

Stafford Municipal School District

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“The Best Little School District in Texas”

The vision of Stafford Municipal School District, a diverse and visionary learning community, is to prepare each student to become a critical thinker and an ethical, productive citizen, in the pursuit of excellence through an unwavering commitment to provide multiple life and learning experiences led by dedicated professionals using innovative teaching techniques in an engaging learning environment.

The vision of Stafford Middle School is to create a culture of pride in the community and campus that supports the development of life-long learners who are prepared for high school and post-secondary opportunities through advanced classroom instruction, early crediting opportunities, and access to our state-of-the-art career and technology center.

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Stafford Middle School Counseling Department

6th and 7th Grade: Liza Knight-Mendonca

8th Grade: LaPorsha Frazier

STAFFORD MIDDLE SCHOOL COURSE SELECTION GUIDE OVERVIEW

This course program guide has been developed to assist you in planning your middle school course of study. It provides a brief description of courses offered and the criteria for special programs. The middle school course of study allows students to reinforce and extend foundation skills as well as explore and develop interests through elective courses. If you have questions about the course offerings, please contact the counselor or an administrator at the middle school campus.

COURSE DESIGNATIONS

Courses are designated in various ways to meet the skills and interests of the students. Many courses are offered as Academic, PreAdvanced Placement (PreAP), or PreAP/GT. A student's course of study may be a combination of courses with different designations. The students, parents, and school will work together to determine the best combinations for each learner.

- **Academic Courses:** these courses prepare students for college and post-secondary instruction using a variety of teaching strategies, student activities, and assessments. The curriculum requires students to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills as well as to master core content.
- **PreAP/GT Courses:** these courses are designed to challenge motivated students and prepare them for success in college-level coursework in high school and in college. *These advanced or above grade-level courses typically move at a faster pace, are more academically challenging, and require more independent learning and homework than Academic courses.* Students who participate in services designed for gifted/talented students will demonstrate skills in self-directed learning, thinking, research, and communication as evidenced by the development of innovative products and performances that reflect individuality and creativity and are advanced in relation to students of similar age, experience, or environment.

WHEN CHOOSING A COURSE OF STUDY, REMEMBER:

- SMSD's Academic curriculum is college-bound curriculum.
- While PreAP and PreAP/GT courses are designed to better prepare students for Advanced Placement (AP) courses in high school, PreAP courses are NOT a requirement for enrolling in AP courses in high school.
- Students may take one or several PreAP courses.
- For most courses, it is possible to move from Academic to PreAP from one year to the next. However, in mathematics, it is more difficult due to the acceleration and compacting of the curriculum in 6th, 7th and 8th grade. A student who decides to move from Academic to PreAP mathematics may require additional support in making the transition.

PreAP ENTRY AND EXIT GUIDELINES:

The purpose of the entry guidelines is to provide information to facilitate the placement of students into academically challenging courses. SMSD recognizes the value of student participation in advanced coursework and encourages students to graduate from high school with at least one advanced academic course credit such as Advanced Placement (AP) or Dual Credit. Students are encouraged to access the most rigorous curriculum in which they can be successful, generally defined as earning a “C” or better semester average. Student performance in related courses and teacher input are important elements for parents and students to consider in selecting advanced coursework.

STUDENTS CHOOSING TO PARTICIPATE IN PreAP MUST:

- Demonstrate mastery on course-related state mandated performance assessments (STAAR)
- Demonstrate above grade-level performance on ability test(s), such as CogAT
- Receive a recommendation from the current course teacher
- Recognize the long-term benefits of participation, seek assistance when needed, and be committed to staying in the course for a minimum of one semester
- Students and parents must sign a PreAP contract to confirm commitment

EXIT CRITERIA FROM MIDDLE SCHOOL PreAP CLASSES:

- Students may exit only at the end of the first three weeks progress report, the end of the first six weeks grading cycle, or at the end of the first semester.
- A grade in the 70’s or 80’s at the end of a formal grading period is not considered a valid reason to exit the PreAP program
- Students must conference with the teacher
- Students must complete their course assignments and/or attend recommended tutorials
- Students must gain approval of the building principal or principal’s designee

HIGH SCHOOL COURSES OFFERED TO STUDENTS IN GRADE 8

The Texas Administrative Code states that districts may offer courses designated for grades 9-12 in grades 7 and 8 and will verify that students who take these courses have satisfactorily completed the prerequisite Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). The Academic Achievement Record (AAR) will reflect that students have satisfactorily completed the courses in grades 7 and 8 and have been awarded state graduation credit. High school credits earned in middle school will NOT count towards a student’s GPA in high school. For elective courses that reach capacity, priority will be given to those students with fewer or no high school courses.

THE FOLLOWING COURSES CAN BE TAKEN IN GRADE 8 FOR HIGH SCHOOL CREDIT:

- PreAP Algebra 1
- Algebra 1(Block)
- Art 1 (fine art)
- Dance 1 (fine art)
- Principles of Business Marketing and Finance
- Principles of Health Science (elective, by invitation only)
- Spanish 1
- Spanish Heritage 1 (for Spanish 1 credit)
- Spanish Heritage 2 (for Spanish 2 credit)
- Principles of Information Technology

STATE ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

The State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) is the state assessment program. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) has identified a set of readiness and supporting standards for designated courses which are assessed in the following grades:

- Grade 6 → Reading and Mathematics
- Grade 7 → Reading, Writing, and Mathematics
- Grade 8 → Reading, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies

REQUIRED COURSES

THE FOLLOWING COURSES ARE REQUIRED IN GRADE 6:

- 6th Grade English Language Arts/Reading (ELAR)
 - A 90-minute (2 class period) block will be required of all 6th grade students
- 6th Grade Mathematics
 - A 90-minute (2 class period) block will be required for all 6th grade students
- 6th Grade Science
- 6th Grade Social Studies: World Cultures and Geography
- A Physical Education course (PE, Dance, or Karate)
- A Fine Arts Course (Art or Band)

THE FOLLOWING COURSES ARE REQUIRED IN GRADE 7:

- 7th Grade English Language Arts/Reading (ELAR)
 - A 90-minute (2 class period) block will be required of students who are not taking the PreAP level course work
- 7th Grade Mathematics
 - A 90-minute (2 class period) block will be required of students who are not taking the PreAP level course work
- 7th Grade Science
- 7th Grade Social Studies: Texas History
- A Physical Education course (PE, Athletics, Dance, or Karate)

THE FOLLOWING COURSES ARE REQUIRED IN GRADE 8:

- 8th Grade English Language Arts/Reading (ELAR)
 - A 90-minute (2 class period) block will be required of students who are not taking the PreAP level course work
- Algebra 1
 - The 8th Pre-Algebra Math course will be taken in place of Algebra 1 for students whose performance on the STAAR test is less than proficient.
- 8th Grade Science
- 8th Grade Social Studies: United States History
- A Physical Education course (PE, Pre- Athletics, or Karate)

6th GRADE CORE COURSES

6110 6th Grade English Language Arts/Reading (year-long course)

****Blocked 2 Period Course***

This course is designed to enhance students' communications skills through reading, writing, listening, speaking, and the study of the English language. The primary focus in language arts class will be comprehension of various texts from various genres, such as: fiction, nonfiction, science fiction, historical fiction, fantasy, drama, and myths. Additionally, students will demonstrate mastery of the appropriate use of the rules of grammar in, and the ability to express yourself effectively through various mediums of communication in direct correspondence to the TEKS. Students can expect to read a variety of fiction and non-fiction texts, including novels, short stories, dramas, poems, and essays. Writing assignments will include timed writings, formal/assessment writing, narrative and expository essays, critiques, and creative pieces. Vocabulary, spelling, and supplemental grammar assignments (as needed) will also be an important part of this class. As a community of learners, students can expect to work periodically in cooperative learning situations and to present information to their peers in collaborative teams as well as individually.

6101 6th Grade Pre-AP English Language Arts/Reading (year-long course)

****Blocked 2 Period Course***

This course is for students who are highly motivated and interested in a rigorous English Language Arts/Reading program.

In grade 6, the PreAP/GT student will develop and sustain the following foundational language skills: listening, speaking, discussion, and thinking. The student will also be able to recognize and analyze genre-specific characteristics, structures, and purposes within and across increasingly complex traditional, contemporary, classical, and diverse texts. The student will also use critical inquiry to analyze the authors' choices and how they influence and communicate meaning within a variety of texts. They will also analyze and apply author's craft purposefully in order to develop their own products and performances. Students will learn how to edit their writing based on their knowledge of grammar, usage, spelling, punctuation, and other conventions of written language, as well as organize ideas in timed and untimed writing assignments. The College Board's official PreAP program, SpringBoard, will be utilized. The differentiated curriculum prepares students for the PreAP program in high school.

6210 6th Grade Mathematics (year-long course)
****Blocked 2 Period Course***

Within a well-balanced mathematics curriculum, the primary focal areas in Grade 6 are number and operations, proportionality, expressions, equations, relationships, measurement and data. Students use concepts, algorithms, and properties of rational numbers to explore mathematical relationships and to describe increasingly complex situations. Students use concepts of proportionality to explore, develop, and communicate mathematical relationships. Students use algebraic thinking to describe how a change in one quantity in a relationship results in a change in the other. Students connect verbal, numeric, graphic, and symbolic representations of relationships, including equations and inequalities. Students use geometric properties and relationships, as well as spatial reasoning, to model and analyze situations and solve problems. Students communicate information about geometric figures or situations by quantifying attributes, generalize procedures from measurement experiences, and use the procedures to solve problems. Students use appropriate statistics, representations of data, and reasoning to draw conclusions, evaluate arguments, and make recommendations. While the use of all types of technology is important, the emphasis on algebra readiness skills necessitates the implementation of graphing technology.

6201 6th Grade Pre-AP Mathematics (year-long course)
****Blocked 2 Period Course***

This is a rigorous Mathematics course for highly motivated students.

Pre-AP Math 6 provides capable students with a course designed to prepare them for Pre-AP Algebra I and other rigorous advanced course work in the future. In addition to the primary focal points of using operations with integers and positive rational numbers to solve problems, understanding and applying ratios and rates and using equivalent ratios to represent proportional relationships, using expressions and equations to represent relationships in a variety of contexts, understanding data representation, and financial literacy. Students connect verbal, numeric, graphic, and symbolic representations of relationships, including equations and inequalities. Students use geometric properties and relationships, as well as spatial reasoning, to model and analyze situations and solve problems. Students communicate information about geometric figures or situations by quantifying attributes, generalize procedures from measurement experiences, and use the procedures to solve problems. Students use appropriate statistics, representations of data, and reasoning to draw conclusions, evaluate arguments, and make recommendations. While the use of all types of technology is important, the emphasis on algebra readiness skills necessitates the implementation of graphing technology. The curriculum will include a rigorous problem-solving component. Students should expect an additional time requirement and be willing to work independently.

6350 6th Grade Science (year-long course)

Grade 6 Science is interdisciplinary in nature; however much of the content focus is on physical science. The standards for Grade 6 include: *Scientific investigation and reasoning*- allowing students to develop a rich knowledge of science in the natural world by becoming familiar with modes scientific of inquiry and the diverse ways scientists study the natural world. *Matter and energy*- students concentrate on developing an understanding of elements and compounds. *Force, motion, and energy*- students will investigate the types of energy as well as the relationship between force and motion through a variety of means; including calculations and measurements. *Earth and space*- students will develop an understanding of Earth's processes, the way our solar system is organized, the role of gravity, and space exploration. *Organisms and environments*- students will gain an understanding of the broadest taxonomic classifications of organisms, the interdependence between organisms and their environments, and levels of organization within an ecosystem.

6351 6th Grade Pre-AP Science (year-long course)

This course is for students who are highly motivated and interested in a rigorous Science program.

PreAP 6th grade science covers the 6th grade science curriculum and integrates the 7th grade science curriculum which allows students to construct their own understanding through an inquiry-based approach while encouraging advanced skills in-depth discussions, more comprehensive lab work, and increased independent study. Class assignments and activities build on and expand higher level thinking skills of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation and integrate units that promote scientific connections and connections with other disciplines. Students are provided opportunities for extension and application of content and processes. Special projects are assigned during the year, which require individual research on the internet or at the library. Classroom presentations are expected. The course will help prepare students to take PreAP Science in grade 7.

6300 6th Grade Social Studies: Contemporary World Cultures and Geography (year-long course)

Students will gain a comprehensive understanding of Contemporary World Cultures and factors that influence the locations of contemporary societies on maps or globes. Students will study culture, religion, government, economics and physical and human geography as it relates to the cultures and societies of the world. Reading, writing, projects, critical thinking, and discussions will be utilized to analyze events and people as they pertain to societal contributions from around the world.

6301 6th Grade Pre-AP Social Studies: World Cultures & Geography (year-long course)

This course is for students who are highly motivated and interested in a rigorous Social Studies program.

Students will gain a comprehensive understanding of Contemporary World Cultures and factors that influence the locations of contemporary societies on maps or globes. Students will study culture, religion, government, economics and physical and human geography as it relates to the cultures and societies of the world. Reading, writing, projects, critical thinking, and discussions will be utilized to analyze events and people as they pertain to societal contributions from around the world. Students will utilize more primary and secondary sources as applied to document-based questions and assessments. Students will be required to participate in a research-based project outside of the classroom.

6th GRADE PHYSICAL EDUCATION COURSES

6400 6th Grade Girls and Boys Pre-Athletics (year-long course)

The Pre-Athletic Class is a Physical Education class which is designed to prepare 6th grade students for the Stafford Middle School Athletic Program in the 7th grade. Students choosing to participate in Pre-Athletics should anticipate daily workouts during the class period that are significantly more physical and mentally demanding than what they may experience in a regular P.E. class. Students will focus on athletic conditioning, strength and agility. The Pre-Athletic class will also focus on sports in-season at the time; ex: Volleyball, Football, Soccer, Basketball, Track and Tennis. Students will learn skills, drills and rules for those sports as well.

6410 6th Grade Boys and Girls Physical Education (year-long course)

The Physical Education program provides each student with the opportunity to participate in a comprehensive program consisting of skill development, lead up games, team sports, and physical fitness activities. It is based on physical activities undertaken in an active, caring, supportive and nonthreatening atmosphere in which every student is challenged and successful. The students receive instruction in rules, skills, and strategies associated with the different sports as well as learning experiences involving physical conditioning activities and lifelong physical activities. The program promotes the spirit of cooperation, leadership, fair play, and friendly competition.

6420 6th Grade Karate (year-long course)

Karate is used to teach character-building values to students. Studies show that karate gives young people the tools and support needed to resist negative peer pressure, avoid self-destructive behaviors, and make responsible decisions. KICKSTART KIDS will improve children's lives both inside and outside of the classroom by engaging their heart, head, and hands. The goal is to positively influence the whole child for the life of the child and help create safer, healthier, and more productive communities.

6th GRADE ELECTIVE COURSES

6810 6th/7th grade Visual Arts 1 (year-long course)

No prerequisites

This course is designed to enable students to develop their problem-solving and creative thinking skills while teaching them to perceive the world around them, interpret emotion through a variety of artistic media, and evaluate their own artwork as well as the work of other artists. Students explore basic elements of art and principles of design using a variety of media and techniques concentrating on both traditional and contemporary. Students may be required to purchase some materials (art kit or supply list). Sketchbooks are required.

6500 6th Grade Band (year-long course)

6th grade students will be tested in 5th grade and placed on the instruments that they will be most successful on. Students must have an instrument by the second full week of school in order to stay in the band class.

7th GRADE CORE COURSES

7110 7th Grade English Language Arts/Reading (year-long course)

****Blocked 2 Period Course***

In grade 7, students refine, and master previously learned reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills in increasingly complex reading selections and written compositions. Students analyze and evaluate a speaker's delivery. Students read a wide variety of texts from all genres. Students use different forms of writing, varied sentence structure, verb tense, grammar, and usage to improve their writing. Students also produce error-free compositions on a quarterly basis, in addition to retrieving data from multiple sources for use in research projects.

7101 7th Grade Pre-AP English Language Arts/Reading (year-long course)

This course is for students who are highly motivated and interested in a rigorous English Language Arts/Reading program.

In grade 7, the PreAP/GT student refines, and masters previously learned knowledge and skills in increasing complex presentations, classical and contemporary reading selections, research and writing in all genres. Students identify various literary forms and use different forms of writing for specific purposes. Students learn how to edit their writing based on knowledge of grammar, usage, spelling, punctuation, and other conventions of written language. Students organize ideas in timed and untimed writing assignments. Students collaborate with other writers to compose, publish, and analyze published examples as models for writers. Significant blocks of time outside the classroom are required for reading both independent and instructional-level materials for varied purposes. The College Board's official PreAP program, SpringBoard, will be utilized. The differentiated curriculum prepares students for the PreAP program in high school.

7210 7th Grade Mathematics (year-long course)

****Blocked 2 Period Course***

In grade 7, students will extend and build upon their foundation of basic understandings of mathematical process standards, number and operations, proportionality, expressions/equations/relationships, measurement and data, and personal financial literacy. Areas of emphasis include addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division of decimals, fractions, and integers fluently. Students will continue to experience opportunities to use models, manipulatives, and data collection and interpretation with appropriate technology. Problem-solving, communication, connections of concepts (both within and outside mathematics), and informal reasoning will be emphasized.

7201 7th Grade Pre-AP Mathematics (year-long course)

This course is for students who are highly motivated and interested in a rigorous Mathematics program.

PreAP Math7 will combine 7th grade math curriculum with several parts of the 8th grade math curriculum, allowing students to use investigations to develop their mathematical thinking skills. Class assignments and activities build on and expand higher level thinking skills of analysis, synthesis, evaluation, and integrate units that promote mathematical connections. Students are provided opportunities for extension and application of content and processes. This course will help prepare students to take Algebra 1 in 8th grade.

7350 7th Grade Science (year-long course)

7th grade science is a course of study coordinating thematic instruction across multiple science disciplines including biology, chemistry, physics, and earth/space science. The curriculum has a balance of content and activities that guide students towards the discovery of basic principles, with a focus on life science (specifically organisms and the environment). The curriculum includes Science Safety, Organisms and the Environment, Cell Structure and Function, Body Systems, Genetics/Genetic Variations and Adaptations, Flow of Energy, Cycling of Matter, Earth and Space, Factors affecting Earth Systems, and Force, Motion, and Energy Relationships. The study of science includes conducting field and laboratory investigations using scientific methods for analyzing data to make informed decisions.

7351 7th Grade Pre-AP Science (year-long course)

This course is for students who are highly motivated and interested in a rigorous Science program.

PreAP 7th grade science covers the 7th grade science curriculum and integrates the 8th grade science curriculum which allows students to construct their own understanding through an inquiry-based approach while encouraging advanced skills in-depth discussions, more comprehensive lab work, and increased independent study. Class assignments and activities build on and expand higher level thinking skills of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation and integrate units that promote scientific connections and connections with other disciplines. Students are provided opportunities for extension and application of content and processes. Special projects are assigned during the year, which require individual research on the internet or at the library. Classroom presentations are expected. The course will help prepare students to take PreAP Science in grade 8.

7300 7th Grade Social Studies: Texas History (year-long course)

Students will gain a comprehensive understanding of the history of Texas from Native Texas and its People through the 20th century. Students will concentrate on the themes of economic, social, political and geography as applied to the growth and development of the history of Texas. Reading, writing, projects, critical thinking, and discussions will be utilized to analyze the events and contributions of people that shaped the foundation of Texas.

7301 7th Grade Pre-AP Social Studies: Texas History (year-long course)

This course is for students who are highly motivated and interested in a rigorous Social Studies program.

Students will gain a comprehensive understanding of the history of Texas from the Native People and settlements through the 20th century. Students will concentrate on the themes of economic, social, political and geography as applied to the growth and development of the history of Texas. Reading, writing, projects, critical thinking, and discussions will be utilized to analyze the events and contributions of people that shaped the foundation of Texas. Students will utilize more primary and secondary sources as applied to document-based questions and assessments. Students will be required to participate in a research-based project outside of the classroom. Outside reading will be required.

7th GRADE PHYSICAL EDUCATION COURSES

7410 7th Grade Boys and Girls Physical Education (year-long course)

The Physical Education program provides each student with the opportunity to participate in a comprehensive program consisting of skill development, lead up games, team sports, and physical fitness activities. It is based on physical activities undertaken in an active, caring, supportive and nonthreatening atmosphere in which every student is challenged and successful. The students receive instruction in rules, skills, and strategies associated with the different sports as well as learning experiences involving physical conditioning activities and lifelong physical activities. The program promotes the spirit of cooperation, leadership, fair play, and friendly competition.

7400 7th Grade BOYS Athletics (year-long course)

The athletic programs are designed for those who are highly motivated to participate in team or individual UIL athletics. Participants are expected to meet all UIL regulations and must maintain academic standards while devoting a great deal of time outside of the school day towards these programs. A physical examination is required PRIOR to the start of the school year and should be on file with SMS athletic department. All participants must have a legal guardian complete the

online forms through RankOne sports. Try-outs and coach approval are required to participate in each of the following sports: Football, Basketball, Track, Soccer, and Tennis. Since Athletics is a year-long course, students **MUST** participate in at least **two or more sports**. They may choose one sport in the fall and one sport in the spring. Students who are competing in one sport are encouraged to join PE.

7401 7th Grade GIRLS Athletics (year-long course)

The athletic programs are designed for those who are highly motivated to participate in team or individual UIL athletics. Participants are expected to meet all UIL regulations and must maintain academic standards while devoting a great deal of time outside of the school day towards these programs. A physical examination is required PRIOR to the start of the school year and should be on file with SMS athletic department. All participants must have a legal guardian complete the online forms through RankOne sports. Try-outs and coach approval are required to participate in each of the following sports: Football, Basketball, Track, Tennis, and Cross Country. Since Athletics is a year-long course, students **MUST** participate in at least **two sports**. They may choose one sport in the fall and one sport in the spring. Students who are competing in one sport are encouraged to join PE.

7450 7th Grade Dance (year-long course)

This course deals with specific knowledge of human skeletal and muscular anatomy and its relationship to movement and postural alignment. This course is performance-based, and students must embody discipline and self-control when learning movement. Students will learn the basic dance movement for jazz, ballet, modern, hip hop, and ballroom. There is a performance at the end of the year that requires some after school hours.

7420 7th Grade Karate (year-long course)

****Prerequisite: 6th Grade Karate***

Karate is used to teach character-building values to students. Studies show that karate gives young people the tools and support needed to resist negative peer pressure, avoid self-destructive behaviors, and make responsible decisions. KICKSTART KIDS will improve children's lives both inside and outside of the classroom by engaging their heart, head, and hands. The goal is to positively influence the whole child for the life of the child and help create safer, healthier, and more productive communities.

7th GRADE ELECTIVE COURSES

Languages Other Than English (LOTE)

7510 Introduction to Spanish (7th graders only, year-long course)

This course serves as an introduction to the Spanish language and culture. Basic listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing and presentation skills are developed. Communication skills are the primary focus of this course. At the end of this course, students will be able to express themselves and engage in simple conversation in Spanish within the limits of their knowledge of vocabulary and structure. This course is the prerequisite for Spanish 1.

Fine Arts

7810 7th grade Visual Arts 1 (year-long course)

**No prerequisites*

This course is designed to enable students to develop their problem-solving and creative thinking skills while teaching them to perceive the world around them, interpret emotion through a variety of artistic media, and evaluate their own artwork as well as the work of other artists. Students explore basic elements of art and principles of design using a variety of media and techniques concentrating on both traditional and contemporary. Students may be required to purchase some materials (art kit or supply list). Sketchbooks are required.

7820 Visual Arts 2 (Year-long course)

**Prerequisite: Visual Art 1.*

Students continue to explore basic elements of art and principles of design using a variety of media and techniques. Art appreciation and art history are basic to the course. Students work on honing their critical analysis skills and recreating traditional, as well as contemporary, works of art. Students will have the opportunity to participate in competitions. Students may be required to purchase some materials (art kit or supply list). Sketchbooks are required.

7803 7th Grade Choir (year-long course)

This performance-based course provides the opportunity for students to develop their vocal ability as individuals and advance their skills and knowledge of fundamental musicianship. Sight-singing techniques are emphasized as part of music language learning and used to assist in performance preparation, as well as to prepare for UIL Contest participation. A variety of choral literature will be explored in both art music and contemporary styles. This course contains extra-curricular components which require participation in after school hours and weekend activities.

7500 7th Grade Band (year-long course)

****Prerequisite: Students must audition and have been in band the previous year***

Students will be recommended by the band director for the appropriate band: Honors, Concert, or Symphonic. Students must commit to working to benefit the entire band through their efforts during class time and in extra-curricular rehearsals and performances, as planned by the director. They are expected to be physically, mentally, and musically well-disciplined and to embody the highest standards and self-control. Performances by the band will include concerts on and off campus, and subsequent competitive auditions, UIL solo ensemble, and sight-reading contests as well as other activities planned by the director.

Career & Technical Education (CTE)

7845 College and Career Readiness (7th graders only, semester-long course)

The career development process is unique to every person and evolves throughout one's life. Students will use decision-making and problem-solving skills for college and career planning. Students will explore valid, reliable educational and career information to learn more about themselves and their interests and abilities. Students integrate skills from academic subjects, information technology, and interpersonal communication to make informed decisions. This course is designed to guide students through the process of investigation and in the development of a college and career readiness achievement plan. Students will use interest inventory software or other tools available to explore college and career areas of personal interest. Students will use this information to explore educational requirements for various colleges and a variety of chosen career paths.

7570 7th Grade Technology Applications (one-semester course)

This course includes instruction in the use of both hardware and software spreadsheets, word processing, databases, multimedia, telecommunications, and graphic design. Students will learn basic data entry and storage and retrieval of information.

7847 Investigating Careers in STEM 1 (semester course)

****No Prerequisites***

Career planning is a critical step and is essential to success in their chosen career. The goal of this course is to create a foundation for success in high school, future studies, and careers such as Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics. Students learn necessary skills such as problem solving to be successful in the field. Students will, also, explore coding as a job option by creating interactive cards, websites, and interfacing Makey Makey controllers with software programs they build.

General Electives

7561 7th Grade Journalism (year-long course)

In Journalism, students are introduced to concepts central to Media literacy. Through discussions about the First Amendment, students will evaluate the role of media in focusing attention on events and informing opinion on issues. Students will also develop their critical thinking skills by considering ethical questions based on real life examples. On the practical side, students are introduced to concepts of photography and complete hands-on assignment on the art of taking great pictures. They will learn what makes writing for the news different than other composition styles. Finally, students also contribute content to the middle school yearbook, by taking pictures, and writing captions or short features.

8th GRADE CORE COURSES

8110 8th Grade English Language Arts/Reading (year-long course)

****Blocked 2 Period Course***

In grade 8, students refine, and master previously learned reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills in reading selections and written compositions. Students continue to read a variety of texts from all genres. Students produce multi-paragraph compositions with varied sentence structure and use their knowledge of grammar and usage to improve their writing and produce error-free compositions on a quarterly basis. Students will also write and present research reports using visuals and media.

8101 8th Grade Pre-AP English Language Arts/Reading (year-long course)

This course is for students who are highly motivated and interested in a rigorous English Language Arts/Reading program.

In grade 8, the PreAP student refines, and masters previously learned knowledge and skills in increasing complex presentations, classical and contemporary reading selections, research and writing in all genres. Students identify various literary forms and use different forms of writing for specific purposes. Students learn how to edit their writing based on knowledge of grammar, usage, spelling, punctuation, and other conventions of written language. Students organize ideas in timed and untimed writing assignments. Students collaborate with other writers to compose, publish, and analyze published examples as models for writers. Significant blocks of time outside the classroom are required for reading both independent and instructional-level materials for varied purposes. The College Board's official PreAP program, SpringBoard, will be utilized. The differentiated curriculum prepares students for the PreAP program in high school.

8210 8th Grade Mathematics (year-long course)

****Blocked 2 Period Course***

Only students who were not proficient on their 7th grade STAAR test will be enrolled in grade 8 mathematics. This course will continue to extend and build upon their foundation of basic understandings of numerical representations and relationships, computations and algebraic relationships, geometry and measurement, and data analysis and personal financial literacy. The areas of emphasis are using algebraic principles to analyze proportional and non-proportional relationships, solving linear equations, functions, analyzing two and three-dimensional figures and applying Pythagorean Theorem. Students will experience opportunities to explore abstract concepts on appropriate technology. Problem-solving, communication, connections of concepts both within and outside mathematics, and informal and formal reasoning will be emphasized. This course is designed to successfully prepare students for Algebra 1 in 9th grade.

8201 Algebra 1 (for 8th graders only, year-long course)

****Blocked 2 Period Course***

This course is a block math course and serves as a foundation for all higher-level mathematics courses. It focuses on the development for functions and the understanding of functional relationships. Students will investigate algebra through problem-solving in real world situations. Students will participate in developing tables, coordinate graphing, algebraic analysis and computation using appropriate technology. High school credit will be awarded for successful completion of this course.

8251 Pre-AP Algebra 1 (for 8th graders only, year-long course)

This course is for students who are highly motivated and interested in a rigorous Mathematics program.

This course is a single period course and serves as a foundation for all higher-level mathematics courses. It focuses on the development for functions and the understanding of functional relationships. Students will investigate algebra through problem-solving in real world situations. Students will participate in developing tables, coordinate graphing, algebraic analysis and computation using appropriate technology. This course will help prepare students to take advanced mathematics courses in high school. High school credit will be awarded for successful completion of this course.

8350 8th Grade Science (year-long course)

8th grade Science is a course of study coordinating thematic instruction across the four science disciplines biology, chemistry, physics and earth/space science. The curriculum has a balance of content and activities that guides students towards the discovery of the basic principles with a focus on earth and space science and the processes involved. The curriculum includes properties of Science Safety, Atoms, and the Periodic Table, Chemical Formulas, Reactions, Force and Motion, Newton's Laws, Earth Changing Forces, Climate, Earth Cycles, The Universe, Living Systems, Student Designed Investigations. The study of science includes field and laboratory investigations using scientific methods for analyzing data to make informed decisions.

8351 8th Grade Pre-AP Science (year-long course)

This course is for students who are highly motivated and interested in a rigorous Science program.

PreAP 8th grade science encompasses the science curriculum and integrated Physics & Chemistry (IPC), which allows students to construct their own understanding through an inquiry-based approach while encouraging advanced skills, in-depth discussion, more comprehensive lab work and increased independent study. Class assignments and activities build on and expand higher level thinking skills of analysis, synthesis, evaluation, and integrate units that promote scientific connections. Students are provided opportunities for extension and application of content and processes. Special projects are assigned during the year, which require individual research on the internet or at the library. Classroom presentations are expected. This course will help prepare students to take PreAP science courses in high school.

8300 8th Grade Social Studies: United States History (year-long course)

Students will study the history of the United States from European Exploration through Civil War and Reconstruction. Students will focus on the themes of economic, social, political, and geography as applied to the events and people of this time period. Students will examine the American beliefs and principles as reflected in the U.S. Constitution and other historical documents. Reading, writing, projects, critical thinking and discussions will be utilized to analyze the events and contributions of people that shaped the foundation of our democratic society in the United States.

8301 8th Pre-AP Social Studies: United States History (year-long course)

This course is for students who are highly motivated and interested in a rigorous Social Studies program.

Students will study the history of the United States from European Exploration through Civil War and Reconstruction. Students will focus on the themes of economic, social, political, and geography as applied to the events and people of this time period. Students will examine the American beliefs and principles as reflected in the U.S. Constitution and other historical documents. Reading, writing, projects, critical thinking and discussions will be utilized to analyze the events and contributions of people that shaped the foundation of our democratic society in the United States. Students will utilize more primary and secondary sources as applied to document-based questions and assessments. Students will be required to participate in a research-based project outside of the classroom. Outside reading will be required.

8th GRADE PHYSICAL EDUCATION COURSES

8410 8th Grade Boys and Girls Physical Education (year-long course)

The Physical Education program provides each student with the opportunity to participate in a comprehensive program consisting of skill development, lead up games, team sports, and physical fitness activities. It is based on physical activities undertaken in an active, caring, supportive and nonthreatening atmosphere in which every student is challenged and successful. The students receive instruction in rules, skills, and strategies associated with the different sports as well as learning experiences involving physical conditioning activities and lifelong physical activities. The program promotes the spirit of cooperation, leadership, fair play, and friendly competition.

8400 8th Grade BOYS Athletics (year-long course)

The athletic programs are designed for those who are highly motivated to participate in team or individual UIL athletics. Participants are expected to meet all UIL regulations and must maintain academic standards while devoting a great deal of time outside of the school day towards these programs. A physical examination is required PRIOR to the start of the school year and should be on file with SMS athletic department. All participants must have a legal guardian complete the online forms through RankOne sports. Try-outs and coach approval are required to participate in each of the following sports: Football, Basketball, Track, Soccer and Tennis. Since Athletics is a year-long course, students **MUST** participate in at least **two or more sports**. They may choose one sport in the fall and one sport in the spring. Students who are competing in one sport are encouraged to join PE.

8401 8th Grade GIRLS Athletics (year-long course)

The athletic programs are designed for those who are highly motivated to participate in team or individual UIL athletics. Participants are expected to meet all UIL regulations and must maintain academic standards while devoting a great deal of time outside of the school day towards these programs. A physical examination is required PRIOR to the start of the school year and should be on file with SMS athletic department. All participants must have a legal guardian complete the online forms through RankOne sports. Try-outs and coach approval are required to participate in each of the following sports: Football, Basketball, Track, Soccer and Tennis. Since Athletics is a year-long course, students **MUST** participate in at least **two or more sports**. They may choose one sport in the fall and one sport in the spring. Students who are competing in one sport are encouraged to join PE.

8450 Dance 1 (8th graders only, year-long course)

This course goes into detail on the relationship between dance movement and emotions. This course is performance-based and students must embody discipline and self-control when learning movement. Students will learn movement for jazz, ballet, modern, contemporary, and how to make choreography and manipulate movement. There is a performance at the end of the year that require some after school hours. Upon successful completion of this course, students will earn a high school fine arts credit (one fine arts credit is required for graduation from high school).

8420 8th Grade Karate (year-long course)

****Prerequisite: 7th Grade Karate***

Karate is used to teach character-building values to students. Studies show that karate gives young people the tools and support needed to resist negative peer pressure, avoid self-destructive behaviors, and make responsible decisions. KICKSTART KIDS will improve children's lives both inside and outside of the classroom by engaging their heart, head, and hands. The goal is to positively influence the whole child for the life of the child and help create safer, healthier, and more productive communities.

8th GRADE ELECTIVE COURSES

Languages Other Than English (LOTE)

8510 Spanish 1 (8th graders only, year-long course)

***Prerequisite: Passing Introduction to Spanish (in 7th Grade)**

**This course is not recommended for students who struggled in the 7th grade Introduction to Spanish course*

Spanish 1 students will develop their basic listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing and presentation skills. Communication skills are the primary focus of this course. At the end of this course students will be able to express themselves and engage in simple conversation in Spanish within the limits of their knowledge of vocabulary and structure.

This is the same Spanish 1 course offered in high school. Successful completion of this course earns one credit toward satisfying the units of foreign language required by the state for graduation from high school. 8th grade students who received credit for Spanish 1 cannot repeat this course in high school but will instead begin in Spanish 2 their 9th grade year.

**Note: Heritage Spanish students should NOT take this course. To determine whether you are a Heritage Spanish student, review the profile below.*

8513 Spanish Heritage 1 (8th graders only, one-semester course taken in the fall)

8512 Spanish Heritage 2 (8th graders only, one-semester course taken in the spring)

Prerequisite: Must fit the Heritage Spanish profile and must be approved by a LOTE teacher

If you fit the following profile below, you are considered a Heritage Spanish student:

- *Well-versed in the language of a Spanish-speaking country*
- *Speakers of prestige variety of Spanish*
- *Access to bilingual instruction in the United States*
- *Basic academic skills in Spanish*
- *Good academic skills in English*

Students who are heritage or native speakers of Spanish may receive credit for high school Spanish 1 and 2 in one year upon successful completion of this course. The main objective of this course is to help students to continue to develop their heritage linguistic and cultural skills in order to become fully bilingual and biliterate so that they will be well-positioned to live and work in an increasingly multilingual environment in the United States. The focus of this course is on increasing students' ability to use Spanish flexibly in both formal and informal situations and on developing their literacy skills, recognizing that the needs of heritage and native speakers are different from those of non-native and non-heritage students of Spanish.

Fine Arts

8815 Art 1 (HS credit-8th graders only, year-long course)

This high school level course emphasizes drawing and painting and provides a foundation for subsequent art courses. Course work will focus on the elements of art and principles of design through a variety of media and creative problem-solving assignments. Art history and critiques are integrated in the curriculum. Students create original art in a variety of media, study art history, aesthetics, and participate in the critique process within this course. Development of a portfolio is required. One full credit (2 sequential semesters) must be earned in Art 1 for entry into a Level 2 art course in high school. Students will receive course information and a list of required supplies at the beginning of the course. Upon successful completion of this course, students will earn a high school fine arts credit (one fine arts credit is required for graduation from high school).

8803 8th Grade Choir (year-long course)

This performance-based course provides the opportunity for students to develop their vocal ability as individuals and advance their skills and knowledge of fundamental musicianship. Sight-singing techniques are emphasized as part of music language learning and used to assist in performance preparation, as well as to prepare for UIL Contest participation. A variety of choral literature will be explored in both art music and contemporary styles. This course contains extra-curricular components which require participation in after school hours and weekend activities.

8500 8th Grade Band (year-long course)

****Prerequisite: Students must audition and have been in band the previous year***

Students will be recommended by the band director for the appropriate band: Honors, Concert, or Symphonic. Students must commit to working to benefit the entire band through their efforts during class time and in extra-curricular rehearsals and performances, as planned by the director. They are expected to be physically, mentally, and musically well-disciplined and to embody the highest standards and self-control. Performances by the band will include concerts on and off campus, and subsequent competitive auditions, UIL solo ensemble, and sight-reading contests as well as other activities planned by the director.

Career & Technical Education (CTE)

8830 Investigating Careers (semester-long course)

Career development is a lifelong pursuit of answers to the questions: Who am I? Why am I here? What am I meant to do with my life? It is vital that students have a clear sense of direction for their career choice. Career planning is a critical step and is essential to success in their chosen career. The goal of this course is to create a foundation for success in high school, future studies, and careers such as Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics; Business and Industry; Public Service; Arts and Humanities; and Multidisciplinary Studies. The students research labor market information learns job-seeking skills, and create documents required for employment.

8580 8th Grade Technology Applications (semester-long course)

This course offers extended activity in word processing, databases, spreadsheets, graphic design, multimedia, telecommunications, and emerging technologies. This class is designed for students who demonstrate proficiency in word processing, databases, spreadsheets, and graphics.

8847 Investigating Careers in STEM 1 (semester-long course)

No prerequisite

Career planning is a critical step and is essential to success in their chosen career. The goal of this course is to create a foundation for success in high school, future studies, and careers such as Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics. Students learn necessary skills such as problem solving to be successful in the field. Students will, also, explore coding as a job option by creating interactive cards, websites, and interfacing Makey Makey controllers with software programs they build.

8848 Investigating Careers in STEM 2 (semester-long course)

****Prerequisite: Investigating Careers in STEM 1***

Career planning is a critical step and is essential to success in their chosen career. The goal of this course is to create a foundation for success in high school, future studies, and careers such as Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics. The students research different types of jobs available in the STEM field. Students in this course explore coding as a job option by creating video games, programming small robotics, and interfacing and writing programs for projects they build with hummingbird hardware.

8590 Principles of Business Marketing and Finance (Year- Long Course)

Students will gain knowledge and skills in economies and private enterprise systems, the impact of global business, the marketing of goods and services, advertising, and product pricing. Students analyze the sales process and financial management principles. This course allows students to reinforce, apply, and transfer academic knowledge and skills to a variety of interesting and relevant activities, problems, and settings in business, marketing, and finance. Upon successful completion of this course, students will earn a high school credit.

8586 Principles of Health Science (elective, by invitation only -8th grade only)

*****Will NOT appear in course selection, Students who attend camp will be added to the course***

This course is designed to provide an overview of the therapeutic, diagnostic, health informatics, support services, and biotechnology research and development systems of the health care industry. Upon successful completion of this course, students will earn a high school credit.

8650 Principles of Information Technology (8th grade only)

In Principles of Information Technology, students will develop computer literacy skills to adapt to emerging technologies used in the global marketplace. Students will implement personal and interpersonal skills to prepare for a rapidly evolving workplace environment. Students will enhance reading, writing, computing, communication, and reasoning skills and apply them to the information technology environment. Upon successful completion of this course, students will earn a high school credit.

General Electives

8561 8th Grade Journalism (year-long course)

In 8th grade Journalism, students study more focused content areas such as videography, graphic design, and Interview skills. Students will incorporate direct and indirect quotes and other research to write copy suited for print and broadcast. They will also use different forms of journalistic writing such as reviews, news, features, and editorials to inform or entertain. Students will also have the opportunity to either contribute content to the middle school yearbook by taking pictures and writing articles or participate in creating basic video news segments to inform the school community.

8562 8th Grade Yearbook (year-long course)

Students in the Yearbook class share the formal responsibility of producing the school's Yearbook. They take a hands-on role in everything that needs to be done to create this important record of the year's events, from graphic design and feature writing to creating ad campaigns. Yearbookers also take leadership roles and work with the Journalism students in other classes, managing story assignments, assigning event coverage, and incorporating their content into the final book. This class requires good communication skills and the ability to meet deadlines. Limited Enrollment - Current Journalism 7 Students and/or by Online Application

DISCIPLINE	GRADE 6	GRADE 7	GRADE 8	GRADE 9
Determine endorsement and pathway you will pursue in high school:				
ENGLISH/READING (required)				
MATHEMATICS (required)				
SCIENCE (required)				
SOCIAL STUDIES (required)				
PE COURSE (required)				
	Elective Options <i>The number of elective courses a student can take vary between 1-3 full year classes and are dependent upon the number of Pre-Ap courses the student chooses.</i>			
LANGUAGE OTHER THAN ENGLISH (LOTE)				
FINE ART (required in 6 th gr.) (optional in 7-8 gr.)				
ELECTIVE				