selection Card](#)
- [8th Grade Course Selection Card](#)

**During 6th and 7th grade**, students are introduced to college and career readiness with activities designed to explore learning styles, exploring future career options, and learning about college choices.

- **Xello-** Xello is an engaging, fun-to-use college and career software that students can access online. It helps them create their very own, unique roadmap for future success by helping them uncover their unique interests and skills through a series of interactive assessments. Xello also provides a search tool where students can research thousands of careers, colleges, and majors. Every student in 6th-12th grade can access their personalized Xello account in the Student Portal by searching for the Xello tile.
- Students can begin exploring different academic pathways and course options in Frisco ISD, including:
  - [Dual Credit](#) (Collin College & UNT NOW)
  - [Advanced Placement](#) (AP) courses
  - [International Baccalaureate](#) (IB) program
  - [National Naval Defense Cadet Corps](#) (NNDCC)
  - [Career and Technical Education](#) (CTE) Programs and the [Career and Technical Education Center](#) (CTEC)
  - [Fine Arts](#)
  - [Athletics](#)
- **Before 8th grade**, it's important to understand how grade point average (GPA) will be cumulatively calculated with every high school credit course. Students can begin to review the [FISD GPA policy](#) and learn about the importance of GPA, rank, and the high school transcript.

Many students choose to take high school credit courses during middle school and should be aware of how the grades impact their GPA.

- Fully review the [Secondary Guidelines for Exams for Acceleration](#) to fully understand the process and implications of taking an exam for acceleration.

**During 8th Grade**, students begin the transition to high school by learning more about the high school endorsements, graduation requirements, and completing their own [personal graduation plan \(4-year plan\)](#).

- **Learn About High School Endorsements**-Think of endorsements as a major for high school students- a related series of courses that are grouped together by interest or skill set. Students earn one or more of five endorsements as part of their high school graduation requirements. All FISD students start high school on the multi-disciplinary plan, but many will earn additional endorsements by graduation simply by taking courses they are interested in. Here are some examples of possible careers and high school courses that connect to each endorsement:
  - [Arts and Humanities](#) to be an actor, musician, artist, or writer. Your student should take high school courses in English, theatre, and journalism.
  - [Business and Industry](#) to start your own business. Your student should take high school courses in math, accounting, and computer technology.
  - [Multidisciplinary Studies](#) to pick from a range of interesting classes that tie into career paths, college, or apprenticeship.
  - [Public Service](#) to be a lawyer or corrections officer. Your student should take high school courses in law studies, sociology, and psychology.
  - [Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math \(STEM\)](#) to be a chemical engineer or IT systems manager. Your student should take high school courses in mathematics, computer science, chemistry, and physics.
- **Complete High School 4 Year Planning**- During 8th grade, your student will be assisted with developing a draft 4-year plan and entering it in Career Plan in HAC. A student's 4-Year plan is like a personal graduation plan. This activity will chart out the courses your student wants and needs to take during their 4 years of high school. This process is extremely helpful in many ways:
  - [Understanding](#) what courses are required for high school graduation
  - [Learning](#) which courses have prerequisites (what your student takes in one year may affect what course can be taken the following year)
  - [Exploration](#) - high school is the perfect time to learn new skills and information by trying different courses, electives, and areas of interest!
  - [Choosing an appropriate balance](#) of challenging courses, courses of interest, and learning how CTE, Dual Credit, and Advanced Academic courses can support a student's high school and post secondary goals.
  - Students are encouraged to utilize the [Academic Planning Tools](#) section of this guide to complete 4-Year Planning and course selection.
- Students in middle school participate in Career Day or Career Experiences on their campus. This provides students the opportunity to hear directly from participating professionals who represent different industries and share about their position, skill sets, and suggested steps to take to obtain a similar career! Virtual Career Day videos are available [here](#).

## What to Expect in High School Guidance

### During 9th Grade

- **Challenge yourself!** Concentrate on your current courses and do the best you can!
- **Join clubs and organizations!** Your extracurricular involvement should highlight your passions, interests, and one day leadership skills!
- **Build relationships!** Build relationships with your teachers, counselors and clubs/organization sponsors.
- **Volunteer.** Community service hours are not required for high school graduation, but students who complete 100 hours or more of community service by April of their senior year will be honored by earning a cord to wear at graduation. Students can log their community service hours in Xello.
- **Continue to review high school graduation requirements.** Pass high school credit courses with a 70 or above in order to earn .5 credit each semester for each course!
- **Passing End of Course (EOC) exams** is also required for high school graduation. Many 9th graders take 3 EOC courses and exams (English 1, Algebra 1, Biology.)
- **Review** your 4-year plan and make adjustments in course selections for 10th - 12th Grade.
  - If you are interested in Dual-Credit Courses, it's time to review the admission criteria so you are prepared to enroll when the time comes.
  - If you really enjoy your CTE courses, have you planned to take additional courses in your chosen pathway?
  - Are you taking enough challenging courses or not enough? Think about the right balance for you!

### During 10th Grade

- **Continue** to get good grades!
- **Get involved** or stay involved in school activities! (Quality is more important than quantity. Work towards leadership positions.)
- **Plan** junior and senior year with graduation requirements in mind.
- Consider career plans- take career assessments in Xello.
- **Begin thinking** about what you want in a college.
- **Start** your resume in Xello.
- **Pass** the English 2 EOC.
- **Take** the PSAT in October (for 10th graders, it is a practice administration)
- **Practice** for future PSAT/SAT/ACT tests by linking your College Board account (after PSAT scores are returned) to Khan Academy for individualized practice.
- **Industry Based Certificates (IBC)** can provide students work-ready credentials and can be available to students who complete certain CTE pathways. Talk with the CTEC Counselor and/or your CTE teachers to find out if you might be eligible for an IBC.
- **Review** your 4-year plan and make adjustments in course selections for 11th - 12th Grade.
  - If you are interested in Dual-Credit Courses, it's time to review the admission criteria so you are prepared to enroll when the time comes.
  - If you really enjoy your CTE courses, have you planned to take additional courses in your chosen pathway?
  - Are you taking enough challenging courses or not enough? Think about the right balance for you!

### During 11th Grade (Fall)

- **Take** challenging classes and make good grades.
- **Continue** to stay involved in school activities, community service, and outside work or education experiences. Update resume accordingly and add awards, etc.
- **Attend** FISD College Week and any College Fair events
- **Visit** 2-3 colleges. Juniors can get two excused absences to do so.



- **Take** PSAT in October (juniors are testing for National Merit status.)
- **Practice** for spring administration of ACT or SAT by linking your College Board account to Khan Academy for individualized practice.
- **Review** your 4-year plan and make adjustments in course selections for 12th Grade.
  - If you are interested in Dual-Credit Courses, it's time to review the admission criteria so you are prepared to enroll when the time comes.
  - If you really enjoy your CTE courses, have you planned to take additional courses in your chosen pathway?
  - Are you taking enough challenging courses or not enough? Think about the right balance for you!

#### **During 11th Grade (Spring)**

- **Attend** college events for juniors to learn more about upcoming admissions requirements and processes.
- **Begin** to narrow the college choices you are interested in.
- **Register** with the NCAA, if you are a potential college athlete.
- **Take** the ACT or SAT, if your college requires it for admission. SAT is administered to all FISD 11th grade students in March.
- **Industry Based Certificates (IBC)** can provide students work-ready credentials and can be available to students who complete certain CTE pathways. Talk with the CTEC Counselor and/or your CTE teachers to find out if you might be eligible for an IBC.
- **Pass** the US History EOC.

#### **During 12th Grade (Fall)**

- **Keep** your grades strong!
- **Begin** college applications. Apply to 3-5 colleges before Thanksgiving.
- **Write down** and keep up with deadlines (admissions, financial aid, scholarships, etc.)
- **Retake** ACT/SAT if needed.
- **Review** [TSIA](#) requirements and exemptions if you will be attending college in Texas.
- **Submit** the FAFSA beginning on Oct. 1. Seniors must submit the FAFSA, TASFA, or opt-out form in order to graduate.
- Submit the [Frisco Education Foundation Scholarship](#) once available.
- **Use** Xello to explore [available scholarships](#) for seniors.

#### **During 12th Grade (Spring)**

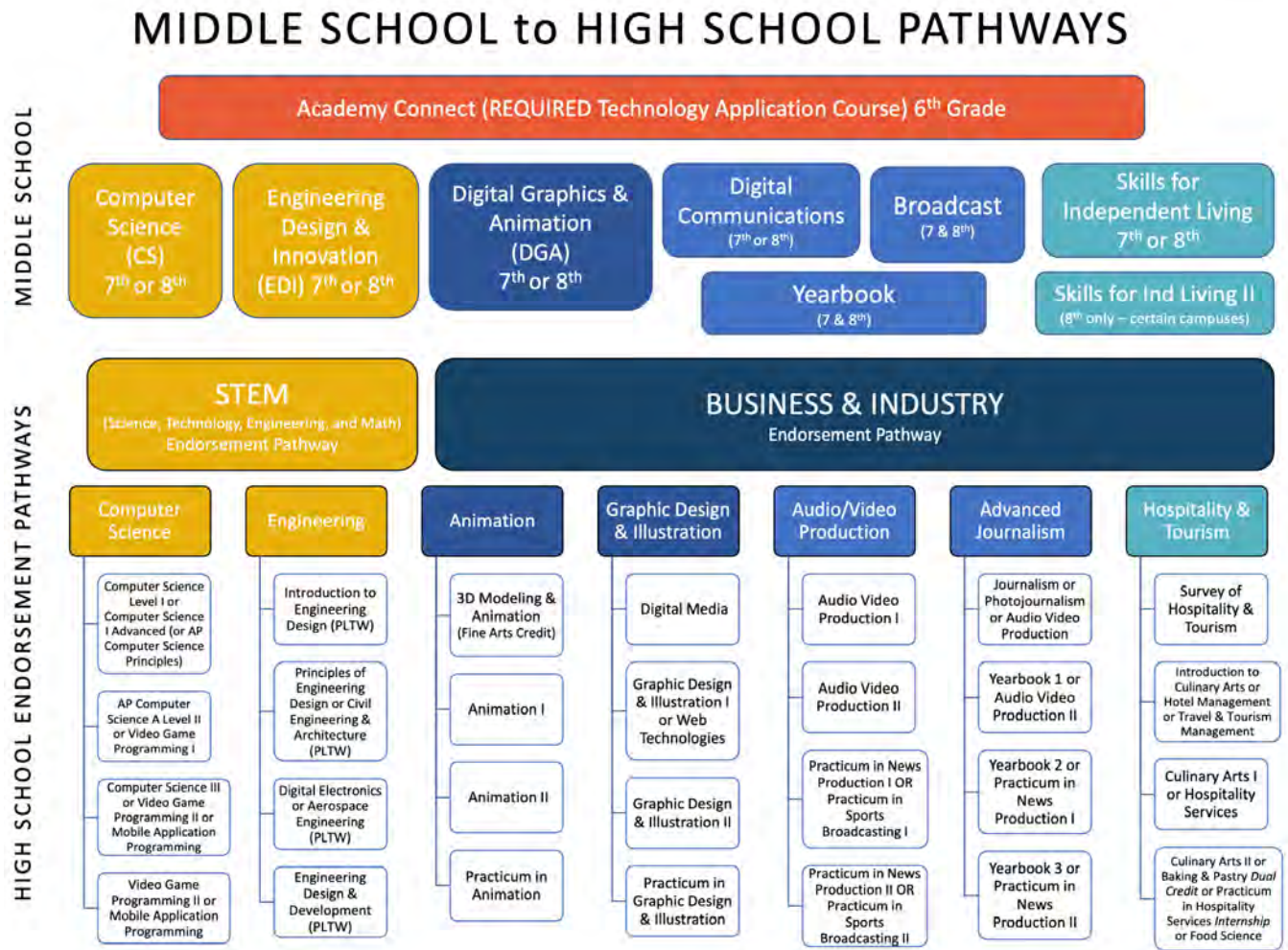
- **Apply** for scholarships.
- **Be aware** of deadlines to submit deposits for fall.
- **Select** your college by May 1.
- **Submit** your high school's end of year Senior Survey.
- **Send** the request for your final high school transcript to be sent to your college.
- **Graduate!**

# Instructional & Academic Overview

## Academic & Elective Information

### Middle School Career & Technical Education Pathways

Students have the opportunity to begin exploring interests in courses that interest them and provide an opportunity to preview some of the Career & Technical Education Pathways available when they enter a Frisco ISD High School. The following graphic provides an overview of middle elective options that link to CTE Pathways.



### Advanced Academics

Students are encouraged to pursue more challenging coursework and may choose to enroll in FISD's Advanced courses for Integrated Language Arts, Math, or Science. All Social Studies courses in middle school provide embedded differentiation for advanced and/or GT students.

### Advanced Courses

Advanced courses provide students the opportunity to learn course content with increased academic depth and complexity. The course content and level (middle or high school) of advanced courses impacts the design and purpose of the course and its curriculum. This means all advanced courses are

not the same. Frisco ISD is strongly committed to providing equity and access in the Advanced Academics programming, and all Advanced courses are open enrollment. Students are encouraged to challenge themselves by choosing advanced courses based on their interests and academic goals. More information on specific courses can be found in the FISD Course Catalog and by communicating with campus teachers and counselors. However, here are some basic guidelines regarding advanced courses.

Advanced Courses:

- Can provide students a pathway to higher levels of learning and/or Advanced Placement (AP) courses by
  - exposing them to greater depth and complexity in the content.
  - allowing students to seek meaning and draw connections more independently.
  - apply concepts to novel situations.
- Cover all required grade-level TEKS and parallel the curriculum offered in other grade-level courses. Some courses move at a faster pace through an instructional week to allow more time for students to learn at a deeper level and/or apply learning in problem-solving situations.
- **Are not** simply more work or additional homework at the same level, college level, independent study, or only for students with good grades.
- Can benefit any student who
  - would like to challenge themselves.
  - has interest in a specific content area.
  - would like to develop their critical thinking skills and become comfortable with productive struggle.

Middle School Advanced Math Courses

- Move at a faster pace and/or compact required TEKS, allowing students to progress through the curriculum more quickly and reach more advanced/AP courses as they progress through the grade levels. See [example math pathways](#) in the addendum of this guide.
- Exams for Acceleration (EA) are [explained in further detail here](#). However, it’s important to note that EAs were designed to meet the needs of a small percentage of learners who have both the academic and emotional need to advance. Due to the foundational learning that occurs in Algebra I, the FISD Teaching & Learning department strongly encourages students and parents to avoid earning credit for this course via an EA.

Advanced Courses Offered at FISD Middle Schools*			
Integrated Language Arts 6, 7, 8 Advanced	Math 6, 7, and 8 Advanced	Science 7 and 8 Advanced	Algebra 1 Advanced (High School Credit)

**Gifted & Talented**

Students who meet eligibility requirements for Frisco ISD’s GT program are provided options and services in a variety of ways at the district’s middle schools. Every middle school offers a GT Integrated Language Arts class that is specifically for students identified as GT. Additionally, GT students have the option of participating in the district’s advanced math pathways, advanced Science courses in grades 7 and 8, and through differentiated instruction in all Social Studies courses. Electives can also provide challenge and enrichment for GT students.



The GT referral/identification window opens in January on each FISD campus. Students who are new to FISD or have not been identified as GT through FISD's referral process, should contact the campus GT teacher(s) and/or their counselor. Students are only eligible for GT testing once per academic year. More information can be found here: [Frisco ISD Gifted Education](#).

## **Core Courses**

All students in grades 6-8 take a block-scheduled Integrated Language Arts (ILA) course as well as single-blocked Math, Science, and Social Studies courses. Depending on a students' grade-level and the course, they have the option of choosing [advanced](#) or high-school credit courses.

## **Reading & Math Lab Courses**

These courses are a supplement to the student's regular grade-level reading or math course and are taken in place of an elective to enable student mastery of grade-level TEKS, fill learning gaps, and develop necessary skills for successful participation in on-level courses.

### **Reading Lab 6, 7, 8:**

Reading Lab is a one or two semester course for those students who struggle with basic reading competencies. Emphasis is placed on using specific reading strategies to increase skills in comprehension, vocabulary development, fluency, and reference usage. Instruction is differentiated and tailored to the individual needs of each student. The model includes experiences in whole and small group instruction, independent reading, and technology-based learning. This course is intended for intervention in reading.

### **Math Lab 6, 7, 8:**

Math Lab provides a rich, supportive curriculum to assist students in mastering foundation concepts through problem solving, reinforcement of skills, and the use of small group instruction. This class will provide students with additional support to help ensure success through the use of individualized, targeted instruction and interventions.

## **Special Education**

Students experiencing prolonged difficulties in school may be referred for services in special education. Before a student can receive special education and/or related services for the first time, an initial evaluation must be conducted. Decisions regarding the provision of special education services are made by an Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) committee. If a student is determined to be eligible for services in accordance with the Texas Education Agency guidelines, an individualized education plan (IEP) is developed. Instruction designed to meet a student's unique educational needs may be provided in a variety of settings. Instructional settings may include (a) general education classroom with accommodations, (b) general education classroom with support, (c) resource classroom, (d) self-contained classroom, or (e) a separate campus. Additional or related services necessary for the student to benefit from special education may also be provided. More information can be found on the [Special Education page](#) of the FISD website.

## **World Languages**

Students in grades 7 and 8 have the option to choose high school Spanish as one of their electives. Spanish I and II are available at all middle schools, and the courses count toward a student's high school GPA and will be included on the student's high school transcript.

### Physical Education

Students are required to take PE in 6th grade. 6th grade students can choose traditional PE, or they may choose Pre-Athletics if they are interested in participating in Athletics during 7th/8th grade. Uniforms and dressing out for PE may be required.

### Off-Campus PE

The purpose of Frisco ISD Off-Campus Physical Education program is to accommodate secondary students who are making a serious effort to develop higher-level skills allowing them to be involved in a physical education program that provides training exceeding that which is offered in our school district. Students may apply to receive PE credit at an approved off-campus private or commercially sponsored physical activity program. Please check the [FISD OCPE Website](#) or contact your campus counselor for registration information. Applications must be submitted using the procedures on [the site](#). The OCPE program approves/denies applications; the campus counselor does not approve/deny applications.

### Health

Students are required to take Health (.5 credit) in order to graduate from an FISD High School. This course is available at all high schools as well as all middle schools for 8th graders. All instruction in this course is aligned with Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills. The Health curriculum includes the following instructional units that require parent/guardian notification or permission.

- The parenting and paternity awareness unit requires permission from parents/guardians of students under the age of 14. Parents of students who are under the age of 14 (on the first day of school) and enrolled in Health will receive an email notification to give their permission for the student to participate in the parenting and paternity awareness unit.
- The reproductive and sexual health unit is aligned with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills, but parents may want to utilize discretion on when their student take this course. All instructional materials have been approved by both the State and Frisco ISD's Student Health Advisory Committee (SHAC).

### Fine Arts

Students have many opportunities in middle school to begin or continue their interest in various Fine Arts programs. The beginning classes for all programs require no prior experience and focus on basic fundamentals of learning the instrument or art of their choice. Students usually begin a Fine Arts program in 6th grade, but beginning courses are also available to 7th and 8th graders.

Fine Arts Programs Available to Middle School Students		
Band	Orchestra	Theater
Choir	Art	Theater Production & Technical Theater

## Middle School Athletics (7th & 8th Graders only)

<b>FISD UIL Competitive Sports offered in Athletics Course:</b>	<b>FISD UIL Competitive Sports offered Before/After School:</b>
Football	Cross Country (boys & girls)
Volleyball	Track (boys & girls)
Basketball (boys & girls)	Soccer (boys & girls)

UIL competition and off-season conditioning are the focus of our athletic programs. To be enrolled in the athletic class period, boys must participate in football, basketball, cross country, track or soccer. Girls must participate in volleyball, cross country, basketball, track or soccer. Students are required to maintain passing grades and outstanding behavior to participate in the athletic programs.

- In order to meet the UIL age requirements for 7th grade athletics, a student cannot have reached their 14th birthday on or prior to September 1st of the current school year.
- In order to meet the UIL age requirement for 8th grade athletics a student cannot have reached their 15th birthday, on or prior to September 1st of the current school year.



## General Academic Information

### Changing Class Schedules

Students finalize pre-enrollment in the spring semester for the upcoming school year, and the campus master schedule is based on student's course selections. Parents/Students should contact their campus counselor and/or administrator for deadlines related to course selections. Any schedule changes after the campus-determined deadline is at the discretion of campus administration and/or is only done to correct course placements that are not appropriate or accurate. **Students should select their alternate course choices wisely as they may likely be in one of those courses.**

Class schedule changes for athletics and fine arts programs and other application/audition based courses are accepted after Feb. 19. Middle school programs include: athletics, band, orchestra, choir, and theater. Middle school application courses include: Broadcast 7/8, Yearbook, Partner's PE, and Student Aide. Athletics and most fine arts typically require extensive time before or after school practices and may include course fees.

Leveling down and/or dropping any course should only be considered when students are experiencing significant academic challenges. The decision to level down from an advanced course and/or drop an on-level high-school credit course should occur at the 6th week of the school year. Dropping an on-level high-school course (such as Health) after this time can present learning, grade, GPA, and scheduling challenges for students. **The option to drop an on-level/required high-school course is only offered to middle school students.** High-school credit courses dropped at the end of the semester will be recorded on a student's transcript, and the grade will be included in GPA calculation.

The decision to make a schedule change should be made based on a student's needs with consideration of input from the teacher, student and parents. Students/Parents are required to follow campus procedures for requesting schedule changes. Leveling down or dropping a course will likely impact a student's entire schedule, especially if dropping elective courses. Campus administration has authority and final approval on all necessary schedule changes.

Courses Eligible for 6-Week Level Down		
Algebra 1**	Advanced ILA (6-8)	Geometry**
Advanced Math (6-8)	Spanish 1* & 2*	Advanced Science (7-8)
Spanish 3** & 4***	Health*	Other HS courses taken by middle school students

\*on-level high school course

\*\*advanced high school course

\*\*\*AP high school course

Please note that some courses mentioned in this section are not available at all middle school campuses.

### High School Course Taken in Middle School

Frisco ISD offers some high school courses in middle schools. The most common high-school credit courses offered in middle schools are Algebra 1, Geometry, Spanish 1 & 2, and Health. However, there are additional high-school courses offered at middle schools, as needed, to meet student needs. It's

important for parents and students to consider the following when selecting high school credit courses in middle school:

- The implications of the acceleration of high school courses at the middle school level can have an impact on course sequencing through Grade 12.
- Grades earned in high school courses taken at the middle school level are included on the student's permanent high school transcript and in the calculation of their high school GPA.
- Students who take high school credit courses must show satisfactory completion of the necessary prerequisites outlined by FISD and/or the Texas Education Agency (TEA). Additionally, students must pass applicable STAAR/End of Course (EOC) exams as required by TEA for graduation.
- In unique situations, a middle school student may need a high school class that is only offered at a high school campus. Scheduling a course at a high school can be challenging for students on a middle school schedule. The following options are available for scheduling:
  - 1st Option: Choose courses available at the student's zoned high school campus.
  - 2nd Option: Choose courses available at the student's zoned high school partner campus.
  - 3rd Option: Choose courses available via FISD online options

## **STAAR Reading, Math, Science, Social Studies, and End of Course Exams (EOCs)**

All students in applicable courses will take required STAAR tests and/or End of Course (EOC) Assessments in accordance with state law. Middle school students enrolled in high school EOC tested courses are only required to take the EOC assessment for the courses in which they are enrolled. Additionally, 8th Grade students enrolled in Geometry may be required to take the 8th Grade Math STAAR test. Achieving "Approaches Grade Level" or higher on all High School EOC exams is a graduation requirement in the State of Texas. Students not achieving "Approaches Grade Level" on EOCs will be given the opportunity to retest in accordance with the state testing calendar.

### **The State acknowledges performance levels as the following:**

- Masters Grade Level
- Meets Grade Level
- Approaches Grade Level
- Did Not Meet Grade Level

### **Students Not Meeting "Approaches Grade Level" Standard on STAAR/EOC**

The "Approaches Grade Level" standard is considered passing on each STAAR and EOC exam. Students who do not meet grade level on STAAR are required to complete 30 hours of academic acceleration provided by FISD. Parents and students will receive an Accelerated Instruction Plan (AIP) that will address student needs for content not mastered, as indicated on the STAAR test.

## **Grading System**

Student academic evaluation is achieved through the use of a grading system. An average grade of 70 is required for successful completion of a course. The grading system of the Frisco Independent School District shall be in accordance with the following scale:

**A: 90-100**

**B: 80-89**

**C: 70-79**

**F: Below 70**

If a student fails one semester, but passes the second semester of the same course, a student may gain credit for that semester if they "average pass" the course. To average pass, the averages of the

two semesters must be at or above 70%. First and second semester grades must average to a 70 or above to earn full credit.

Each teacher is required to effectively communicate their grading standards to students and parents. Grade reports are posted each nine weeks, usually on the Friday following the end of the grading period. Progress reports are posted mid-way through each quarter. All FISD secondary schools participate in the Home Access Center, a web-based communications system that allows parents and students to obtain information online regarding the student’s current grades as well as assignment information. Students and parents will be given instructions regarding utilization of this system at the beginning of the year. Additional information regarding Home Access Center can be found [here](#).

**Assessment and Grading**

The goal of Frisco ISD’s assessment and grading system is to help ensure student mastery of the [Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills](#) and other appropriate content standards. The system exists to communicate student performance to all stakeholders.

- 1. Assessment: The purpose of assessment is to provide timely and continuous feedback to students and parents in order to monitor progress, teachers in order to make instructional decisions regarding intervention/extension, and stakeholders in order to make placement/program decisions.
- 2. Grading: Grades serve as artifacts of learning and communicate what students know and are able to do for a wide variety of audiences including students, parents, school administrators, post-secondary institutions, and employers. Grades need to be a true reflection of the student’s relative level of mastery of content, knowledge, and skills. While grades are a final necessity for certain processes (GPA, rank), grades only represent a student’s understanding of a specific topic at a point in time.

**UIL Athletic Eligibility**

Students participating in extra-curricular activities regulated by the University Interscholastic League (UIL) must maintain a 70% or higher in all courses. Students enrolled in advanced courses (listed below) will retain UIL eligibility for extracurricular activities if the grade earned at the first six week UIL eligibility checkpoint, or any subsequent nine week marking period is between 60%-69%. Grades below 60% in advanced courses and below 70% in all other courses at the first six week UIL eligibility checkpoint, or any subsequent nine week marking period will result in the student being ineligible to participate in UIL activities until the next opportunity to regain UIL eligibility. The following advanced level courses are the most common advanced courses at FISD middle schools:

Courses Exempt from UIL Eligibility Requirements	
Advanced & GT Integrated Language Arts 6, 7, 8	Math 6, 7, and 8 Advanced
Algebra I Advanced	Science 7 and 8 Advanced
Spanish 4 AP (Hunt & Staley only)	

**Note:** Spanish, Health, and other non-advanced high school courses taken while in middle school are NOT considered Advanced and students must maintain a 70% or higher in those courses to retain eligibility.

## Alternative Methods for Earning Course Credit

All additional methods of earning credit that are completed during the school day adhere to UIL rules and guidelines as well as the TEA-UIL Side-by-Side (No Pass No Play) academic policies.

### Recovery of Failed Courses Required for Promotion

The goal of the Frisco ISD Course Recovery Program is to assist middle school students who are deficient in required course passage, while at the same time preserving the need for students to demonstrate mastery of applicable TEKS for the course and grade. FISD will ensure that every student has the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of TEKS necessary to pass all required courses for promotion to the next grade level. Middle school students who fail a course may recover credit through the following options:

- **Lesson Mastery** - Lesson Mastery is an online platform that includes required middle-school core courses. The course work is developed by FISD, and allows a student to earn a passing grade and demonstrate mastery of essential knowledge and skills. Students must complete the required course work at home or during advisory.
- **Academic Recovery** - Some middle schools offer an Academic Recovery course during the day for students to complete Lesson Mastery course work while at school. Students in danger of not meeting grade-level promotion may also be placed in an Academic Recovery course to receive additional academic support to prevent retention in their current grade. This decision is made by the student's counselor, administrator, and parent. Placement in Academic Recovery, or alternatively named class, eliminates one elective in the student's schedule.
- **Summer School** - Students who don't meet promotion requirements may participate in Lesson Mastery during the summer. Participation in summer school includes a fee that is paid by students/families.
- **Accelerate Program** - Accelerate is an online, asynchronous learning opportunity for Frisco ISD high school students who are one or more years behind in credit attainment, have experienced significant interruptions in their schooling, and/or have unique familial responsibilities (expectant parents, financial obligations, etc.). Students who join the program work at an accelerated pace to fill educational gaps needed to catch up with their cohort and graduate with a high school diploma. The unique structure of the Accelerate Program provides opportunities for students to receive academic support for coursework as well as individualized attention to the development of educational and occupational goals. Transportation is provided. Students who turn 16 prior to completing middle school may be referred to the Accelerate program.

Participation in a middle-school course recovery/Lesson Mastery can only improve a student's cumulative grade. If your student participates in course recovery, the campus counselor and/or administrator will provide additional information.

### Credit Through Testing

Students can earn credit through testing in two different ways. Credit by Exam and Exam for Acceleration are similar and the terms are often used interchangeably, however CBE and EA exist for two different individual reasons.

1. **Exam for Acceleration (EA)**: provides an opportunity to earn grade level or course credit in which no prior formal instruction was completed. Students must demonstrate mastery of 80% or higher on an EA to earn credit. EA is only intended for use by students who display an extremely advanced level of understanding of learning objectives for the course/grade in which they would like to earn credit. More information and details, including testing schedules, can be found on [this page of FISD's website](#).



2. Credit by Exam (CBE): utilized to earn credit for a course, when a student has had prior instruction. Students must demonstrate mastery of 70% or higher on a CBE to earn credit. More information on CBE, including testing schedules, can be found on [this page of FISD's website](#). CBE is intended to meet the needs of students who:
  - Moved into FISD from a school that is not accredited
  - Failed a subject or course
  - Passed a course but did not receive credit due to excessive absences

For middle school courses, the student's CBE or EA numerical score will be documented in the student's permanent academic record. Scores not meeting the passing standard are documented on the middle school student's permanent record with "NG" and no credit will be earned.

### Exam for Acceleration - Without Prior Instruction

If an Exam for Acceleration is passed, the student **will be accelerated**. If a student does not want to accelerate or is not sure if they want to accelerate, they should not take an EA. Parents who wish to have their child take an EA should carefully read the District Guidelines for Exam for Acceleration on this page of FISD's website. Applications are available from the school counselor and must be submitted by the parent electronically by the deadline posted on the Frisco ISD website.

While it is not encouraged, Frisco ISD does allow parents to request Exam for Acceleration testing outside of Frisco ISD. Counselor approval is still needed for outside testing, and parents should submit an Approval Request for Independent Administration of Exam for Acceleration form to their child's campus counselor by the district's published application close dates posted on the Frisco ISD website after carefully reading the District Guidelines for Exam for Acceleration. Exams from non-approved providers will not count for credit toward graduation. Pre-approval from your campus counselor guarantees that the appropriate exams are selected and that prerequisites and all requirements of Texas Education Code (TEC) §74.24 are met. Limited providers are accepted for Frisco ISD exams for acceleration. These providers are currently limited to:

- Texas Tech
- University of Texas
- Frisco ISD
- Avant Assessment (World Languages Only)

Exams must be completed and official scores received prior to the start of the semester or else the student will be enrolled in the appropriate course. Due to the foundational learning in Algebra I, students are *strongly discouraged* from utilizing the Exam for Acceleration option to advance through the course and consider other options to advance through [course pathways in math](#). [Additional information can be found here](#).

### Credit by Examination - With Prior Instruction

Students, under certain circumstances, may be able to take credit by exam for a course in which they have had prior instruction but did not receive credit. This option must be approved by the campus principal (or designee). This option generally applies to students who have not earned credit due to extenuating circumstances such as a family move, illness, etc. To be eligible for a credit by exam, a student must have had prior instruction in the course. It also may apply to students who were homeschooled or attended a non-accredited private school and need state approved credit. Students who attended school in a foreign country where students were taught in a language other than English may also qualify to test that language (French, Spanish, German) with prior instruction. Students are encouraged to review the admission requirements for universities before choosing the credit by exam

option. Applications are available from the school counselor and must be submitted by the parent electronically. There is a fee of \$45-\$50 (depending on exam) for each semester exam..

### Exam Study Guides

Please see the following links for study guides:

**Texas Tech University** [https://www.depts.ttu.edu/ttuisd/cbe\\_review\\_sheets.php](https://www.depts.ttu.edu/ttuisd/cbe_review_sheets.php)

**University of Texas** [https://highschool.utexas.edu/cbe\\_study\\_guides](https://highschool.utexas.edu/cbe_study_guides)

### What is “Prior Instruction?”

“Prior Instruction” is constituted by

- Course grade on a transcript below 70
- Transcribed credit from a non-accredited organization
- Credit lost due to excessive absences
  - Students that have missed 25% or more days per semester
- Prior instruction may also be considered if a student has attended 90% or more of a semester but was not able to complete in entirety
  - [TEC 25.092 Texas Education Code, Attendance for Course Credit](#)
  - Comprehensive information regarding Credit by Exam and Exam for Acceleration can be found at <https://www.friscoisd.org/departments/testing/acceleration-credit-by-exam>

See also: [EDHB](#) (LOCAL) Board Policy

### World Language Distance Learning & Correspondence Credit

Students have the opportunity to seek a maximum of two credits for the purpose of meeting graduation requirements for World Languages. These courses must be from an accredited school within the United States that has been approved by Frisco ISD. Courses must be taken outside of normal school hours and credits can only be earned during or after the student’s 7<sup>th</sup> grade year. Students with graduation dates of 2024 and beyond must provide the correct documentation of grades along with the transcript in order for GPA points to be awarded. GPA points will not be awarded to students graduating prior to 2024.

## Examples of Math Course Pathways

