Middle School Course Catalog

2027-2028



Howard County Public School System

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Howard County
Public School System

Dear Parents/Guardians,

As part of our commitment to ensure that every student exits our school system with their dreams intact, the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) has instituted a Middle School Program of Studies designed to prepare students for success in high school, college and careers.

The middle school years are a critical time that will shape the course of your child's future as they transition from the relatively structured environment of elementary school to the more independent world of high school. Middle school is an ideal time for them to strengthen their study habits, discover new interests, and continue building a foundation for lifelong success.

The Middle School Course Catalog is intended to help you and your child learn about each course available to them. The courses are organized by subject and grade and identified by course numbers. Your child's school counselor is available to answer any questions you may have after reviewing the catalog.

Our goal is to ensure that each child is gaining the skills, knowledge and confidence to explore opportunities, challenge themselves, and ultimately graduate or earn a certificate in their quest to fulfill their dreams. Thank you for partnering with us to support and guide your child as they pursue their goals and achieve success.

Sincerely,

William J. Barnes
Superintendent of Schools

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Table of Contents

Middle School Program of Studies 1-2
Assessment Requirements. 2

General Information

Attendance 3
Homework Guidelines 3
Grading 4
Middle School Tips for Success. 4
What you Should Know About High School 4
Student Service Learning 5
Credit for High School Courses Taken in Middle School 5
Fully Online Course Enrollment Guidance - Middle School 6
Course Description Diagram 7

Course Descriptions

Career and Technical Education 8-9
English Language Arts 10-11
English Language Development (ELD) 12
Fine Arts 13-16
Art. 13
Dance 14
Music 15-16
Theatre Arts. 16
Advanced Academic Programs 17
Health Education 18
Mathematics 19-21
Physical Education 22
Reading Supports. 23
Science 24-25
Social Studies 26-27
Special Education. 28
World Languages 29-30
Other Elective Course Offerings 31

Appendix

Course Index 32
Directory of Middle Schools 33

Middle School Program of Studies

Middle School Program of Studies

The Board of Education approved a seven-period schedule across all middle schools. The Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards establish a set of shared goals and high expectations for what students should understand and be able to do in grades Pre-K–12. The goal is to ensure all students will be well prepared for success in college and the workplace.

In accordance with state requirements, each year, middle school students receive instruction in the following areas:

- English Language Arts
- Fine Arts (band, chorus, dance, general music, orchestra, theater arts, or visual arts)
- Health
- Mathematics
- Physical Education
- Science
- Social Studies

English Language Arts, Social Studies, Science, and Mathematics offer an Advanced Academic Programs option for instruction. Mathematics also offers an above-grade level course.

Students are also required to receive Career and Technical Education, (CTE) instruction in the following areas of study during their middle school experience:

- Technology - Computational Thinking
- Financial Literacy
- Careers

Students may also take:

- Foundations of Technology
- Exploring Computer Science
- Advanced Research or Seminars/Interventions in reading and/or mathematics
- Reader's and Writer's Workshop
- Additional Fine Arts classes (band, chorus, dance, general music, orchestra, theater arts, or visual arts)
- World Language
- Other Elective Course Offerings



Middle School Program of Studies

Middle School Course Offerings

Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
English Language Arts 6 English Language Arts 6 ADV	English Language Arts 7 English Language Arts 7 ADV	English Language Arts 8 English Language Arts 8 ADV
Mathematics 6 Mathematics 7 Pre-Algebra ADV	Mathematics 7 Mathematics 8 Algebra I ADV	Mathematics 8 Algebra I Geometry ADV
Science I Science I ADV	Science II Science II ADV	Science III Science III ADV
Geography and World Cultures 6 Geography and World Cultures 6 ADV	Geography and World Cultures 7 Geography and World Cultures 7 ADV	United States History 8 United States History 8 ADV
Health 6	Health 7	Health 8
Physical Education 6	Physical Education 7	Physical Education 8
Fine Arts[1]: • Band • Chorus • General Music • Orchestra • Theatre Arts • Visual Arts	Fine Arts[1]: • Band • Chorus • Dance • General Music • Orchestra • Theatre Arts • Visual Arts	Fine Arts[1]: • Band • Chorus • Dance • General Music • Orchestra • Theatre Arts • Visual Arts
Career and Technical Education: • Family and Consumer Science • CTE Life and Career Skills • Technology Education [4]	Career and Technical Education: • Financial and Career Foundations I[5] • Exploring Computer Science [6] • Foundations of Technology [6]	Career and Technical Education: • Financial and Career Foundations II[5] • Exploring Computer Science [6] • Foundations of Technology [6]
Other Course Offerings: • MS ADV Research[3] • Reader's and Writer's Workshop • Digital Citizenship • 21st Century Learning • Boost Your Brain • Interventions • English Language Development	Other Course Offerings: • Reader's and Writer's Workshop • World Languages[2] • Additional Fine Arts • Interventions • English Language Development	Other Course Offerings: • Reader's and Writer's Workshop • World Languages[2] • Additional Fine Arts • Interventions • English Language Development

[1] All students must take at least one of these courses each year to fulfill the COMAR fine arts requirement.

[2] All middle schools offer French, Spanish, and Chinese in grades 7-8.

[3] Students must be in English Language Arts 6 ADV and Math 7 or Pre-Algebra ADV, based upon the recommendation of the Placement Committee, to enroll in this course.

[4] This course fulfills the ESSA computational thinking requirement.

[5] both of these courses must be taken to fulfill the COMAR requirements for financial literacy and career awareness, exploration, and preparation.

[6] This course fulfills the Computer Science, Engineering, or Technology Education graduation requirement. See more details on page 5.

Assessment Requirements

The federal and state accountability system requires all students in grades 3-8 to participate in an assessment for English language arts and mathematics. In addition, students also take science and social studies assessments during their eighth grade year.

General Information

Information in this section summarizes HCPSS policies. Although deemed accurate, this information does NOT supersede policy. See the Board of Education (BOE) section of the HCPSS website (www.hcpss.org) for access to full copies of Board of Education policies.

Attendance

The Maryland State Department of Education defines full-day and half-day absences using the following thresholds:

- A student is "present" or "attending" for a partial day of attendance if the student is attending an instructional program approved by the state, local school system, and/or school for 10% to 50% of the school day.

Middle and high schools will use these definitions to determine present or full-day/half-day Absences:

- The student is full-day absent if the student is present for less than 40 minutes
- The student is half-day absent if the student is present at least 40 minutes but less than 3 hours, 25 minutes
- The student is present for the day if the student is present for more than 3 hours, 25 minutes

The schools will use the time the students arrive late or leave early to determine the All Day Code and Absence Amount.

A note from the parent/guardian must be submitted to the school within five school days of the student's return, indicating the date and reason for tardiness or absence from a regular school session. A doctor's note is required in cases of long-term absence due to illness. A note should also be submitted to request early dismissal or exclusion from activities (e.g., physical education). Regular daily attendance is vital to the continuity of classroom instruction and participation in school activities. Therefore, students are required to be in school or to be attending a school activity each day school is in session. In recognition that situations do arise that necessitate absence from school, the Board of Education allows students to be lawfully absent for a death in the family, illness, a court summons, hazardous weather as determined by the superintendent, work release, religious obligation, declared state emergencies, suspension, or for other emergencies or sets of circumstances, which in the judgment of the superintendent or designee, constitute a good and sufficient cause for absence. Review Policy 9010: Attendance for additional information (https://policy.hcpss.org/9000/9010/).

Homework Guidelines

If assigned, homework will be purposeful, appropriate, informational, and flexible. Homework is intended to extend learning and provide an opportunity for practice. Some courses or instructors may choose to not assign homework. Review Policy 8020: Grading and Reporting: Middle and High School (https://policy.hcpss.org/8000/8020/) for additional information.

Homework guidelines will be established using the following criteria:

- Each school year, the school will communicate the school's homework procedures with all stakeholders.
- Teachers are required to ensure students' Individualized Education Program (IEP) and Section 504 Plans are implemented.
- Teachers will provide feedback on homework assignments.
- Homework assignments may not be assigned or due on a day schools are closed due to inclement weather or unplanned closures.
- Homework may not be assigned over the summer for any courses, nor winter or spring breaks or closures.
- A student may make up and receive a recorded grade for homework not completed due to the observance of a religious holiday. Students returning from a religious holiday observance will have an equal number of school days to complete make-up work.
- Homework may be graded in grades 6-12 but cannot exceed 10% of the total grade.

Amount and Purpose of Homework:

- Teachers should determine the number of hours of homework assigned per week by including reading of course material, studying of course material, and practicing skills taught in the course (e.g., rehearsing a musical instrument). Time spent on long-term projects should also be considered when assigning homework.
  - For middle school courses: Each teacher may assign an average of, at most, one hour of homework per week. Not all classes will require homework. Some classes might require students to spend more or less time on homework than is typical.
  - For high school courses taken in middle school, some courses may require students to spend more time on homework than is typical.
- Homework reflects daily instruction, reinforces previously taught skills, prepares students for future lessons, and/or promotes creativity.
- Teaching staff will be provided with opportunities to meet as teams to schedule assignments so that students do not regularly have more than one hour of homework each week per instructor. It is recommended that the school principal or designee work with teaching staff to facilitate this collaboration.

General Information

Grading

Final middle school grades will be determined by translating the letter grade for each marking period using the following quality points scale:

A = 4 B = 3 C = 2 D = 1 E = 0

Full Year Courses

After using the conversion above, compute the sum of all marking periods and divide by four. Next, convert that number to a letter grade using the following scale:

A = 3.50-4.00 B = 2.50-3.49 C = 1.50-2.49 D = 0.75-1.49 E = Below 0.75 (no credit)

Percent scores are rounded to the nearest whole number.

Note: The average for a D must be at least 0.75 in order for credit to be awarded. Example: Student earns an A in quarter 1, a B in quarter 2, a B in quarter 3, and an A in quarter 4: Student's grade would be 4(A), 3(B), 3(B), 4(A). 4+3+3+4 =14. 14 divided by 4 = 3.5. Final Grade A. For high school courses taught in middle school, the final assessment will be included in the fourth quarter grade. To earn credit, a student must earn at least a 0.75 year-end average and either (a) pass one marking period each semester or (b) pass both marking periods in the second semester.

Semester Courses

Compute the sum of the marking period grades using the conversion above. Divide by two. Convert back to a letter using the chart above.

Example: Student earns a C in quarter 1 and a B in quarter 2: Student's grade would be 2(C), 3(B). 2+3=5. 5 divided by 2 = 2.5. Final Grade B.

Quarter Courses

For quarter-credit courses, the quarter grade will be the final grade.

For additional information, review Policy 8020: Grading and Reporting: Middle and High School (https://policy.hcpss.org/8000/8020/)

Middle School Tips for Success

- Encourage your child to challenge themselves by working up to their ability in appropriate classes.
- Recognize that study habits are an important part of academic achievement. Your child will need to learn to organize their materials, write down homework assignments, and complete homework assignments independently.
- Encourage your child to take advantage of opportunities to explore their interests. Well-rounded students are the happiest students.
- Attend parent conferences and stay involved in your child's academic success. Contact your child's teachers or school counselor if you have questions or concerns.
- Help your child set short- and long-term goals. Praise your child for successes and provide support when needed.
- Be patient. Adolescence is a time of great growth and change.

What You Should Know About High School

- While sixth graders are not expected to know what courses they want to take in high school, it is important for students and parents/guardians to have a general understanding of the course offerings.
- Students enrolled in Algebra I, English 10, Biology, and American Government are required to participate in the corresponding Maryland state assessment for each course to fulfill the Maryland High School Diploma testing requirements.
- Finding the right balance between course rigor and grades is important.
- Students must complete 75 hours of service learning. Most HCPSS students complete this requirement in middle school through a curricular project completed during each of the three years.
- For more information about high school courses and graduation requirements, please see the Catalog of Approved High School Courses.

General Information

Student Service Learning

Student Service Requirements

To graduate from high school in Maryland, all students will complete 75 hours of student service learning (SSL). Since the accumulation of SSL hours may begin in middle school, most students in Howard County will complete the requirement by the end of grade 8.

Howard County middle schools infuse a minimum of 25 hours of SSL within curriculum experiences in grades 6, 7, and 8. This model ensures Howard County students have equitable access to meet the SSL graduation requirement before they enter high school. In this model, schools select and facilitate SSL experiences from a variety of centrally-approved projects, and students will have experiences in the planning, preparation, action, and reflection phases of service as a part of curriculum.

Students enrolled in HCPSS middle schools will earn credit as follows:

Grade	Hours earned
6	25
7	25
8	25

Students who do not attend middle school in HCPSS for each of grades 6, 7, and 8 may not have earned the full 75 hours of SSL upon entering high school. In these cases, students may fulfill the SSL graduation requirement through successful completion of courses designated with the SSL distinction and listed in the Catalog of Approved High School Courses. These courses are designed to give students practical opportunities to demonstrate leadership skills and to meet the service requirement in various settings.

Credit for High School Courses Taken in Middle School

Any high school course listed in the Middle School Course Catalog, which is offered at the middle school level (including the summer after 8th grade), is eligible for high school credit and will be treated as an equivalent, including final assessments. For high school courses taught in middle school, the final assessment will be included in the fourth quarter grades.

The student's course grade will be recorded on the high school transcript. The student's grade will not be calculated into the high school grade point average (GPA).

If a student re-takes one of the high-school courses taken in middle school for which credit was earned:

- The high school grade(s) will be calculated into the GPA, and
- Only the first credit will be awarded.

High school credit courses offered in middle school include:

- ELD - English Language Development 1, 2, and 3
- Mathematics - Algebra I, Algebra I ADV, Geometry ADV
- Technology Education - Exploring Computer Science and Foundations of Technology
- World Language - Spanish I and II, French I and II, and Chinese I and II

For additional information, review Policy 8020: (https://policy.hcpss.org/8000/8020/)

General Information

Fully Online Course Enrollment Guidance - Middle School

Fully Online Courses

Students who meet the Policy 8200: Digital Education (https://policy.hcpss.org/8000/8200/) eligibility criteria for high school level fully online courses may enroll in HCPSS digital education if they meet the prerequisite requirements.

Any high school course listed in the Middle School Course Catalog which is offered at the middle school is eligible for high school credit and will be treated as an equivalent.

- The student's course grade will be recorded on the high school transcript.
- The student's grade will not be calculated into the high school grade point average.
- If a student re-takes one of the high school courses that was taken in middle school for which credit was earned:
    - The high school grade(s) will be calculated into the GPA, and
    - Only the first credit will be awarded.

***NOTE**:* It is recommended that middle school students do not accelerate mathematics by enrolling in fully online course instruction.

Students who are transferring into HCPSS and were enrolled in a course that is not listed in the Middle School Course Catalog, may not take a fully online course to earn credit for that course.

Innovative Pathways High School Summer Program

The summer program is an extension of the current school year. Course availability is based on the student's grade level preceding the summer program and the degree to which they have met prerequisite requirements.

Available courses for entering ninth grade students is limited. Please review the Innovative Pathways High School Course List prior to submitting an enrollment request.

For entering ninth grade students enrolled in a summer course, the student's course grade will be recorded on the high school transcript. The student's grade will not be calculated into the high school grade point average.

For more information, please visit the Innovative Pathways High School Summer Program section on the HCPSS Summer Programs web page (https://www.hcpss.org/summer-programs/) or email: IPSummer@hcpss.org.

General Information

Course Description Diagram

Course Number - LA-101-1

Course Title - English Language Arts 6

LA-101-1
English Language Arts 6
Grade 6

Grade Eligible for Course - 6

English 6 students learn how to make purposeful and deliberate choices when responding to diverse media and formats. Students read grade-appropriate, complex literary and informational texts while further developing the ability to cite textual evidence to support analyses when responding to text in written and spoken modes. Students analyze both the structure and content of complex, thematic-based texts.

Course Description - Describes the content of a class.



Career and Technical Education

In middle school, Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses provide opportunities for exploration and skill development. Students can use introductory courses to explore a variety of careers and skills related to a specific pathway or across multiple pathways, helping them identify a career or field that interests them. Students can earn high school credit to satisfy the Computer Science, Engineering, or Technology Education (CSET) graduation requirement with Foundations of Technology or Exploring Computer Science.

CT-100-9 Grade 6 (Required)
Technology Education

In this quarter-long course, students use computational thinking as well as the engineering design process to solve complex, open-ended problems. This course includes fundamental computer science concepts which support computational thinking. Computational thinking allows students to develop the ability to logically order and analyze data and to create solutions using an algorithmic approach (ordered steps). Students will focus on applying the engineering design process and participate in design activities to understand how criteria, constraints, and processes affect designs. Brainstorming, visualizing, modeling, constructing, testing, and refining designs provide firsthand opportunities for students to understand the uses and impacts of innovations. This is a required quarter long course for all sixth grade students.

CT-212-9 Grade 7
CTE Financial & Careers Foundations I

This quarter-long financial literacy and career preparation course will focus students on building a foundation for making intelligent financial decisions that last a lifetime, including decisions related to income, expenses, savings, and credit. Students will apply financial management principles in learning about spending decisions and the impact on career choices such as saving for college and getting a job. Students will identify the components of a budget and create a successful budget using hypothetical life situations.

In addition to building a foundation of financial literacy skills, students will prepare for careers by exploring a variety of interests and talents, developing an understanding of current and emerging career possibilities, while learning and applying career readiness skills. Students will connect their own career aspirations and connect classroom learning to real-world roles and opportunities. This career exploration unit is designed to support the Maryland Career Development Framework standards and indicators while also providing opportunities for students to think critically.

CT-110-9 Grade 6 (Elective)
Family and Consumer Science (FACS)

In this quarter-long course, students develop critical thinking, problem solving, and decision making skills through projects and activities needed to be contributing members of their families and communities through food labs, students will learn food and kitchen safety and use of basic, healthy ingredients to plan and prepare tasty and nutritious meals and snacks.

CT-111-9 Grade 6 (Elective)
CTE Life and Career Skills

This quarter-long course equips students with essential skills for independence and life management, including food preparation and kitchen safety, soft skill development, transferable work habits, leadership development and employability skills for diverse career fields. Through hands-on activities, projects, interactive lessons, and real-world applications, students will gain practical knowledge that applies career and technical knowledge to everyday living.

CT-321-9 Grade 8 (Required)
CTE Financial & Careers Foundations II

In this quarter-long course, students will prepare for careers through exploring a variety of interests and talents, developing an understanding of current and emerging career possibilities, while learning and applying career readiness skills. This career exploration unit is designed to support the Maryland Career Development Framework standards and indicators while also providing opportunities for students to think critically.

In addition to developing career readiness, students will build a foundation for making intelligent financial decisions that last a lifetime, including decisions related to income, expenses, savings, and credit. Students will apply financial management principles in learning about spending decisions and the impact on career choices such as saving for college and getting a job.

Career and Technical Education (CTE)

The following CTE High School Computer Science, Engineering, or Technology (CSET) courses fulfill the high school graduation requirement. See Credit for High School Courses Taken in Middle School on page 5. Each of these elective courses below are available to all students in grades 7 and 8.

CT-800-1 Grades 7, 8

Foundations of Technology

This full-year course prepares students to understand and apply technological concepts and processes that are the cornerstone of the high school technology education program. Students study the nature and technological issues of the designed world. Group and individual activities engage students in creating ideas, developing innovations, design, fabricating, and engineering solutions. *One high school CSET credit will be awarded upon successful completion of this course. See Credit for High School Courses Taken in Middle School, page 5 for more information.*

CT-402-1 Grades 7, 8

Exploring Computer Science

This full-year course will give students the opportunity to delve into real-world, relevant computing problems while gaining high school level foundational computer science knowledge. Students will engage in several in-depth projects to demonstrate the real-world applications of computing. Units include human computer iteration, web design, programming, computing and data analysis, and robotics. *One high school CSET credit will be awarded upon successful completion of this course. See Credit for High School Courses Taken in Middle School, page 5 for more information.*

English

All middle school students take English in grades 6-8. Students in grades 6, 7, and 8 learn how to make purposeful and deliberate choices when responding to diverse media and formats. Students read grade-appropriate, complex literary and informational texts while further developing the ability to cite textual evidence to support analyses when responding to text in written and spoken modes. Students analyze both the structure and content of complex, grade-appropriate text. English instruction is an integral part of the implementation of the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards and teaches the foundational literacy skills that are applied in all content areas.

LA-101-1 Grade 6

English Language Arts 6

In this course, students build essential skills in reading, writing, speaking, and listening through engaging, grade-level content. Students explore a wide range of texts including short stories, articles, novels, and multimedia. Each unit is centered around essential questions and builds toward a culminating task that challenges students to think critically and communicate effectively. Students will have opportunities for discussion, vocabulary development, grammar practice, and both formal and informal writing. Throughout the year, students strengthen their ability to think critically, express themselves clearly, and make connections between texts and the world around them.

LA-102-1 Grade 6

English Language Arts 6 ADV

This course requires students to address the expectations of the grade 6 English Language Arts Curriculum, as well as more advanced critical reading, writing, and thinking demands. This course requires students to demonstrate self-motivation and independence when addressing the demands of this accelerated course. Students build essential skills in reading, writing, speaking, and listening through engaging, grade-level content. Students explore a wide range of texts including short stories, articles, novels, and multimedia. Each unit is centered around essential questions and builds toward a culminating task that challenges students to think critically and communicate effectively. Students will have opportunities for discussion, vocabulary development, grammar practice, and both formal and informal writing. Throughout the year, students strengthen their ability to think critically, express themselves clearly, and make connections between texts and the world around them.

LA-163-9 Grade 6

Introduction to Reader's and Writer's Workshop

This quarter-long course is designed as an introduction for students to foster a critical eye of their writing and engage in thoughtful discourse about texts. Students will then create their own responses that mirror the mentor text and demonstrate mastery of the writing skills that were analyzed. Students will be introduced to the workshop approach, where they will be reading and writing daily so that final products can be constructed and polished throughout the course.

LA-201-1 Grade 7

English Language Arts 7

In this course, students continue to develop their reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills through a variety of engaging and thought-provoking texts of diverse genres and perspectives. Each unit is centered around an essential question and builds toward a culminating task that challenges students to think critically and communicate effectively. Through structured discussions, vocabulary and grammar practice, and frequent writing opportunities, students learn to analyze complex texts, support their ideas with evidence, and express themselves with clarity and confidence

LA-202-1 Grade 7

English Language Arts 7 ADV

This course requires students to address the expectations of the grade 7 English Language Arts Curriculum, as well as more advanced critical reading, writing, and thinking demands. This course requires students to demonstrate self-motivation and independence when addressing the demands of this accelerated course. Students build essential skills in reading, writing, speaking, and listening through engaging, grade-level content. Students continue to develop their reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills through a variety of engaging and thought-provoking texts of diverse genres and perspectives. Each unit is centered around an essential question and builds toward a culminating task that challenges students to think critically and communicate effectively. Through structured discussions, vocabulary and grammar practice, and frequent writing opportunities, students learn to analyze complex texts, support their ideas with evidence, and express themselves with clarity and confidence.

LA-263-1 Grades 7, 8

Reader's and Writer's Workshop

This full-year course is designed for students to foster a critical eye of their writing and engage in thoughtful discourse about texts. Students will then create their own responses that mirror the mentor text and demonstrate mastery of the writing skills that were analyzed. Using a workshop approach, students will be reading and writing daily so that final products can be constructed and polished throughout the course.

English

LA-301-1 Grade 8

English Language Arts 8

This course requires students to learn how to make purposeful and deliberate choices when responding to diverse media and formats. Students proficiently read grade-appropriate complex literary and informational texts while further developing the ability to cite textual evidence to support analyses when responding to text in written and spoken modes. Students analyze both the structure and content of complex, theme-based texts.

LA-302-1 Grade 8

English Language Arts 8 ADV

This course requires students to address the expectations of the grade 8 English Language Arts Curriculum, as well as more advanced critical reading, writing, and thinking demands. The compacted curriculum collapses previously mastered grade-level skills in order for students to engage with more advanced text analysis and student-directed inquiry.

English Language Development (ELD)

Multilingual learners who qualify for English Language Development (ELD) services in middle school receive direct instruction from an ELD teacher. ELD teachers in middle school deliver language instruction by co-teaching during content classes and/or through an English Language Development (ELD) class.

EL-100-1 Grade 6
EL-200-1 Grade 7
EL-300-1 Grade 8

English Language Development 6-8

This course offering is designed for multilingual learners who are at the entering level of English proficiency (ELP 1) and have experienced an interruption in their educational experience. This course provides targeted English language instruction to accelerate both literacy and language skills. Students should meet all of the following requirements:

- Newly enrolled in a U.S. school or rising sixth grader who first enrolled in second semester of fifth grade
- Entering level scores on screening assessment
- Documentation of interrupted education

Please contact the ELD office to discuss specific case-by-case recommendations.

EL-410-1 English Language Development 1 (1 World Language credit)
EL-410-8 English Language Development 1A (1/2 World Language credit)
EL-411-8 English Language Development 1B (1/2 World Language credit)

Grades 6, 7, 8

This course is designed for multilingual learners with entering and emerging English proficiency levels (ELP 1- ELP 2). Students develop academic language in all modes of communication including listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Instruction focuses on word/phrase, sentence, and discourse dimensions of language used to access the concepts and objectives of secondary content courses. The course is provided as full or half credit options to accommodate students who enroll in HCPSS during the first or second semesters. *One high school world language credit will be awarded upon successful completion of this course. See Credit for High School Courses Taken in Middle School, page 5 for more information.*

EL-510-1 English Language Development 2 (1 World Language credit)
EL-510-8 English Language Development 2A (1/2 World Language credit)
EL-511-8 English Language Development 2B (1/2 World Language credit)

Grades 6, 7, 8

Prerequisite: English Language Development 1

This course is designed for multilingual learners with emerging and developing English proficiency levels (ELP 2- ELP 3). Students develop academic language in all modes of communication including listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Instruction focuses on word/phrase, sentence, and discourse dimensions of language used to access the concepts and objectives of secondary content courses. The course is provided as full or half credit options to accommodate students who enroll in HCPSS during the first or second semesters. *One high school world language credit will be awarded upon successful completion of this course. See Credit for High School Courses Taken in Middle School, page 5 for more information.*

EL-611-1 English Language Development 3 (1 World Language credit)
EL-611-8 English Language Development 3A (1/2 World Language credit)
EL-612-8 English Language Development 3B (1/2 World Language credit)

Grades 6, 7, 8

This course is designed for multilingual learners with developing and expanding English language proficiency levels (ELP3 - ELP4). In this course, students develop academic language in all modes of communication including listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Instruction focuses on more complex word/phrase, sentence, and discourse dimensions of language used to access the concepts and objectives of secondary content courses. *One high school world language credit will be awarded upon successful completion of this course. See Credit for High School Courses Taken in Middle School, page 5 for more information.*

Fine Arts

Art

The visual arts program is designed to foster inquiry and innovation, creative problem solving, and communication, as well as to develop studio skills in the visual arts at the highest possible level. Objectives relating to idea generation, design and manipulation of two- and three-dimensional space, the exploration of personal meaning, attention to quality, studio behaviors, and the analysis of art, empower students to make sense of an increasingly visual world both through making their own art and responding to the work of others.

VA-100-9
Art Grade 6

In this quarter-long course, students continue to develop their observational skills in order to inform their imagination and memory with a goal toward refining personal solutions to given visual arts problems. The problems presented are challenging and engaging open-ended tasks that include a variety of studio practices and media. Through the critical analysis and making of visual images, students will make personal discoveries, which reflect their own experiences and ideas, their relation to their peers and family, and their place in the world.

VA-210-1
Visual Arts Studio A
Grades 7, 8

This full-year course is designed to develop visual arts skills, knowledge, and understanding of the historical and contemporary visual arts world. Through the production and in-depth analysis of artwork, students make personal discoveries that inform and guide their practice, strengthen visual memory, and encourage experimentation, imagination, perseverance, and risk taking. By developing personal solutions to art challenges, students gain experience in a variety of media, and strengthen their understanding of the language and formal qualities of art. Experiences will include developing and strengthening observational drawing skills, using color and value to create the illusion of form, relief printmaking, using additive and subtractive techniques to construct sculpture or craft forms, and exploring alternative and media arts. Students will understand the importance of self-reflection to ensure personal growth by using established criteria to guide and inform their behavior and process.

VA-310-1
Visual Arts Studio B
Grade 8

Prerequisite: Visual Arts Studio I

This full-year course is designed to expand upon and strengthen skills developed in MS Art I. Art challenges will address a variety of studio practices, techniques, and behaviors that continue to foster a variety of art-making and creative problem solving skills. Experiences include representing observed proportions, creating the illusion form, mixing observed color, translating ideas from 2-D to 3-D, combining text and images, and refining compositional strategies and the use of alternative and media arts to communicate ideas. Through the making and close reading of art work and in-depth analysis of the visual world, students will construct informed aesthetic judgments and make personal discoveries that inform and guide their artwork, imagination, visual memory, and encourage experimentation, perseverance, and risk taking.

Fine Arts

Dance

The HCPSS middle school dance program is designed to introduce students to choreography, dance techniques, history, and vocabulary through creating, performing, and responding experiences. Courses are designed to provide students with collaborative opportunities to explore dance concepts/genres, critical thinking skills, and foster an understanding that dance promotes positive interactions, an appreciation for diverse points of view, and strong human connections. The HCPSS middle school dance curriculum is directly aligned and articulated with the HCPSS high school dance program.

DT-220-1

MS Dance A

Grades 7, 8

This full-year course introduces students to a basic working knowledge of performance concepts that can be applied to all dance forms. Students will create, perform, and respond to dance through creative movement, social/cultural dance, ballet, modern jazz, choreography, and composition. Students will learn and apply dance concepts and vocabulary through class discussion, performance, demonstration, and self-reflection.

DT-320-1

MS Dance B

Grade 8

In this full-year course, students will expand their knowledge of performance concepts that can be applied to all dance forms. Students will continue to create, perform, and respond to dance through more complex creative movement, social/cultural dance, ballet, modern jazz, choreography, and composition experiences. Students will refine and apply dance concepts and vocabulary through class discussions, performances, demonstrations, and evaluations of themselves and others.

Fine Arts

Music

Each course in the music program is designed to develop skills, understanding, and musicality at the highest possible level. Inherent in the musical experience is a simultaneous combination of visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learning, as well as the emotional connection to the art form. Additionally, the process of musical study enhances the development of creative and critical thinking skills, affords opportunity to build individual and group discipline, and increases achievement through both individual and collective effort.

Students enrolling in the performance-based courses, such as those in band, chorus, and orchestra, should be aware that attendance at rehearsals, sectional practices, and performances is an integral part of the course. Every effort is made by directors to arrange sectional and pre-concert rehearsals and to schedule concerts within the context of the school's master schedule.

All skills developed in the ensemble classes are demonstrated and assessed at culminating performances throughout the school year including, but not limited to, school concerts, community performances, and the county-wide adjudications and assessments.

Ability-based Performing Arts Ensembles

Band	Chorus	Orchestra
Concert Band	Chorus	String Ensemble
Symphonic Band	Concert Chorus	String Orchestra
Wind Ensemble	Chamber Chorus	Chamber Orchestra

MU-100-1 Concert Band
MU-200-1 Symphonic Band
MU-300-1 Wind Ensemble
Grades 6, 7, 8

Prerequisites: Audition and director approval

Students perform music representing various styles and genres with an emphasis on developing ensemble skills. Additionally, students meet in small groups to receive instruction to improve their individual skills. After school and evening rehearsals and activities, such as concerts and countywide adjudications, are integral to the course and may not exceed 20 per school year. Grades may reflect such participation.

MU-110-1 Chorus
MU-210-1 Concert Chorus
MU-310-1 Chamber Chorus
Grades 6, 7, 8

Prerequisites: Audition and director approval

Students perform music representing various styles and genres with an emphasis on developing ensemble skills. Additionally, students may receive small group instruction to improve their individual skills. After school and evening rehearsals and activities, such as concerts and countywide adjudications, are integral to the course and may not exceed 20 per school year. Grades may reflect such participation.

MU-120-1 String Ensemble
MU-220-1 String Orchestra
MU-320-1 Chamber Orchestra
Grades 6, 7, 8

Prerequisites: Audition and director approval

Students perform music representing various styles and genres with an emphasis on developing ensemble skills. Additionally, students will meet in small groups to receive instruction to improve their individual skills. After school and evening rehearsals and activities, such as concerts and countywide adjudications, are integral to the course and may not exceed 20 per school year. Grades may reflect such participation.

MU-130-9
General Music
Grade 6

This quarter-long course is divided into four performance strands: guitar, piano, world music drumming, and music technology. These disciplines are used to foster music literacy skills, develop critical and creative thinking skills, and strengthen communication and collaboration between students. Students are able to appreciate cultural differences through active involvement with diverse styles and genres of music.

Fine Arts

MU-240-1

General Music I

Grades 7, 8

This full-year course is designed to expose students to the basics of playing music on various instruments, including guitar, keyboard, drums, and through music technology. Students learn how to read and write music using traditional notation, and begin to expand their knowledge of various music genres. Experiences include performances on all classroom instruments, as well as simple composition and improvisation.

MU-340-1

General Music II

Grade 8

Prerequisite: General Music I

This full-year course provides students with an opportunity to further hone their skills on keyboard, guitar, drumming, and with music technology. Students deepen their knowledge of genres introduced in General Music I, as well as explore contemporary genres of music. Experiences include the performance of more advanced repertoire, intermediate-level composition with melodies and accompaniment, improvisation based on chord progressions, and simple arrangement.

Theatre

The HCPSS middle school theatre arts program is designed to introduce and develop performance and production skills, creative collaboration, and aesthetic appreciation of classical and contemporary theatre. The process of theatre arts study enhances the development of creative and critical thinking skills, affords opportunities to build individual and group work ethics, and increases student communication skills through theatre activities, which scaffold and support student growth and achievement through both individual and collective efforts.

DT-100-9

Theatre Arts

Grade 6

In this quarter-long course, students begin to develop an understanding of acting techniques and technical skills. Students will be presented with challenging and engaging open ended tasks, designed to instill confidence and promote communication and collaboration with peers. Through the study of performance and design, students will make personal discoveries, which reflect their own experiences and ideas, their relation to their peers and family, and their place in the world.

DT-210-1

Theatre Arts A

Grades 7, 8

This full-year course is designed to introduce students to theatrical performance and the process of production. Through collaborative experiences and the study of acting techniques, students build confidence, stimulate imagination, and role-play with an emphasis on believability and sensory awareness. Students will learn and apply theatre concepts and vocabulary in class discussions, performances, journal writing, and self-reflections.

DT-310-1

Theatre Arts B

Grade 8

Prerequisite: Theatre Arts A

This full-year course is designed to expand student knowledge of performance and production concepts that can be applied to various theatre forms and genres. Students will actively engage in collaborative experiences and the study of acting techniques building confidence, stimulating imagination, and role-play to refine believability and sensory awareness. Students will refine and apply theatre concepts and vocabulary in class discussions, performances, journal writing, and evaluations of themselves and others.

Advanced Academic Programs

The Advanced Academic Programs support comprehensive programming in grades PreK–12 with a focus on talent development, enabling students to launch their own talent trajectories as they discover and build upon their individual strengths and interests. The middle school Advanced Academic Programs promote student engagement through enrichment, rigorous coursework, and opportunities to solve real-world problems, and to conduct original research.

Advanced (ADV) Content Classes

An accelerated and enriched program is provided for students who participate in one or more Advanced Academic Programs class. These classes replace the general education classes in each subject area and are taught on a daily basis by designated content area teachers. All Howard County public middle schools offer ADV classes in the following academic areas: English, mathematics, science, and social studies. The Advanced Academic Programs resource teacher works collaboratively with the content area teachers to support the implementation of a differentiated curriculum for advanced-level learners.

The Writers Guild ADV is an extension of the seventh-grade writing program for selected students who participate in English ADV. This extension unit, taught by the Advanced Academic Programs resource teacher in a writers' workshop format, provides talented creative writers with the opportunity to produce authentic writing based on their individual interests and to have a clear understanding of the elements that constitute compelling writing. Participating students meet at least twice monthly and are expected to submit their writing for publication consideration.

Recommendation Process for ADV Content Classes

Students are recommended for ADV content area classes based upon multiple criteria, including the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT), Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), and Maryland State Department of Education mathematics and English Language Arts assessments, as well as class performance. Recommendations may take place at the end of elementary school or in subsequent middle school years. Students who wish to enroll in a course that differs from the one recommended may enter their course request through HCPSS Connect.

Instructional Seminars

Advanced Academic Programs Instructional Seminars focus on talent development by instructing students in a broad range of advanced-level skills in an area of interest as they engage in inquiry or creative production. Skill development might include written, oral, and visual communication skills; critical and creative thinking skills; research skills; technology skills; and skills in visual and performing arts.

Television Production and the Debate seminar are offered in each of the school system's middle schools. Additional seminars are offered, such as journalism, environmental studies, robotics, creative problem solving, film production, and leadership, based upon the interests of the students at the school. Instructional Seminars are open to all interested students.

AAP-100-8

MS Advanced Research

Grade 6

Advanced Research is designed for sixth-grade students enrolled in English Language Arts 6 ADV, along with Math 7, Pre-algebra **ADV**, or Algebra I **ADV**, based upon the recommendation of the **Advanced Academic Programs** Placement Committee.

Taught by the **Advanced Academic Programs** Resource Teacher, this class provides a curricular framework for students to become producers of new knowledge as they apply the research skills modeled in the curriculum to an original investigation in a self-selected area of study. Participating students are expected to culminate their research investigation by creating an original product to be shared with an authentic audience.

Health Education

Health education helps students develop the knowledge, attitudes, and skills they need to avoid risky behavior and maintain and improve their health. Health instruction gives students opportunities to practice skills that result in health-promoting behaviors. The standards for health education are designed to help students become health literate; obtain, interpret, and understand basic health information and services; and use such information and services in ways that enhance health.

HE-100-8
HE-100-9
Health

Grade 6

The goal of health education is to develop health literate individuals who have the knowledge and skills to avoid risky behaviors as well as maintain and improve their wellness. The health education curriculum is based on the National Health Education Standards and the Maryland State curriculum. Students develop and utilize health skills including analyzing influences, accessing information, interpersonal communication, decision making, goal setting, and advocacy within each content unit. In accordance with Maryland's education regulations, parents/guardians have the option of having their children excused from instruction in sexual health. Excused students will complete a health education enrichment project.

HE-200-8
HE-200-9
Health

Grade 7

Students will develop an understanding of health concepts, behaviors, and skills that reduce health risks and enhance the health and well-being of self and others. Specific topics will include social and emotional health, communicable disease, alcohol use prevention, nutrition, and sexual health. Students will engage with this content in the context of the National Health Education Standards health skills: analyzing influences, accessing health information, interpersonal communication, decision-making, goal-setting, self-management, and advocacy.

HE-300-8
HE-300-9
Health

Grade 8

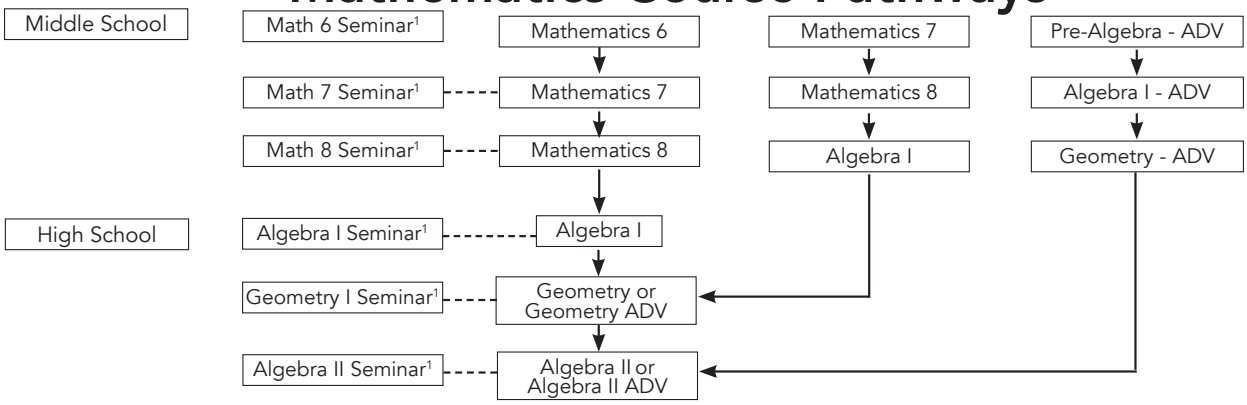
Students will develop an understanding of health concepts, behaviors, and skills that reduce health risks and enhance the health and well-being of self and others. Specific topics will include safety and first aid, social and emotional health, drug prevention, and sexual health. Students will engage with this content in the context of the National Health Education Standards health skills: analyzing influences, accessing health information, interpersonal communication, decision-making, goal-setting, self-management, and advocacy.



Mathematics

The Howard County Public School System's mathematics program is based on the HCPSS Mathematics Standards, aligned with Maryland's College and Career-Ready Standards. Middle and high school standards emphasize deep understanding and real-world application of mathematics. Following the core mathematics sequence, students have opportunities to explore coursework across three mathematics themes—Quantitative Reasoning, Data and Statistical Reasoning, and Calculus—offering flexible course options aligned with their interests, aspirations, and postsecondary goals. Students may select courses within and across themes to align with their evolving plans.

Mathematics Course Pathways



Mathematics Themes	Focus	College and Career Connections	Aligned Coursework
Quantitative Reasoning	Focuses on using mathematics to solve real-world problems, make informed decisions, understand financial concepts, and analyze data. Students apply mathematical reasoning to practical situations such as planning, budgeting, and problem-solving.	**College Connections:** Helps humanities and social science students build skills to analyze research and trends with data. **Career Connections:** Beneficial for careers in business, public policy, and technical fields where data-driven decision-making is critical.	• Advanced Algebra & Functions* • Statistics & Probability - Honors* • Data Science - Honors* • Math Analysis - Honors* or HCC Math 141: College Algebra[2] or HCC MATH 143: Precalculus I[2] • Trigonometry - Honors* • Precalculus - Honors* or Precalculus - AP* or HCC MATH 143: Precalculus I[2] & HCC MATH 153: Precalculus II[2] • Statistics - AP* or HCC MATH 138 Statistics[3] • Business Calculus - ADV or HCC MATH 145: Business Calculus • Calculus AB - AP or HCC MATH 181: Calculus 1[2]
Data, Statistics, and Data Analytics	Focuses on developing students' skills in data analysis, programming, and mathematical reasoning through real-world applications. Students use technology to explore and analyze real-world data, preparing them for college, careers, and an increasingly data-driven world.	**College Connections:** Prepares students for college programs in data science, computer science, and business analytics. **Career Connections:** Supports careers in data analytics, cybersecurity, market research, and other Big Data fields.	• Statistics & Probability - Honors* • Data Science - Honors* • Math Analysis - Honors* or HCC Math 141: College Algebra[3] or HCC MATH 143: Precalculus I[2] • Precalculus - Honors* or Precalculus - AP* or HCC MATH 143: Precalculus I[2] and HCC MATH 153: Precalculus II[2] • Statistics - AP* or HCC MATH 138 Statistics[3] • Computer Science A - AP[3] • Discrete Math - ADV • Business Calculus - ADV or HCC MATH 145: Business Calculus • Calculus AB - AP or HCC MATH 181: Calculus 1[2]
Algebraic Foundations of Calculus	Focuses on functions, change, and mathematical modeling to prepare students for further study in Calculus and STEM-related fields. Students develop advanced mathematical reasoning and problem-solving skills that support success in college and careers.	**College Connections:** Prepares students for STEM majors such as engineering, physics, and math that require calculus. **Career Connections:** Supports careers in engineering, medicine, and research that need strong problem-solving and math skills.	• Precalculus - ADV* or HCC MATH 143: Precalculus I[2] and HCC MATH 153: Precalculus II[2] • Calculus AB - AP then Calculus C/Multivariate Calculus - AP or HCC MATH 181: Calculus I[2] then HCC MATH 182: Calculus II[2] • Statistics - AP* or HCC MATH 138 Statistics[2] • Linear Algebra - ADV or HCC MATH 250: Linear Algebra[2] • Differential Equations - ADV or HCC MATH 260: Differential Equations

*** Courses that require successful completion of Algebra II (or Algebra II – ADV)**

1 Seminar courses receive elective credits and are to be taken together with their corresponding mathematics course (e.g., Algebra I and Algebra I Seminar).

2 JumpStart Dual Enrollment, a partnership between HCPSS and Howard Community College (HCC), allows high school students to earn college credit. Students must meet prerequisites, may incur fees, and must work with their counselor and HCC staff to coordinate course selection and schedules. HCPSS pre-approval is required for high school credit. Students planning to return to HCPSS for higher-level mathematics courses are not recommended to enroll in HCC math courses.

3 This course fulfills graduation and four-year high school math requirements, but per University System of Maryland guidelines, cannot be the final math course taken in high school. Therefore, students who take it in grade 12 should also enroll in an additional math course.

Mathematics

Mathematics Placement

Students who generally perform on grade level will be enrolled in Mathematics 6 in grade 6. Students requiring additional instructional time and support to master grade-level content will be concurrently enrolled in Mathematics 6 Seminar. Incoming grade 6 students who successfully perform in above grade-level mathematics, score at the 83rd percentile or higher on the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT QN), and/or meet or exceed HCPSS performance benchmarks will be enrolled in Mathematics 7. Students who successfully perform in grade 5 Mathematics ADV, score in the 90th percentile or higher on the CogAT QN and Measure of Academic Process (MAP) - Math, and/or demonstrate advanced performance through the placement process will be enrolled in grade 6 Pre-Algebra **ADV**. The Accelerated Mathematics Program is provided for students who show outstanding ability and a high level of performance in mathematics to progress through the sequence of mathematics courses at an accelerated rate (Algebra I **ADV** in grade 6, Geometry **ADV** in grade 7, and Algebra II ADV in grade 8). Consideration for placement in the Accelerated Mathematics Program includes scores in the 99th percentile for both the CogAT Quantitative and Quantitative-Nonverbal composite, MAP-Math scores in the 99th percentile, advanced Maryland State Department of Education math assessment performance, as well as demonstration of outstanding performance in grade 5 Mathematics ADV.

MA-101-1

Mathematics 6

Grade 6

In this course, students will explore the concepts, skills and practices used to develop a deep understanding of: 1) area and surface area; 2) ratios; 3) unit rates and percentages; 4) division of fractions; 5) arithmetic of multi-digit whole numbers and decimals; 6) expressions and equations; 7) rational numbers and inequalities; and 8) data sets and distributions.

MA-100-1

MA-100-8

Mathematics 6 Seminar

Grade 6

This seminar course is designed to provide support through an engaging additional period of mathematics. Units are designed to parallel and strengthen the mathematics being taught in the Mathematics 6 class. Students will develop a deep understanding of mathematics by exploring real-world applications and connections to the concepts, skills, and practices they are learning. *This course is taken concurrently with Mathematics 6.*

MA-303-1

Pre-Algebra ADV

Grade 6

In this course, students will explore the concepts, skills and practices used to develop a deep understanding of: 1) angles and triangles; 2) percent increase/decrease and applying percentages; 3) representing proportional relationships and slope; 4) linear relationships; 5) linear equations in one variable and inequalities; 6) systems of linear equations; 7) functions; 8) exponents and scientific notation; 9) Pythagorean Theorem and irrational numbers; and 10) probability and sampling.

MA-201-1

Mathematics 7

Grades 6, 7

In this course, students will explore the concepts, skills, and practices used to develop a deep understanding of: 1) scale drawings of geometric figures; 2) introducing proportional relationships; 3) measuring circles; 4) proportional relationships and percentages; 5) rational number arithmetic; 6) expressions, equations, and inequalities; 7) volume and surface area; and 8) probability and sampling.

MA-200-1

MA-200-8

Mathematics 7 Seminar

Grade 7

This seminar course is designed to provide support through an engaging additional period of mathematics. Units are designed to parallel and strengthen the mathematics being taught in the Mathematics 7 class. Students will develop a deep understanding of mathematics by exploring real-world applications and connections to the concepts, skills, and practices they are learning. *This course is taken concurrently with Mathematics 7.*



Mathematics

MA-301-1
Mathematics 8
Grades 7, 8

In this course, students will explore the concepts, skills and practices used to develop a deep understanding of: 1) angles and triangles; 2) linear relationships; 3) linear equations in one variable and inequalities; 4) systems of linear equations; 5) functions; 6) associations in data and probability; 7) exponents and scientific notation; and 8) Pythagorean theorem and irrational numbers.

MA-300-1
MA-300-8
Mathematics 8 Seminar
Grade 8

This seminar course is designed to provide support through an engaging additional period of mathematics. Units are designed to parallel and strengthen the mathematics being taught in the Mathematics 8 class. Students will develop a deep understanding of mathematics by exploring real-world applications and connections to the concepts, skills, and practices they are learning. *This course is taken concurrently with Mathematics 8.*

MA-401-1
Algebra I
Grade 8

In this above-grade-level course, students will focus on the mastery of five critical areas: 1) developing understanding and investigating relationships between quantities and reasoning with equations; 2) developing understanding and applying linear and exponential relationships; 3) performing arithmetic operations on polynomial expressions, solving equations, inequalities, and systems of equations; 4) using properties of rational and irrational numbers to develop an understanding of quadratic functions, and 5) investigating trends and modeling with descriptive statistics. *One high school mathematics credit will be awarded upon successful completion of this course. See Credit for High School Courses Taken in Middle School, page 5 for more information.*

MA-403-1
Algebra I ADV
Grade 7

In this course, students will focus on the in-depth mastery of five critical areas: 1) developing understanding and investigating relationships between quantities and reasoning with equations; 2) developing understanding and applying linear and exponential relationships; 3) performing arithmetic operations on polynomial expressions, solving equations, inequalities, and systems of equations; 4) using properties of rational and irrational numbers to develop an understanding of quadratic functions, and 5) investigating trends and modeling with descriptive statistics. Course requirements are rigorous and emphasize the use of mathematical modeling to solve applications-based problems and other high cognitive demand tasks. *One high school mathematics credit will be awarded upon successful completion of this course. See Credit for High School Courses Taken in Middle School, page 5 for more information.*

MA-433-1
Geometry ADV
Grade 8

In this course, students will focus on the development of transformational, Euclidean, and coordinate geometry with extensive real-world application. Students work with rigid motions, dilations, and constructions of geometric figures to establish criteria for determining if two figures are similar and/or congruent. Student will prove and use theorems, definitions, and postulates to explain mathematical conjectures for various geometric figures and angle concepts. Students also explore probability of compound events, and an introduction to trigonometry. *One high school mathematics credit will be awarded upon successful completion of this course. See Credit for High School Courses Taken in Middle School, page 5 for more information.*

Physical Education

The goal of physical education at the middle school level is to develop physically literate individuals who have the knowledge, skills, and confidence to enjoy a lifetime of healthful physical activity. Elementary school physical education focuses on basic developmental skills and movements, while high school physical education focuses more on personal choices and specialization. The middle school physical education program is a bridge between skills and specialization by allowing for exploration and exposing students to the plethora of sports and activities available to them. The middle school physical education program curriculum provides a wide variety of activities including fitness and motor-skill development activities, lifetime recreational activities, dance, and team and individual sports opportunities which students can participate in during and outside of the school day.

PE-100-8
PE-100-9
Physical Education
Grade 6

Instructional emphasis will focus on using the skills developed at the elementary level. Students will demonstrate motor skills and movement patterns in a variety of games, sports, outdoor pursuits, individual performance activities, and dances. Students will develop strategies and tactics used in a variety of games and sports. They will participate in physical activities that meet their specific needs and analyze components of health and skill related fitness. Students will continue to work on accepting feedback and differences among classmates. Areas of instruction include movement patterns and concepts, fitness and physical activity, and personal and social behavior.

PE-200-8
PE-200-9
Physical Education
Grade 7

Instructional emphasis will focus on developing skills through games, sports, and group or individual activities. Students will apply motor skills, movement patterns, and game strategies in a dynamic environment. Students will identify factors and activities that contribute to a personal fitness plan. They have the opportunity to self-officiate and problem solve throughout an assortment of activities. Most importantly, students will continue to analyze the importance of physical activity. Areas of instruction include movement patterns and concepts, fitness and physical activity, and personal and social behavior.

PE-300-8
PE-300-9
Physical Education
Grade 8

By the end of grade 8 all students will have learned how to apply tactics and strategies to modified game play, demonstrate fundamental motor skills, and design and implement a fitness plan. Students will have participated in self-selected physical activities, cooperated with classmates, and accepted individual differences. Lastly, students will have engaged in physical activities for enjoyment and self-expression. Areas of instruction include movement patterns and concepts, fitness and physical activity, and personal and social behavior.



Reading Supports

The HCPSS middle school reading supports program focuses on producing strategic, independent readers through the implementation of a rigorous curriculum that aligns with the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards. The reading program is designed to prepare school system graduates for success in entry-level, credit-bearing academic college courses and in workforce training programs. Students are provided with opportunities to meet their individual needs through engaging reading experiences.

Reading Placement

Students who are enrolled in middle school reading seminar courses are provided with targeted support to address their specific reading needs in the areas of decoding, fluency, and comprehension. The course is conducted using a flexible grouping model to incorporate individual student needs. Literacy success is achieved by providing personalized educational experiences while continuing to address the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards. Individual student achievement data is constantly monitored to provide timely, meaningful information to help teachers adjust instruction to provide the appropriate level of challenging instruction for learners. Clearly defined criteria are established to exit this class once the standards have been met.

LA-155-1 Grade 6
LA-255-1 Grade 7
LA-355-1 Grade 8

Seminar C Reading (Comprehension)

Middle School Reading Seminar C provides support for students who require an intervention in comprehension. The course is conducted using a flexible grouping model to incorporate individual student needs. Individual student achievement data is constantly monitored to provide timely, meaningful information to help teachers adjust instruction to provide the appropriate level of challenging instruction for learners. Clearly defined criteria are established to exit this class once the student has met the standards.

LA-150-1 Grade 6
LA-250-1 Grade 7
LA-350-1 Grade 8

Seminar D Reading (Decoding)

Middle School Reading Seminar D provides support for students who require an intervention in decoding, fluency, and comprehension. The course is conducted using a flexible grouping model to incorporate individual student needs. Individual student achievement data is constantly monitored to provide timely, meaningful information to help teachers adjust instruction to provide the appropriate level of challenging instruction for learners. Clearly defined criteria are established to exit this class once the student has met the standards.



Science

The HCPSS middle school science program is designed to be student-centered and to engage all students mentally in an inquiry-based laboratory program where students operate as "Student-Scientists." The major goal of the middle school program is to develop substantive science literacy in all students. The middle school science curriculum integrates the practices of science and engineering with important ideas from each of the major disciplines of science. The crosscutting concepts, or big ideas, of science provide an organizational framework so that students develop deep and lasting understanding of science. The learning environment in science promotes students' thinking, honesty, curiosity, and questioning. Students will be empowered to express and share points of view, solve problems, and make decisions based on evidence. The middle school science curriculum is built around driving questions that set the context for learning. Laboratory experiences are integral within each middle school science course.

At the middle school level, students learn Earth Science, Life Science, and Physical Science in grades 6, 7, and 8, respectively. On-grade level and **Advanced Academic Programs** level options are offered for each course. Teachers of the **advanced** level courses will differentiate their instruction to meet the unique needs of high-ability learners. The ultimate goal of the science program is to guide all students to intelligent decision-making through the assimilation of scientific knowledge and the application of scientific inquiry. The middle school program provides students with opportunities to expand, change, enhance, and modify the ways in which they view the world. Disciplinary literacy is emphasized throughout the program; environmental literacy is integrated into each grade level.

All students will participate in the Maryland Integrated Science Assessment (MISA) at the end of grade 8. MISA will include science ideas from each of the three science disciplines, Earth/Space Science, Life Science, and Physical Science.

SC-100-1
Science I
Grade 6

This course is comprised of units designed to address earth science ideas from the Maryland Science Standards. There are six earth science topics in middle school addressed through six units: Space Systems, History of Earth, Earth's Interior Systems, Earth's Surface Systems, Weather and Climate, and Human Impacts. Units are organized around a driving question. Within each driving question, students engage in a series of hands-on learning experiences that are carefully designed to immerse them in a collaborative learning environment. Students utilize the science and engineering practices as they construct their understanding of important concepts. Students also have opportunities to learn and apply engineering specific practices such as designing solutions to identified problems. *This course includes an embedded student service learning experience.*

SC-105-1
Science I ADV
Grade 6

This course is comprised of units designed to address earth science ideas from the Maryland Science Standards. There are six earth science topics in middle school addressed through six units: Space Systems, History of Earth, Earth's Interior Systems, Earth's Surface Systems, Weather and Climate, and Human Impacts. Units are organized around a driving question. Within each driving question, students engage in a series of hands-on learning experiences that are carefully designed to immerse them in a collaborative learning environment. Students utilize the science and engineering practices as they construct their understanding of important concepts. Students also have opportunities to learn and apply engineering specific practices such as designing solutions to identified problems.

Teachers will differentiate the instruction to incorporate advanced, conceptually complex content that challenges high-ability learners and provides opportunities for self-directed inquiry. *This course includes an embedded student service learning experience.*

SC-200-1
Science II
Grade 7

This course is comprised of units designed to address life science ideas from the Maryland Science Standards. There are four topics in middle school addressed through six units: molecules to organisms: structures and processes, ecosystems: interactions, energy, and dynamics, heredity: inheritance and variation of traits, and biological evolution: unity and diversity. Units are organized around a driving question. Within each driving question, students engage in a series of hands on learning experiences that are carefully designed to immerse them in a collaborative learning environment. Students utilize the science and engineering practices as they construct their understanding of important concepts. Students also have opportunities to learn and apply engineering specific practices such as designing solutions to identified problems. *This course includes an embedded student service learning experience.*

Science

SC-205-1
Science II ADV
Grade 7

This course is comprised of units designed to address life science ideas from the Maryland Science Standards. There are four topics in middle school addressed through six units: molecules to organisms: structures and processes, ecosystems: interactions, energy, and dynamics, heredity: inheritance and variation of traits, and biological evolution: unity and diversity. Units are organized around a driving question. Within each driving question, students engage in a series of hands on learning experiences that are carefully designed to immerse them in a collaborative learning environment. Students utilize the science and engineering practices as they construct their understanding of important concepts. Students also have opportunities to learn and apply engineering specific practices such as designing solutions to identified problems.

Teachers will differentiate the instruction to incorporate advanced, conceptually complex content that challenges high-ability learners and provides opportunities for self-directed inquiry. *This course includes an embedded student service learning experience.*

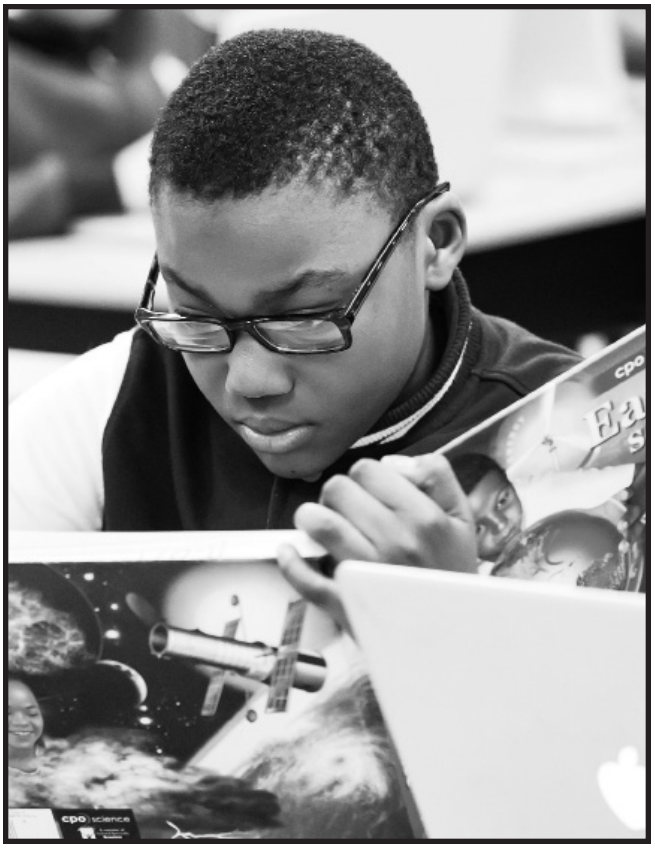
SC-300-1
Science III
Grade 8

In this course, there are five physical science topics in middle school addressed through five units: Structure and Properties of Matter, Chemical Reactions, Forces and Interactions, Energy, and Waves and Electromagnetic Radiation. Units are organized around a driving question. Within each driving question, students engage in a series of hands-on learning experiences that are carefully designed to immerse them in a collaborative learning environment. Students utilize the science and engineering practices as they construct their understanding of important concepts. Students also have opportunities to learn and apply engineering specific practices such as designing solutions to identified problems.

SC-305-1
Science III ADV
Grade 8

In this course, there are five physical science topics in middle school addressed through five units: Structure and Properties of Matter, Chemical Reactions, Forces and Interactions, Energy, and Waves and Electromagnetic Radiation. Units are organized around a driving question. Within each driving question, students engage in a series of hands-on learning experiences that are carefully designed to immerse them in a collaborative learning environment. Students utilize the science and engineering practices as they construct their understanding of important concepts. Students also have opportunities to learn and apply engineering specific practices such as designing solutions to identified problems.

Teachers will differentiate the instruction to incorporate advanced, conceptually complex content that challenges high-ability learners and provides opportunities for self-directed inquiry.



Social Studies

The HCPSS middle school social studies program focuses on promoting the ability among students to make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good, to apply disciplinary literacy and problem solving skills within relevant content, and to understand their roles and responsibilities as citizens in a democratic society. These are foundational skills of lifelong learning and key components in the process of preparing students to navigate in a global environment, and to critically evaluate information in a rapidly changing world. Social studies instruction is an integral part of the implementation of the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards and facilitates the integration of disciplinary literacy skills, writing, critical thinking, and problem solving across the curriculum.

National History Day® Participation

National History Day® (NHD) is a highly regarded academic competition for secondary school students.

Each year, more than half a million students, encouraged by thousands of teachers nationwide, participate in the NHD contest. Students choose historical topics related to a theme and conduct extensive primary and secondary research through libraries, archives, museums, oral history interviews, and historic sites. After analyzing and interpreting their sources and drawing conclusions about their topics' significance in history, students present their work in original papers, exhibits, websites, performances, and documentaries. These products are entered into competitions in the spring at local, state, and national levels where they are evaluated by professional historians and educators. The program culminates in a national competition each June held at the University of Maryland at College Park.

In addition to discovering the exciting world of the past, NHD also helps students develop the following attributes that are critical for future success:

- critical thinking and problem-solving skills
- research and reading skills
- oral and written communication and presentation skills
- self-esteem and confidence
- a sense of responsibility for and involvement in the democratic process

The Office of Secondary Social Studies, in collaboration with the Office of Advanced Academic Programs, sponsors a regional National History Day® Competition for the students of Howard County. Schools also have school-wide competitions, and send the top ten projects from their schools, with a maximum of two per category. The teachers then register these online for our countywide event.

The regional competition is a large event which includes students, parents/guardians, teachers, news reporters, and performers. Up to 300 students are evaluated by judges recruited from the local community and our teaching staff. The top two projects per category then move on to the statewide competition. Several community groups also offer special awards for specific historical topics.

SO-100-1
Geography and World Cultures
Grade 6

Students will study the first part of a two-year program entitled Geography and World Cultures. Course content includes four geographic concepts: movement, human systems, human interactions with the environment, and place and region. Geographic reasoning is taught through the lens of global history. Skills instruction includes: geographic reasoning, historical thinking, problem solving, disciplinary literacy, and writing and communication skills.

SO-101-1
Geography and World Culture ADV
Grade 6

Students will study the first part of a two-year program entitled Geography and World Cultures. Course content includes four geographic concepts: movement, human systems, human interactions with the environment, and place and region. Geographic reasoning is taught through the lens of global history. Skills instruction includes: geographic reasoning, historical thinking, problem solving, disciplinary literacy, and writing and communication skills. All students learn the social science research process and begin the development of research and writing skills that will prepare them for extended research investigations such as National History Day®

Social Studies

SO-200-1

Geography and World Cultures

Grade 7

Students will continue the two-year program entitled Geography and World Cultures. Course content includes four geographic concepts: movement, human systems, human interactions with the environment, and place and region. Geographic reasoning is taught through the lens of global history. Skills instruction includes: geographic reasoning, historical thinking, problem solving, disciplinary literacy, and writing and communication skills. This course culminates in a unit applying students' geographic understandings to a case study of North America and American history to 1754.

SO-201-1

Geography and World Cultures ADV

Grade 7

Students will continue the two-year program entitled Geography and World Cultures. Course content includes four geographic concepts: movement, human systems, human interactions with the environment, and place and region. Geographic reasoning is taught through the lens of global history. Skills instruction includes: geographic reasoning, historical thinking, problem solving, disciplinary literacy, and writing and communication skills. This course culminates in a unit applying students' gegoraphic understandings to a case study of North America and American history to 1754. All students learn the social science research process and begin the development of research and writing skills that will prepare them for extended research investigations such as National History Day®.

SO-300-1

United States History

Grade 8

Students will study the first part of a two-year program in United States History, focusing on the period from approximately 1763 through the end of Reconstruction. This program provides opportunities for students to develop an understanding of historical reading skills, chronological reasoning skills, key historical concepts, and content related to the history of our nation. All students will participate in the Social Studies Grade 8 assessment. This assessment will cover the content of United States History covered in this course but will also reflect an assessment of skills built throughout a students' middle school studies courses. *This course includes an embedded student service learning experience.*

SO-301-1

United States History ADV

Grade 8

This course provides a differentiated curriculum for the United States history content listed above in which students engage in more rigorous critical thinking and problem solving activities that require deeper analysis and understanding. All students complete a multi-stage historical research paper based on national standards or participate in National History Day®. *This course includes an embedded student service learning experience.*



Special Education

Special education services in each Howard County middle school are designed to provide instruction, related services, and support for students who have been determined to be eligible through the Individualized Education Program (IEP) process. An IEP is developed for each student with a disability by the IEP team and reflects special education and related services in accordance with least restrictive environment guidelines. All students must complete graduation requirements in order to earn a Maryland high school diploma.

RE-100-0

Resource English

Grades 6, 7, 8

In this course, students with IEPs are working towards a Maryland Certificate of Program Completion and are working on individualized reading and written language goals and objectives aligned with modified English curriculum and alternative state standards. Students take the English/Language Arts Dynamic Learning Maps Alternative Assessment in grades 6, 7, and 8.

RE-106-0
RE-106-8

Instructional Support

Grades 6, 7, 8

This course is for students that have IEPs and require additional instruction in the area of written language, reading, and/or executive functioning skills. Students will receive specialized instruction in the area(s) aligned with their goals and objectives.

RE-110-0

Resource Mathematics

Grades 6, 7, 8

In this course students with IEPs are working towards a Maryland Certificate of Program Completion and are working on individualized goals and objectives aligned with modified mathematics curriculum. Students take the Mathematics Dynamic Learning Maps Alternative Assessment in grades 6, 7, and 8.

RE-120-0

Resource Science

Grades 6, 7, 8

In this course, students with IEPs are working towards a Maryland Certificate of Program Completion and are working on individualized goals and objectives aligned to the science curriculum and alternative state standards. Students take the Science Dynamic Learning Maps Alternative Assessment in grade 8.

RE-130-0

Resource Social Studies

Grades 6, 7, 8

In this course, students with IEPs are working towards a Maryland Certificate of Program Completion and are working on individualized goals and objectives aligned to the social studies curriculum and alternative state standards. Students take the Social Studies Dynamic Learning Maps Alternative Assessment in grade 8.

RE-150-0 Grade 6
RE-250-0 Grade 7
RE-350-0 Grade 8

Braille

Grades 6, 7, 8

This tutorial aligns with the IEP of a student who is blind or visually impaired. Instruction is provided in the reading and writing of Unified English Braille and the Nemeth Braille Code for Mathematics and Science Notation. Instruction in the following specialized Braille codes is provided as appropriate: foreign language, music, computer, and chemical codes. Additional areas of instruction include tactile graphics, textbook format, and the use of specialized technology to access and produce written work.

RE-140-0

Communication, Self-Advocacy and Learning Behaviors

Grades 6, 7, 8

Students will expand their skills by providing authentic school-based experiences connected to skills needed for future employment and community life. These experiences will be based on appropriate communication, self-advocacy and learning behaviors needed for any job or career. Students will effectively use purposeful and appropriate communication across all settings, exhibit behavior that matches their tasks and/or environment, and decrease the need for adult prompting and increase engagement for instruction/learning. This course is designed for students with IEPs who are working toward a Maryland Certificate of Program Completion.

World Languages

Language study builds confidence, supports academic success, and develops the future-ready communication skills of Effective Information Sharing and Global Citizenship through biliteracy. It is a lifelong skill with personal and professional benefits. HCPSS world language courses follow a proficiency-based curriculum that enables students to use the language in real-life situations while also strengthening critical thinking, perseverance, problem-solving, and teamwork through the exploration of diverse cultures.

Achieving biliteracy takes time—often five to six years— and world language study requirements for college admission differ widely. Some colleges accept high school credits earned in middle school, while others require all credits in high school. Families are encouraged to plan ahead and review the admission requirements of colleges that interest them.

HCPSS participates in the Maryland Seal of Biliteracy (SoBL) Program, which recognizes seniors who demonstrate high proficiency in English and at least one other language. This honor, added to transcripts at no cost, affirms the value of language learning, celebrates heritage languages, and supports students in college, career, and life in a global society. For more details, contact the Office of World Languages.

WL-402-1

Chinese I

Grades 7, 8

Chinese I introduces students to the Chinese language and culture with an overview of Chinese history, people, current affairs, politics, economics, science, technology, arts, and literature. Students explore pronunciation and common terms and may expect experiences in all four of the traditional language acquisition skills with an emphasis on listening and speaking. Chinese I highlights the evolution and Romanization of Chinese and a study of tone, an extremely important aspect of the Chinese language. *One high school World Language credit will be awarded upon successful completion of this course. See Credit for High School Courses Taken in Middle School, page 5 for more information.*

WL-404-1

French I

Grades 7, 8

This course is an introduction to the French language and Francophone culture. In French I, students communicate on a variety of topics, such as exchanging greetings, identifying classroom objects, describing family members, telling time, describing weather conditions and seasons, locating places around town, and ordering foods in a café. Students explore the Francophone and examine the differences and similarities between Francophone and American cultures. *One high school World Language credit will be awarded upon successful completion of this course. See Credit for High School Courses Taken in Middle School, page 5 for more information.*

WL-414-1

Spanish I

Grades 7, 8

This course introduces students to the language and cultures of the Spanish-speaking world. In Spanish I, students communicate about various topics, such as exchanging greetings, identifying classroom objects, describing family members, telling time, describing weather and seasons, locating places around town, and shopping for clothing. Students explore the Spanish speaking world, focusing on the geography of Spain and Latin America. They compare relevant aspects of the cultures of the Americas and Spain. *One high school World Language credit will be awarded upon successful completion of this course. See Credit for High School Courses Taken in Middle School, page 5 for more information.*

World Languages

The following Level II courses are available for students who have earned a Level I credit.

WL-502-1
Chinese II
Grade 8

Prerequisite: Chinese I

This course continues the study of the Chinese language and culture, including Chinese history, people, current affairs, politics, economics, science, technology, arts, and literature. Students may expect language-learning experiences in all four of the traditional language acquisition skills. Study of the evolution and the Romanization of the Chinese language is also included. Tone, an extremely important aspect of the Chinese language, is an important aspect of study in this course. *One high school World Language credit will be awarded upon successful completion of this course. See Credit for High School Courses Taken in Middle School, page 5 for more information.*

WL-504-1
French II
Grade 8

Prerequisite: French I

This course emphasizes what students are able to do in the language. Students communicate regarding a variety of topics in the past, present and future. Students continue to study Francophone culture through reading, lectures, discussions, and the use of media and technology. *One high school World Language credit will be awarded upon successful completion of this course. See Credit for High School Courses Taken in Middle School, page 5 for more information.*

WL-514-1
Spanish II
Grade 8

Prerequisite: Spanish I

This course emphasizes what students are able to do in the language. Students communicate about a variety of topics in past, present and future. Students study the culture of the Spanish-speaking world through readings, lectures, discussions, and the use of media and technology. *One high school World Language credit will be awarded upon successful completion of this course. See Credit for High School Courses Taken in Middle School, page 5 for more information.*

Other Elective Course Offerings

MC-101-9

21st Century Learning

Grade 6

This course introduces students to brain development and strengthening executive functioning skills. Students explore learning digitally with lessons about organizing digital space, using email functions, and working in Google Drive. It also develops study skills such as mnemonics, note taking and graphic organizers. This course also includes a module about respecting others and anti-bullying. Students in this course will work on a digital portfolio to show what they have learned in each section of the course. They will include 2-3 examples of their best learning activities. These activities will be graded throughout the course and will make up the final grade.

MC-110-9

Boost the Brain

Grade 6

Students will learn strategies that enable them to navigate this their middle and high school careers successfully. In addition, students will learn how the adolescent brain functions. Students will develop an understanding of 1) why teens respond more emotionally and less rationally to situations; 2) practices that promote "roadways in the brain" and 3) the need for students to develop and implement a personal survival guide for high school.

MC-120-9

Digital Citizenship

Grade 6

Digital citizenship is an idea that encompasses all realms of the web from the globalized world in which we live. This module has been designed for next-generation learners to provide rigor and relevance for all students. During this unit, students will create an authentic product that could be published online. While exploring the different topics, students will reflect on how each topic impacts their personal publishing product.



Course Index

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Technology Education 8
Family and Consumer Science (FACS) 8
CTE Life and Career Skills 8
CTE Financial & Careers Foundations I 8
CTE Financial & Careers Foundations I I 8
Foundations of Technology 9
Exploring Computer Science 9

ENGLISH

English Language Arts 6, **ADV** 10
English Language Arts 7, **ADV** 10
English Language Arts 8, **ADV** 11
Introduction to Reader's and Writer's Workshop . . .10
Reader's and Writer's Workshop 10

English Language Development (ELD)

English Language Development 6-8 12
English Language Development 1, 1A, 1B 12
English Language Development 2, 2A, 2B 12
English Language Development 3, 3A, 3B 12

FINE ARTS

Art. 13
Visual Arts Studio A, B 13
Dance A, B 14
Concert Band 15
Symphonic Band 15
Wind Ensemble 15
Chorus 15
Concert Chorus 15
Chamber Chorus 15
String Ensemble 15
String Orchestra 15
Chamber Orchestra 15
General Music 15
General Music I, II. 16
Theatre Arts. 16
Theatre Arts A, B 16

ADVANCED ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

MS **Advanced** Research 17

HEALTH EDUCATION

Health 18

MATHEMATICS

Mathematics 6, Seminar 20
Pre-Algebra **ADV** 20
Mathematics 7, Seminar 20
Mathematics 8, Seminar 21
Algebra I, **ADV** 21
Geometry **ADV** 21

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Physical Education 22

READING SUPPORTS

Seminar C Reading (Comprehension) 23
Seminar D Reading (Decoding) 23

SCIENCE

Science I 6, **ADV** 24
Science II 7, **ADV** 24-25
Science III 8, **ADV**. 25

SOCIAL STUDIES

Geography and World Cultures 6, 7, **ADV** 26-27
United States History 8, **ADV** 27

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Resource English 28
Instructional Support 28
Resource Mathematics 28
Resource Science 28
Resource Social Studies 28
Braille 28
Communication, Self Advocacy, and Learning Behaviors. 28

WORLD LANGUAGES

Chinese I, II 29-30
French I, II 29-30
Spanish I, II 29-30

OTHER ELECTIVE COURSE OFFERINGS

21st Century Learning 31
Boost the Brain 31
Digital Citizenship 31

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