

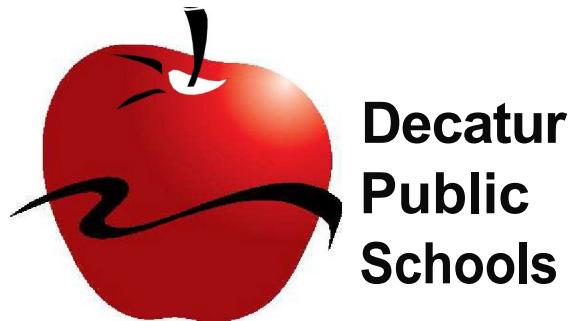
2026-2027

Decatur Public Schools

# STUDENT COURSE

# GUIDE

**A Guide for Parents and Middle School Students**



**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 CURRICULUM GUIDE**

**2026 - 2027**

**DECATUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**101 W. Cerro Gordo**

**Decatur, IL 62523**

**217-362-3000**

**www.dps61.org**

**BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**Bill Clevenger - President**

Kevin Hale

Devon Joyner

Dr. Karen Lauritzen

Mark Reynolds

Christina Tyus

Will Wetzel

***DISTRICT LEADERSHIP***

**Dr. Rochelle Clark - Superintendent**

Dr. Larry Gray - Assistant Superintendent of Teaching & Learning  
Eldon Conn - Assistant Superintendent of Support Services

Dr. Mike Curry - Chief Operational Officer

Mary Brady - Director of Teaching & Learning, Elementary

Dr. Edwin Robinson - Director of Teaching & Learning, Secondary

Ashley Grayned, Executive Director of Innovative Programs & Strategic Planning  
Monica Wilks - Director of Human Resources

Maria Robertson - Director of Communication & Public Relations

Dr. Danielle Lusby, Director of Student Services

Kathy Horath - Director of Macon -Piatt Special Education District

Maurice Payne - Director of Information Technology

Floyd Bolt - Director of Buildings & Grounds

Valdimir Talley, Jr. - Safety & Security Administrator

Kayla McCreary - Health Services Administrator

**ADMINISTRATION**

**Stephen Decatur Middle School**

Curtiss Lindsey, Principal

**Dennis Lab School**

Kamra Meador, Principal

**Ellsworth Dansby Magnet School**

Querida Ellis, Principal

**Hope Academy**

Tashia Burks, Principal

**Johns Hill Magnet School**

Michelle Prior, Principal

**Montessori Academy for Peace**

Nathaniel Tallent, Principal

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### ACADEMIC INFORMATION

Academy Experiences.....	4
Scheduling Information .....	5
Standardized Test Information .....	6
Scheduling Change Policy, Course Prerequisites, & Honors Curriculum.....	7
Grading and Promotion & Summer School.....	8

### COURSES

English Language Arts .....	9-10
Mathematics.....	11
Science .....	12
Social Studies .....	13-14
Physical Education.....	15
General Electives.....	16-19

## 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 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade year.

**The two 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.

**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 21<sup>st</sup> century!

## **SCHEDULING INFORMATION**

The 2026-2027 Curriculum Guide lists and describes all courses currently offered at the middle school level for Decatur Public Schools. Selections should be made carefully with the 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 February 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 the middle school level in Decatur Public Schools, 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.

# STANDARDIZED TEST INFORMATION

## **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 respectfully. 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 8th grade students enrolled in schools 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:

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

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

The Dynamic Learning Maps Alternate Assessment (OLM-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 OLM-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.

## **STAR Assessment - District Required**

Renaissance STAR Assessments are short, computer-adaptive tests (CAT), designed for K-12 to measure proficiency and growth in Reading & Math. They adjust difficulty based on student responses, providing fast, accurate data for personalized instruction and benchmarking.

**\*Currently, the academic assessments are given three times per year, while the Social, Academic, and Emotional Behavior Risk Screener (SAEPRS) is only given in the fall and spring.**

## **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 (which are at the discretion of the building principal) are misplacement or scheduling error.

Requested changes related to teacher assignments, class periods, etc. will not be considered.

## **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 Criteria**

- 20%** - Star Assessment-Proficient or Advanced (50th Percentile or Above)
- 20%** - Grade - B or Better in the previous year's corresponding course
- 20%** - Student Interest - Must have at least a B or better in the previous year's corresponding course
- 20%** - Teacher recommendation
- 20%** - Principal recommendation

## **GRADING AND PROMOTION (Board Policy 6:280)**

The Superintendent or designee shall establish a system of grading and reporting academic achievement to students and their parents/guardians. The system shall also determine when promotion and graduation requirements are met. The decision to promote a student to the next grade level shall be based on successful completion of the curriculum, attendance, and performance on the Illinois Assessment of Readiness (IAR) and/or other assessments. A student shall not be promoted based upon age or any other social reason not related to academic performance. The administration shall determine remedial assistance for a student who is not promoted.

Every teacher shall maintain an evaluation record for each student in the teacher's classroom. A District administrator cannot change the final grade assigned by the teacher without notifying the teacher. Reasons for changing a student's final grade include:

- A miscalculation of test scores,
- A technical error in assigning a particular grade or score,
- Completion of extra work provided by the teacher that may impact the grade,
- An inappropriate grade based on an appropriate grading system.

Should a grade change be made, the administrator making the change must sign the changed record.

## **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.

# ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

## 7<sup>th</sup> 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 7<sup>th</sup> GRADE ENGLISH

*Length:* Year

*Prerequisite:* Proficient and efficient score on IAR - 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

## 8<sup>th</sup> 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 8<sup>th</sup> GRADE ENGLISH

*Length:* Year

*Prerequisite:* Successful completion of Honors 7<sup>th</sup> 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 IAR or Consent of Instructor

*Course Description:*

This course is designed to move at an aggressive pace. The course is designed to prepare students 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. ***OTE 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.

## **HONORS 7th GRADE SCIENCE**

*Length:* Year

*Prerequisite:* Proficient and efficient score on IAR 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:

- Changes in Matter
- Cells and Body Systems and Disease
- Reproduction and Heredity
- Science, Technology, and the Human Impact of Science on Society
- Dynamic Earth and Fossils

Students will use scientific inquiry to see the relevance of science in their everyday lives while exploring these units.

## **HONORS 8th GRADE SCIENCE**

*Length:* Year

*Prerequisite:* Successful completion of Honors 7<sup>th</sup> 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

## 7<sup>TM</sup> 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 - including the Illinois and US Constitutions, 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.

## HONORS 7<sup>TM</sup> GRADE SOCIAL STUDIES

*Length:* Year

*Prerequisite:* Proficient and efficient score on IAR 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.

## 8<sup>TM</sup> 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

## **Honors 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Social Studies**

*Length:* Year

*Prerequisite:* Successful completion Honors 7<sup>th</sup> 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.

# **PHYSCIALEDUCATION**

## **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.

## **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.

# **General Electives**

## **ART1**

*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.

## **ART2**

*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.

## **AFRICAN AMERICAN ART HISTORY**

*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.

## **ORCHESTRA**

*Length:* Year

*Course Description:*

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

## **CONCERT BAND**

*Length:* Year

*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 solo and ensemble playing.

## **MIXED CHOIR**

*Length:* Year

*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.

# General Electives

## INTRODUCTION TO MUSIC

*Length:* Semester

*Course Description:*

This course will be a general introduction to various genres of music and how music fits into our daily lives.

## PUBLIC SPEAKING AND THEATRE

*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.

## CULTURES AND COMMUNITIES

*Length:* Semester

*Course Description:*

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

## 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**

## 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.

## INTRO TO 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.

# General Electives

## TECHNOLOGY & CODING I & II

*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.

## BUSINESS & ENTREPRENEURSHIP

*Length:* Semester

*Course Description:*

This course provides students with the tools and the mindset to explore what it takes to be an entrepreneur. Students work in teams to identify a problem or need, create a product concept and pitch the idea while learning business skills and concepts. Through team-based, project-based learning, students build both entrepreneurship & critical real-world skills.

## FASHION AND 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.

# General Electives

## 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.

## 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.

## AGRICULTURAL EXPLORATION

*Length :* Semester

*Course Description:*

This course provides the opportunity to learn fundamental concepts in agriculture to serve as a foundation for future courses and to inform students about the industry that is so vital to society and to their future. Instruction includes an introduction to the agricultural industry, animal science, plant science, horticulture science, agribusiness, environmental science, agricultural mechanics, food science, and leadership and personal development. Participation in FFA student organization activities is an integral course component for leadership development, career exploration and reinforcement of academic concepts.