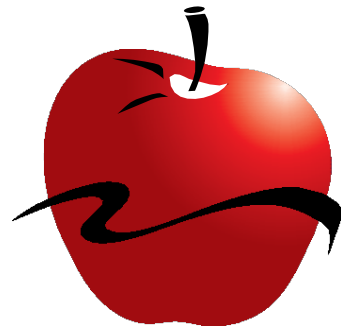


2019-2020
Decatur Public Schools
STEPHEN DECATUR
MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT
COURSE GUIDE

A Guide for Parents and Middle School Students



Decatur
Public
Schools

A Destination District

OUR MISSION is to unlock students' unique and limitless potential, to achieve their personal aspirations as fully prepared, contributing citizens in a global society through learning experiences distinguished by:

- commitment to the whole person resulting in student growth and confidence
- relevant, innovative, personalized academic pathways that promote passion and pride
- a learning environment that fosters curiosity and the thirst for achievement and discovery
 - a culture of diversity, adaptability, and resilience
 - meaningful and lasting relationships
 - extraordinary school and community connections



DECATUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS

MIDDLE SCHOOL COURSE GUIDE

2019-2020

DECATUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS

101 West Cerro Gordo

Decatur, IL 62523

217-362-3000

www.dps61.org

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ACADEMY EXPERIENCES

The academy model uses exposure to real-world problems to help students gain a deeper understanding of career opportunities within their chosen Academy Field. Students will have the opportunity to choose which academy they want to be in. Students will explore ways that the curriculum they are learning in their classes applies to fields open to them as career choices after schooling is completed. The academy will help students feel that they are part of a smaller community within the larger Middle School as a whole. Students will be in their core (ELA, Math, Science, and Social Studies) and Academy Exploration classes together based on their chosen academy. Students are encouraged to stay within their chosen academy for both years of middle school but will be able to apply to administration to have it changed for extreme circumstances in between 7th and 8th grade year.

The three Academy choices are;

Ag Academy

- Agricultural education prepares students for successful careers and a lifetime of informed choices in the global agriculture, food, fiber and natural resources systems. Through agricultural education, students are provided opportunities for leadership development, personal growth and career success. It is not just agribusiness companies that benefit from those who have excelled in ag education. Students learn transferable career skills that will benefit any employer.

Public Service Academy

- The challenges of our time—education, national security, access to healthcare, and more- cannot be solved alone; we need the public, private, nonprofit and military sectors to work together towards a shared goal. The Public Service Academy answers our nation's call for a new type of leader, a character-driven leader armed with the courage to cross sectors, connect networks and ignite action for the greater good.

STEAM Academy (Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts and Mathematics)

- STEAM is an educational approach to learning that uses Science, Technology, Engineering, The Arts and Mathematics as access points for guiding student inquiry, dialogue, and critical thinking. The end results are students who take thoughtful risks, engage in experiential learning, persist in problem-solving, embrace collaboration, and work through the creative process. These are the innovators, educators, leaders, and learners of the 21st century!

SCHEDULING INFORMATION

The 2019-2020 Curriculum Guide lists and describes all courses currently offered at the newly combined Decatur Public Schools Middle School. Selections should be made carefully with deliberation and thoughtfulness in regard to personal and career interest. Students are urged to retain the curriculum guide after classes are selected.

The course selection process begins with students, parents and counselors working together beginning in January to allow for thoughtful, informed decision-making. Students must select their scheduling choices carefully making use of a variety of resources: family, teachers, counselors, the curriculum guide and post-secondary interests and goals.

After each student selects courses, the program of courses to be offered in the coming year is finalized and the teachers assigned to the courses are determined. As a student-centered district, we base the master schedule on student requests and available teacher staffing. Therefore, these selections have a major impact in the master schedule and staffing needs for the following school year. Drops and adds are only allowed when there is significant evidence present that a student will not be successful in a course.

At Decatur Public Schools Middle School, we have an extensive curriculum with many courses offered to meet the different ability and interest levels of its students. It should be noted, however, that just because a course is offered does not mean that it will be taught. Courses will be taught only if there is sufficient student enrollment. This is also true of courses that are sequential in a program.

COURSE PREREQUISITES

Certain courses require consent of the instructor and/or previous coursework in the field in order to register for a particular course. The guidance department will make every effort to make sure that prerequisites are met. However, students must be aware they have a responsibility in seeing they have taken the appropriate prerequisites before they register for courses. All appropriate information regarding prerequisites is listed in the course curriculum guide. Students need to read the course curriculum guide carefully and understand that they are responsible for its contents including but not limited to all course prerequisites.

HONORS CURRICULUM

Seventh grade students have the opportunity to enroll in the Honors Curriculum available in English Language Arts, Social Studies, Mathematics, and Science. Honors Curriculum enrollment is recognized on grade cards and on student transcripts. This Honors Curriculum enrollment is available at all middle schools for seventh and eighth grade students.

The purpose of creating Honors Curriculum for Decatur Public School District middle school students is to address the cognitive and affective needs of high-achieving learners by providing an accelerated and enriched academic program.

Honors Curriculum ensures that differentiated instruction is provided for all students. Honors Curriculum empowers students to complete rigorous academic work and be responsible for their own learning.

Honors units require students to demonstrate knowledge and skills through application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Students participating in the Honors Curriculum are evaluated through a variety of assessment tools.

Honors Eligibility Requirements

Need 3 of 4:

- > Fastbridge – Proficient or Advanced
- > Attendance – 94% or better
- > Grade – B or better in the previous year's corresponding course
- > Teacher Recommendation

SCHEDULE CHANGE POLICY

Once a student selects courses for the year, changes are discouraged. Only his/her counselor may make changes in a student's daily schedule of classes. He/She must attend the classes as printed on his/her schedule until his/her counselor makes the necessary change. No student request for changes will be accepted during the first two (2) days of the semester or after five (5) days of the semester. Counselors are required to keep such changes to a minimum after the semester has begun. Therefore, a student should choose his/her courses carefully. Acceptable reasons for a schedule change: misplacement or scheduling error. Requested changes related to teacher assignments, class periods, etc. will not be considered.

RETENTION Policy (Board Policy 6:280)

A student may be retained at his/her current grade level when s/he has:

- A. Failed to demonstrate proficiency in mathematics and reading based on multiple data points, including scoring below proficient on any state-mandated test;
- B. In the opinion of the professional staff, failed to achieve the instructional objectives set forth at the current grade level that are requisite for success at the succeeding gradelevel

The Office of Curriculum and Instruction shall:

- C. Require that a student be retained if s/he is truant for ten percent (10%) or more of the required school days and has failed at least two (2) courses of study, unless the Principal and teachers of the failed subjects determine that the student is academically prepared to be promoted.

CREDIT RECOVERY

Credit Recovery is a program student may use to repeat a previously failed course. The courses offered are limited. Students in need can enroll with their guidance counselor.

SUMMER SCHOOL OPPORTUNITIES

Summer school information and registration forms are available to parents and students in the guidance office in the spring semester. A limited number of courses and spots are offered. The deadline for registration is early spring.

STANDARDIZED TEST INFORMATION

FastBridge – District Required

This assessment uses multiple measures in Reading and Math to help best inform teachers to make impactful instructional decisions in the classroom. Students are given a series of short assessments in these two subject areas that focus on fluency, problem solving, comprehension, and other grade level standards. In addition to the academic assessments, FastBridge offers the Social, Academic, and Emotional Behavior Risk Screener (SAEBRS). SAEBRS measures a student's potential risk for social, academic, and emotional problems. Currently, the academic assessments are given three times per year, while SAEBRS is only given in the fall and spring.

Illinois Assessment of Readiness (IAR) – State Required

The Illinois Assessment of Readiness (IAR) is the state assessment and accountability measure for students enrolled in a public-school district. The test assesses the New Illinois Learning Standards Incorporating the Common Core and is administered in English Language Arts and Mathematics. This assessment measures each student's grade-level knowledge in these two subject areas respectively. This test is typically given over the span of multiple days between the months of March and April.

Illinois Science Assessment (ISA) – State Required

All grade 8 students enrolled in the state of Illinois are also required to take the Illinois Science Assessment. This test is administered in an online format and takes approximately one hour to complete. It is aligned to the Illinois Learning Standards for Science incorporating the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). These standards were adopted by the state of Illinois in 2014. The assessment will include questions from the following categories:

2. Earth and Space Sciences
3. Engineering, Technology, and Applications of Science
4. Life Science
5. Physical Science.

Dynamic Learning Maps Alternate Assessment (DLM-AA) - State Required (If student qualifies)

The Dynamic Learning Maps Alternate Assessment (DLM-AA) is the alternate assessment to the IAR and is intended for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. Many students with cognitive disabilities will not qualify for the DLM-AA and must take our regular state assessment with or without accommodations. This assessment is given during the months of March and April.

ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 – State Required (If student qualifies as an ELL)

The ACCESS test is given to all students identified as English Language Learners (ELL). All K-12 ELLs must be assessed annually for English proficiency growth and academic progress. The assessment measures English language learners' social and academic proficiency in English. ELLs in Illinois need to receive an overall composite score of 4.8 on ACCESS to be English proficient. Once a student is considered proficient in English, they are no longer required to take the ACCESS.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

7th GRADE ENGLISH

Length: Year

Course Description:

The seventh grade English Language Arts curriculum focuses on students' ability to read and communicate skillfully in a variety of personal, school, and real-life settings.

Students apply the skills and strategies of the reading process to:

- read and understand texts
- analyze and interpret a variety of literary and informational texts
- analyze various elements of literature and explain how they relate to each other and the real world
- apply research skills to gather and use information for research and study purposes
- apply prewriting strategies to develop ideas and plans for writing and apply the skills and strategies of the writing process
- write for a variety of purposes, and create a variety of accurate and effective communications to share with others
- use grammatical and mechanical conventions in a variety of written compositions
- evaluate writing for clarity, organization, and purpose
- revise/rewrite to improve communication

HONORS 7th GRADE ENGLISH

Length: Year

Prerequisite: Proficient and efficient score on PARCC – ELA or Consent of Instructor

Course Description:

This Honors option has been designed to meet the needs of students who have already mastered the reading, writing, and speaking skills of the regular English Language Arts curriculum. Experiences in the classroom will concentrate on in-depth analysis of literary selection through writing and discussion.

The student:

- can process abstract ideas and concepts, delving deeper into them more than the average student
- stays organized, having a sense of time management and an awareness of the need to prioritize
- is able to take adequate, concise notes
- is committed to learning and curious about a wide variety of topics and issues
- is willing to do the work and seeks help when needed
- can accept and respond to criticism
- is able to collaborate with peers AND work independently with confidence
- is eager to ask and answer questions
- can be creative on projects and in problem-solving
- understands his or her strengths and weaknesses
- thrives under pressure and seeks out new challenges
- oral presentations

8th GRADE ENGLISH

Length: Year

Course Description:

This course explores a variety of literature, grammar, and composition. It expands the concepts of short stories, non-fiction, drama, poetry, and novels, and extensive reading and writing of narrative, persuasive, and expository essays. Students will develop correct and effective uses of written and spoken language, reinforcing skills in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and relating to one another. This course focuses on the theme of Heroism, Challenges, Making a Difference, and Comedy. Students will explore cultural identity through texts written from different cultural perspectives. Finally, Students will look at how different cultures view justice and how cultural clashes often lead to conflict in the world.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

HONORS 8th GRADE ENGLISH

Length: Year

Prerequisite: Successful completion of Honors 7th Grade English with a C or above or with consent of instructor.

Course Description:

This course explores a variety of literature, grammar, and composition. It expands the concepts of short stories, non-fiction, drama, poetry, and novels, and extensive reading and writing of narrative, persuasive, and expository essays. Students will develop correct and effective uses of written and spoken language, reinforcing skills in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and relating to one another. This course focuses on the theme of Heroism, Challenges, Making a Difference, and Comedy. Students will explore cultural identity through texts written from different cultural perspectives. Finally, Students will look at how different cultures view justice and how cultural clashes often lead to conflict in the world. This course will move at a rapid pace and will focus heavily on critical thinking in regards and thematic topics and literature. Students will be expected to read independent novels and give oral presentations throughout the year.

MATHEMATICS

7TH GRADE MATH

Length: Year

Course Description:

This course is based upon life application and foundational skills to support continued math development and understanding. The topics will include ratios and proportionality, the number system, expressions and equations, geometry, statistics and probability.

7TH GRADE ACCELERATED MATH

Length: Year

Prerequisite: Proficient and efficient score on PARCC or Consent of Instructor

Course Description:

This course is a course designed to move at an aggressive pace. The course is designed to prepare students to be able to be successful in Algebra I in the 8th grade year. The topics will include ratios and proportionality, the number system/number and quantity, expressions and equations/algebra, geometry, statistics and probability.

8TH GRADE MATH

Length: Year

Course Description:

This course is for the typical 8th grade mathematics student. HMH Go Math is designed to fully address the Common Core State Standards. Concepts are organized in units that align to major domains and provide focus on key big ideas. Within each unit, concepts are organized in modules that align to clusters and build connections among the individual standards. Topics to be covered in the first semester include real numbers, exponents and scientific notation, proportional relationships, non-proportional relationships, writing linear equations, and functions. Topics to be covered in second semester include solving linear equations, solving systems of linear equations, transformations and congruence, transformations and similarity, angle relationships in parallel lines and triangles, the Pythagorean Theorem, volume, and scatter plots.

HONORS ALGEBRA I

Length: Year

Prerequisite: Successful completion of Accelerated Math with a C or above or with consent of instructor.

Course Description:

The Algebra I curriculum is the foundation for all future high school mathematics courses. There will be an emphasis on algebraic concepts with applications in algebra, statistics, and probability. This course includes techniques in problem solving involving the real number system. An understanding of patterns, relations, and functions is introduced in this course. Students will learn how to represent and analyze mathematical situations and structures using algebraic symbols and how to use mathematical models to represent and understand quantitative relationships. This course also includes the analysis of change in various contexts and prepares students for Geometry. ***(This course counts as high school credit and will affect your high school GPA.)***

SCIENCE

7TH GRADE SCIENCE

Length: Year

Course Description:

This course is designed to introduce students to the basic concepts in Life Science that they will encounter throughout their school career. The course is designed to help all students develop the knowledge and skills needed for success in college as well as success in the workforce. Students will learn how to ask questions, develop and use models, plan and carry out investigations, analyze and interpret data, and use mathematics and computational thinking. Students will also learn how to construct explanations and engage in debates based on evidence. This course will help students understand that science is part of everyday life. Scientific inquiry provides the foundation for study of the following instructional units:

- Heredity and Adaptations
- Diversity of Life
- Human System Interactions
- Populations and Ecosystems

HON. 7TH GRADE SCIENCE

Length: Year

Prerequisite: Proficient and efficient score on PARCC or Consent of Instructor

Course Description:

The Honors Science option will follow the regular seventh grade Science curriculum but will provide a more in-depth approach to topics. Honors curriculum expectations include application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of information. A student enrolled in Honors Science curriculum will be expected to complete supplemental readings, independent research, lab reports, and complete projects outside of class. Students who consider taking Honors Science also need to have strong ELA and math skills.

8TH GRADE SCIENCE

Length: Year

Course Description:

Students experience eight strands of science. These strands are covered in depth as students move through the grade levels. Students in eighth grade study a variety of science concepts upon which science instruction will be based in succeeding grades. Scientific inquiry provides the foundation for study of the following instructional units:

- Chemical Interactions
- Gravity and Kinetic Energy
- Electromagnetic Force
- Waves

HONORS 8TH GRADE SCIENCE

Length: Year

Prerequisite: Successful completion of Honors 7th Grade Science with a C or above or with consent of instructor.

Course Description:

The Honors Science option will follow the regular eighth grade Science curriculum but will provide a more in-depth approach to topics. Honors curriculum expectations include application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of information. A student enrolled in Honors Science curriculum will be expected to complete supplemental readings, independent research, lab reports, and complete projects outside of class.

SOCIAL STUDIES

7TH GRADE SOCIAL STUDIES

Length: Year

Course Description:

Seventh graders learn about the modern world through the study of geography, government and citizenship, society and culture, economics, and the tools of social science inquiry. Emphasis is placed on understanding how geography plays a role in the development of cultures and economic systems, where people settle, and the life they lead as a result of geographical factors impacting them. Students learn about the development of the democratic process, formulate a greater understanding of the origins of cultural diversity, and appreciate other cultures and differences among people. Seventh grade students learn about the past, emphasizing the early history of the United States. Students will study geography, government and citizenship, society and culture, history, economics, and the tools of social science inquiry. The time period covered includes European Exploration through Reconstruction following the Civil War. Emphasis is placed on formulating a greater understanding of historical events and their impact on the development of democracy in the United States.

Students will be able to:

- Identify primary and secondary source documents.
- Identify and use reliable sources.
- Construct arguments using claims and evidence from multiple sources, recognizing their strengths and weaknesses.
- Determine quality of resources and their ability to use them to construct an argument.
- Identify a problem and address the challenges and opportunities in trying to solve that issue.
- Identify a person or group's ability to solve problems and the effect of the solutions to the problem.
- Identify roles played by citizens (examples: voters, jurors, taxpayers, military, protesters and officeholders).
- Describe the roles of political, civil and economic organizations in shaping people's lives.
- Describe the origins, purposes, and impact of constitutions, laws, treaties, and international agreements.
- Explain the origins, functions, and structure of government with reference to the U.S. Constitution, Illinois Constitution and other systems of government.
- Compare the means by which individuals and groups change societies, promote the common good, and protect rights.
- Explain the connection between interests and perspectives, civic virtues, and democratic principles when addressing issues in government and society.
- Analyze the ideas and principles contained in the founding documents of the United States and other countries and explain how they influence the social and political system.
- Apply civic virtues and democratic principles in school and community settings.
- Determine whether specific rules and laws (both actual and proposed) resolve the problems they were meant to address.
- Examine the motives, processes, and results of public strategies in historic and modern settings.
- Explain how economic decisions affect the well-being of individuals, businesses and society.
- Analyze the role of innovation and entrepreneurship in a market economy.
- Explain barriers to trade and how those barriers influence trade among nations.
- Explain how external benefits and costs influence choices.
- Explain the roles and relationships between savers, borrowers, interest, time, and the purposes for saving.
- Describe the roles of institutions, such as corporations, non-profits, and labor unions in a market economy.
- Use geographic models to explain cause and effect between locations and their environment.
- Compare and contrast a map or graph of two different cultures or environments.
- Analyze how the environmental characteristics of places and production of goods influence patterns of world trade.
- Describe the impact of humans moving into a new environment.
- Identify how cultural and environmental characteristics vary among regions of the world.
- Compare and contrast the cultural and environmental characteristics of different places or regions.

SOCIAL STUDIES

- Explain how changes in transportation and communication influence the spatial connections among human settlements and affect the spread of ideas and culture.
- Explain how people’s movements from around the world affect changes in the environment.
- Classify series of historical events and developments as examples of change and/or continuity.
- Analyze connections among events and developments in broader historical contexts.
- Explain multiple causes and effects of historical events.
- Compare the central historical arguments in secondary works across multiple media.
- Classify the kinds of historical sources used in secondary interpretation.
- Detect possible limitations in the historical record based on evidence collected from different kinds of historical sources.
- Explain how and why perspectives of people have changed overtime.
- Analyze multiple factors that influenced the perspectives of people during different historical eras.

HONORS 7TH GRADE SOCIAL STUDIES

Length: Year

Prerequisite: Proficient and efficient score on PARCC or Consent of Instructor

Course Description:

This Honors option will follow the regular seventh grade Social Studies curriculum but will provide a more in-depth approach to topics. Honors Curriculum students will focus on primary source documents and on learning to answer more in-depth document-based questions as required on AP exams. Honors Curriculum expectations include application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of information. A student enrolled in Honors Curriculum will be expected to do research, complete projects, and do supplemental readings; therefore, students enrolling in Honors Social Studies should have demonstrated a history of consistent effort and work completion. Seventh grade students who have a special interest in Social Studies and who experience success (earning an “A” or “B”) in sixth grade are encouraged to consider the Honors Social Studies Curriculum option.

- Inequality
- Social Justice
- Cultural Diversity
- Technology & Innovation
- Conflict
- Freedom
- American Culture
- Citizenship
- Democracy
- American Ideals

8TH GRADE SOCIAL STUDIES

Length: Year

Course Description:

Eighth graders learn about the modern world through the study of geography, government and citizenship, society and culture, Foreign policy and diplomacy, economics, and the tools of social science inquiry. This course focuses on the theme of culture and how students’ personal cultures help to shape people as individuals and influence society.

Students will explore cultural identity through texts written from different cultural perspectives. Finally, students will look at how different cultures view justice and how cultural clashes often lead to conflict in the world.

This course is designed to give the student view of our nation’s history using primary and secondary sources, historical novels, and graphic novels. In the first semester, the course will survey Immigration, Industrialization, and Urbanization, Reform Movements, Foreign Policy, World War I, and the 1920’s. In the second semester, the course will survey the Great Depression, New Deal, World War II, Holocaust, Rise of Communism and Social Movements.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Students will be able to:

- Identify primary and secondary source documents.
- Identify and use reliable sources.
- Determine quality of resources and their ability to use them to construct an argument
- Create a presentation using multimedia sources and present to an outside source like a community member.
- identify a person or group's ability to solve problems and the effect of the solutions to the problem.
- Take what they have learned and use it to help their schools and communities.
- Describe the roles of political, civil and economic organizations in shaping people's lives.
- Evaluate the powers and responsibilities of citizens, political parties, interest groups, and the media.
- Analyze the power and limits of governments, public officials, and bureaucracies at different levels in the United States and other countries.
- Compare the means by which individuals and groups change societies, promote the common good, and protect rights.
- Analyze the ideas and principles contained in the founding documents of the United States and other countries and explain how they influence the social and political system.
- Create a detailed analysis of the decision-making process used by a wide variety of groups in various settings.
- Apply civic virtues and democratic principles in school and community settings.
- Examine the motives, processes, and results of public strategies in historic and modern settings.
- Develop procedures for making decisions in historic and contemporary settings (such as the school, civil society, or local, state or national government).
- Evaluate benefits and costs of alternative approaches or solutions to economic issues for different groups and society as a whole.
- Evaluate employment, unemployment, inflation, total production, income and economic growth data and how they affect different groups.
- Describe the connection between credit, credit options, and interest and credit history.
- Describe the roles of institutions, such as corporations, non-profits, and labor unions in a market economy.
- Explain the correlation between investors, investment options (and associated risks), and income/wealth.
- Compare and contrast a map or graph of two different cultures or environments.
- Create their own geographic representation of cultural and environmental characteristics.
- compare and contrast the characteristics of different environments.
- Evaluate how cultural and economic decisions influence environments and the daily lives of people in both nearby and distant places.
- Explain how people's movements from around the world affect changes in the environment.
- Analyze how the environmental characteristics of places and production of goods influence patterns of world trade.
- Analyze connections among events and developments in broader historical contexts.
- Use questions generated about individuals and groups to analyze why they, and the developments they shaped, are seen as historically significant.
- Compare the central historical arguments in secondary works across multiple media.
- Organize applicable evidence into a coherent argument about the past.
- Detect possible limitations in the historical record based on evidence collected from different kinds of historical sources.
- Use other historical sources to infer a plausible marker, date, place of origin, and intended audience for historical sources where information is not easily identified.
- Analyze multiple factors that influenced the perspectives of people during different historical eras.
- Analyze how people's perspectives influenced what information is available in the historical sources they created.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Honors 8th Grade Social Studies

Length: Year

Prerequisite: Successful completion Honors 7th Grade Social studies with a C or above or with consent of instructor.

Course Description:

This Honors option will follow the regular eighth grade Social Studies curriculum but will provide a more in-depth approach to topics. Honors Curriculum students will focus on primary source documents and on learning to answer document-based questions as required on AP exams. Coursework will include research projects, writing assignments, and pictorial and graphic displays while incorporating the use of technology. Individualized projects will allow students to report findings and demonstrate several levels of learning including application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Students enrolling in Honors Social Studies should have demonstrated a history of consistent effort and work completion. Eighth grade students who have a special interest in Social Studies and who experience success in seventh grade are encouraged to consider the Honors Social Studies Curriculum option. A good work ethic and history of work completion are a must. A desire to learn for the sake of learning is desired.

Eighth grade honors social studies will be conducted ***thematically*** this year. **Thematic** instruction is the organization of a **curriculum** around macro “themes.” The themes in 8th grade honors social studies this year will be:

- American Culture
 - Have American Values changed?
- Role of Government
 - Has increased government involvement improved the daily lives of its citizens?
- War & Diplomacy
 - Under what circumstances should the US take an active role in foreign affairs?
- Economic Transformation
 - Have economic changes improved the lives of American citizens?
- American Diversity and Reform
 - Why have Americans been intolerant of different groups in the past?
 - What are the best methods to create change in society?

Other themes suggested were as follows:

- Inequality
- Social Justice
- Cultural Diversity
- Technology & Innovation
- Conflict
- Media Influence
- American Culture
- Citizenship
- Reforms

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

HEALTH (REQUIRED FOR 7TH GRADE)

Length: Semester

Course Description:

The seventh-grade Health curriculum encourages every child to develop the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors that will help build a safe and healthy lifestyle. Students learn health behaviors that will contribute to the well-being of the community and enrich their quality of life. Seventh grade Health focuses on body systems, disease prevention and control, injury prevention and safety, and risk assessment and reduction as it relates to tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION (REQUIRED FOR 1 SEMESTER OPPOSITE HEALTH IN 7TH GRADE AND BOTH SEMESTERS OF 8TH GRADE)

Length: Semester

Course Description:

The overview of the middle school Physical Education program is an academic subject designed to incorporate the psychomotor, cognitive, and affective learning domains which will enhance the knowledge, fitness levels, motor skill, personal/social skill, and attitude of each student. The goal of Physical Education is to provide students with opportunities to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary that develop and maintain the core values of having a lifetime of healthy habits, wellness, and to sustain an active lifestyle. Students will participate in a variety of fitness activities and learn to appreciate the value of an active life to improve their personal level of fitness. In Physical Education students will also develop the skills and knowledge necessary to participate successfully in lifetime activities, team, and individual sports. The course emphasizes the importance of safety, cooperation, and sportsmanship.

General Electives

ACADEMY EXPERIENCE EXPLORATION – PBL

Length: Semester

Course Description:

This course is aligned with the student's assigned academy. Students will explore various industry and career opportunities within the defined academy. Students will use a problem-based learning model to explore a real-world issue within their academy industry and work to provide a solution.

ALL STUDENTS WILL TAKE THIS ONE TIME EACH YEAR

ADVERTISING/MARKETING

Length: Semester

Course Description:

This course will have students develop advertising strategies by analyzing advertising styles used in different mediums, such as TV, radio and print. Students learn methods to identify their target audiences, such as children, stay-at-home mothers, working parents or teenagers. They then research and develop strategies for marketing products to those groups.

AFRICAN AMERICAN ART

Length: Semester

Course Description:

This course will focus solely on the history of African American Art and the artists who paved the way in their field. A historically underrepresented area of art, there are hundreds of artists that many art students never learn about in traditional art classes. From Harriet Powers to Gregory Warmack (Mr. Imagination), this course will provide students with an in-depth look on African American art. Students will learn a great deal of art history as well as create art pieces inspired by the artists and their work.

ART 1

Length: Semester

Course Description:

This art course continues to develop the students' understanding of the importance of the visual arts in their everyday life. Students will develop an increasing fluency in the use of tools, techniques, processes, and art vocabulary. Students will study artists' styles as inspiration for their personal artwork.

ART 2

Length: Semester

Prerequisite: Successful completion of Art I

Course Description:

This class further develops students' comprehension of media, techniques, and art concepts and prepares students for high school art. Opportunities will be provided for a more in-depth application of problem-solving skills and independent thinking through the process of creating art and studying art history. Students will expand their ability to evaluate their own artwork and the artwork of others.

CAREER EXPLORATION

Length: Semester

Course Description:

This class is designed to help students' research career options as well as make a career plan for the future. Students will examine the workplace and the requirements of various careers. They will complete self-assessments and self-evaluations to help select a career area that fits their individual abilities and interests. This class will help students set goals as well as plan post-secondary opportunities.

General Electives

CONCERT BAND

Length: Year Long

Course Description:

Concert Band is the entry-level group for the band program. Students will gain training in the full band setting with additional training being offered on marching band technique and solo playing

CULTURES AND COMMUNITIES

Length: Semester

Course Description:

This course will explore various cultures and community around the world giving the students a better understanding of diversity and global awareness.

FASHION & DESIGN

Length: Semester

Course Description:

In this class you will:

- Learn to apply the principles and elements of design (including color) as they relate to clothing and textiles
- Learn about the Fashion Industry—design, production and merchandising
- Explore the use and types of fabrics for home and clothing
- Learn/improve your sewing skills using both hand and machine sewing
- To apply appropriate safety skills while sewing
- Learn to select, plan, implement, complete, and evaluate projects

FOODS I

Length: Semester

Course Description:

This course includes the basic classroom and laboratory experiences needed to develop a knowledge and understanding of basic food principles and nutrition for people of all ages. Course content centers around: food service and preparation management using the decision-making process; meeting basic needs by applying nutrition concepts; meeting health and safety needs in planning, preparing and serving food; maximizing resources when planning/preparing/ serving food; promoting hospitality in food practices; and analyzing individual and family nutritional needs. Students will practice the principles of cookery for dairy, grains, eggs, breads, bakery products, main dishes, fruits, vegetables and desserts. Teamwork will be used to plan and prepare food. Information related to careers in foods and nutrition is incorporated throughout the course.

FOODS II

Length: Semester

Prerequisite: Successful completion of Foods I

Course Description:

This course centers on food selection and preparation for special circumstances and dietary needs. Emphasis will be on planning and organization skills. Laboratory sessions are devoted to preparation of foods with specific characteristics. Course content includes the following: career in foods and nutrition, diet and health, current nutritional issues, special food needs, food safety and sanitation, food purchasing, food conservation, and food preservation. Students will explore new technology and more difficult food preparation techniques in a laboratory setting.

General Electives

INTRODUCTION TO BUSINESS/ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Length: Semester

Course Description:

This course empowers students with the tools and mindset to explore what it takes to be an entrepreneur. Students work in teams to identify a problem to solve, create a product concept, pitch the idea, and iterate based on market learnings and the ecommerce selling experience. Through team-based, project-based learning, students build both entrepreneurship & critical skills, real-world skills.

INTRODUCTION TO MUSIC

Length: Semester

Course Description:

This course will be a general introduction to music and instruments. Some of the instruments include guitar, piano, and drums.

INTRODUCTION TO SPANISH

Length: Semester

Course Description:

This course includes an introduction to the basic concepts of Spanish. Skills in listening speaking, reading, and writing will be developed, and basic grammar will be introduced. Conversational skills will be emphasized, and the culture of Spanish-speaking countries will be studied. This course gives additional foundation before beginning the yearlong course in high school.

INTRODUCTION TO VIDEO/MUSIC PRODUCTION I

Length: Semester

Course Description:

Students will gain the basic understanding of operation of various video equipment. Students will gain basic principles of how to capture great video and audio, how to edit video and audio, and how to create a storyboard. Internet and computer skills make this a class for the self-motivated student. Art, music, speech, and play production are also recommended background courses.

LEADERSHIP

Length: Semester

Course Description:

This course Teach students strong leadership, character building, and social & emotional skills to better prepare them for life today and in the future.

MIXED CHOIR

Length: Semester: This course may be taken every semester

Course Description:

Interested students are invited to participate regardless of previous choir experience. Participants in choir are required to perform in concerts both inside and outside of school. Students will be required to sing the following choral styles in concerts: classical songs, art songs, patriotic songs, American folk songs, pop songs, madrigals, and holiday songs. The course will emphasize the development of fundamental skills in appropriate choral singing such as sight singing, vocal production, tone quality, and performance etiquette.

ORCHESTRA

Length: Year Long

Course Description:

All string players (violin, viola, cello, and double bass) will enroll in Orchestra.

General Electives

PUBLIC SPEAKING AND THEATER

Length: Semester

Course Description:

Students will continue to become more competent writers and speakers through researching, outlining, and delivering a variety of speeches. Students will also become better communicators by using technology in a variety of ways. Students will be exposed to the world of theatre; they explore live stage performance, technical theatre, reader's theatre, or improvisational theatre. Listening skills will be reinforced as well as theatre etiquette

TECHNOLOGY/ CODING I

Length: Semester

Course Description:

This course will explore key coding concepts while demonstrating how coding is a way of thinking that can be applied to other subjects and everyday life.

TECHNOLOGY/ CODING II

Length: Semester

Course Description:

This course will expand student's coding skills to start thinking more like app developers. They'll build a set of creative tools by exploring powerful coding concepts that professional developers use. And they'll learn how to place and manipulate images to create new worlds.

VIDEO/MUSIC PRODUCTION II

Length: Semester

Course Description:

This course is an advancement and continuation of videography skills. Internet research for new software, special effects, and unique video techniques is an integral part of the course. The student's past experience in Introduction to Video Production 1 now lends itself to moving into an even more creative and professional mode. Broadcasting and special projects for the school and community remain the focus of this course.

Stephen Decatur Middle School 7th Grade - 2019-20 School Year

Student Name _____ Student ID _____

Please place a 1 next to your first choice and a 2 next to your second choice;

Agriculture Academy _____

Public Service Academy _____

STEAM Academy _____

All students will take a semester of Health, a semester of PE, and 1 semester of the Academy Experiences Exploration Course.

Please select one for each course;

ELA	7 th Grade English _____	Hon. 7 th Grade English _____
Math	7 th Grade Math _____	7 th Grade Accelerated Math _____
Science	7 th Grade Science _____	Hon. 7 th Grade Science _____
Social Studies	7 th Grade Soc. Studies _____	Hon. 7 th Grade Soc. Studies _____

Please select three elective choices from the list (all courses are 1 semester long);

Art 1 _____	Introduction to Business/Entrepreneurship _____
Art 2 _____	Video/Music Production I _____
African American Art _____	Video/Music Production II _____
	Technology/Coding I _____
Orchestra (2 semesters) _____	Technology/Coding II _____
Concert Band (2 Semesters) _____	Advertising/Marketing _____
	Leadership _____
Mixed Choir (1 semester) _____	Fashion and Design _____
Mixed Choir (2 semesters) _____	Foods I _____
Introduction to Music _____	Foods II _____
Public Speaking and Theatre _____	Career Exploration _____
Cultures and Communities _____	Introduction to Spanish _____

Please list three elective alternates in order of preference;

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Student Signature _____

Parent Signature _____

Stephen Decatur Middle School 8th Grade - 2019-20 School Year

Student Name _____ Student ID _____

Please place a 1 next to your first choice and a 2 next to your second choice;

Agriculture Academy _____

Public Service Academy _____

STEAM Academy _____

All students will take a full year of PE and 1 semester of the Academy Experiences Exploration Course.

Please select one for each course;

ELA	8 th Grade English _____	Hon. 8 th Grade English _____
Math	8 th Grade Math _____	Hon. Algebra I _____
Science	8 th Grade Science _____	Hon. 8 th Grade Science _____
Social Studies	8 th Grade Soc. Studies _____	Hon. 8 th Grade Soc. Studies _____

Please select three elective choices from the list (all courses are 1 semester long);

Art 1 _____	Introduction to Business/Entrepreneurship _____
Art 2 _____	Video/Music Production I _____
African American Art _____	Video/Music Production II _____
_____	Technology/Coding I _____
Orchestra (2 semesters) _____	Technology/Coding II _____
Concert Band (2 Semesters) _____	Advertising/Marketing _____
_____	Leadership _____
Mixed Choir (1 semester) _____	Fashion and Design _____
Mixed Choir (2 semesters) _____	Foods I _____
Introduction to Music _____	Foods II _____
Public Speaking and Theatre _____	Career Exploration _____
Cultures and Communities _____	Introduction to Spanish _____

Please list three elective alternates in order of preference;

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Student Signature _____

Parent Signature _____

