



Middle School - 8th Grade Overview

Language Arts: The objective of this course is to help students develop a passion for reading and writing by building on foundational literacy skills. Throughout the course students will engage with a variety of text styles, including narrative, expository, descriptive, dramatic, poetic, persuasive, and media styles. Students will enhance their vocabulary through the study of Greek and Latin roots. Eighth graders will build on previous knowledge of grammar skills to understand more complex grammatical structures to enhance their writing skills. Writing assignments will include creative works and formal essays which follow guidelines from the MLA Handbook. They will edit their own writing and their peers' writing. Their writing will be held to a more mature, error-free standard, and they will be expected to thoroughly edit their own work based on their knowledge of grammar, spelling, punctuation and other conventions of our written language.

Textbooks and Supplements: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt English Language Arts 8th Grade, Vocabulary From Classical Roots, Shurley Grammar, Literature – *The Outsiders*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *The Red Pony*.

Mathematics: The Middle School math curriculum reinforces and expands knowledge of the computational skills and problem-solving strategies. The program takes the learner from the concrete stages of arithmetic to those concepts that require more abstract reasoning skills. The program uses a variety of teaching techniques and learning experiences to meet the needs of varying levels of mathematical maturity. Our goal is to provide all Middle School students with a solid mathematical foundation for all future upper level math courses. Course placement is based on academic records, test scores, and approval from math faculty.

High School Algebra I explores three core functions: linear, exponential, and quadratic. Students encounter multiple representations of functions and equations, and gain an understanding of how to solve real-world situations using algebraic models. Students learn to distinguish functions by discerning patterns of changes and use a variety of methods to represent solutions of equations and inequalities. A TI-84 Plus graphing calculator will be provided.

High School Algebra I Honors explores three core functions: linear, exponential, and quadratic. Students encounter multiple representations of functions and equations, and gain an understanding of how to solve real-world situations using algebraic models. Students learn to distinguish functions by discerning patterns of changes and use a variety of methods to represent solutions of equations and inequalities. Advanced classes are not accelerated, but dive into the curriculum in greater depth. This class is for the motivated mathematician who enjoys critical thinking, problem-solving, and exploring various concepts. A TI-84 Plus graphing calculator will be provided.

High School Geometry studies Euclidean geometry with an emphasis on logical reasoning, critical thinking skills, and problem solving. Topics include foundations of geometry, angle and triangle relationships, congruence and similarity, polygons, trigonometry, circles, transformations, 2-D and 3-D modeling, and probability. A TI-84 Plus graphing calculator will be provided.

Textbooks: Pearson Algebra I and Geometry

History: Eighth grade students study the history of the United States from the early colonial period through World War II. It is a very broad overview of the geography, history, and the beginning of government in the United States. The history department uses the standards set forth in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Social Studies as well as the National Standards for Social Studies. Students analyze the various economic factors that influenced the development of colonial America and the early years of the Republic. They also examine the American beliefs and principles, including limited government, checks and balances, federalism, separation of powers, and individual

rights, reflected in the U.S. Constitution. Eighth graders evaluate the impact of Supreme Court cases and major reform movements of the 19th and 20th centuries. They study the rights and responsibilities of citizens of the United States as well as the importance of effective leadership in a democratic society. The history department uses a variety of rich primary and secondary source material such as the complete text of the U.S. Constitution and the Declaration of Independence. Writing skills are used with daily writings and scenarios set by the teacher. At the end of the eighth grade year, the class takes an educational trip to Washington, D.C. or another historic area. Students experience firsthand the history of our country and the workings of the government.

Textbook: United States History – Holt, Rinehart, & Winston

Science: The Middle School science curriculum emphasizes and builds upon the life, physical and earth sciences. Students are prepared to use the scientific method by hands-on investigations weekly. During middle school, the proper use and care of lab equipment is emphasized. Emphasis is placed on the development of problem-solving skills, critical thinking skills, and scientific practices, including experimental design. Students also integrate mathematical computation skills through the use of formulas and metric and customary unit conversion. A science fair project enhances the students' independent research and investigation skills annually.

The eighth grade science curriculum includes topics in physical science such as atomic structure, chemical reactions and equations, trends of the periodic table, solubility, acids/bases, principles of sound and light, the laws of motion, energy, and simple machines. Topics of study in the area of earth and space science are the sun/moon/earth systems, stars and galaxies, rocks and minerals, plate tectonics, weather and climate, and human impacts on ecosystems. Students write lab reports and a research paper. Students are also exposed to dissection.

Textbook: HMH Science Dimensions

Spanish: Eighth Grade Spanish I HS (High School) curriculum builds on material learned in seventh grade and is designed to further develop verbal communication and writing skills specifically in the past tense with stem-changing verbs. The imperfect tense is also introduced towards the end of the year. Students continue to gain an understanding of the influence of the Spanish culture/language locally, nationally and worldwide. By making comparisons and connections to Spanish-speaking cultures with their own, students are encouraged to understand and accept the differences and more importantly celebrate those differences that make us unique. Life, customs, foods, and celebrations in various Spanish-speaking countries are examined all while also continuing to work on pronunciation and writing. 8th grade students also participate in the National Spanish Exam where they get the opportunity to showcase their Spanish.

Textbook and workbook: Avancemos Level II

Co-curricular classes: Students have physical education three times a week, Advisory twice a week, and Sacred Studies once a week. Students also have two electives per semester, each meeting two times per week. All students also attend Daily Chapel.