

**8<sup>th</sup> Grade  
Course Descriptions  
2017-2018**

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**Required Courses**

**Integrated Language Arts 8 (Full Year):**

Students will continue to improve their skills in oral and written communication in four basic areas: grammar, spelling, composition and literature. This course is also designed to prepare students for high school English and advanced vocabulary development. Emphasis is placed on correctly using the writing process and using critical thinking skills.

**Pre-AP Integrated Language Arts 8 (Full Year):**

The Pre-AP course in English Language and Composition engages students in becoming skilled readers of non-fiction and prose written in a variety of periods, disciplines, and rhetorical contexts and in becoming skilled writers who compose for a variety of purposes. Both their writing and their reading should make students aware of the interactions among a writer's purposes, audience expectations, and subjects as well as the way generic conventions and the resources of language contribute to effectiveness in writing.

The middle level Pre-AP Integrated Language Arts classes are designed to support and prepare students for high school AP English courses and the AP English Literature and Composition exams, which are components of the Distinguished Achievement Program (DAP).

**GT Integrated Language Arts 8 (Full Year):**

*Students must be currently identified in the Frisco ISD Gifted and Talented program.*

Students will be guided through a challenging course that will allow for their analysis of a variety of literature genres. Students will be required to read and analyze both classic and contemporary novels as well as non-fiction selections, participate in thematic units, conduct in-depth research, complete individual and group projects, and write extensively throughout the year. Both their writing and their reading should make students aware of the interactions among a writer's purposes, audience expectations, and subjects as well as the way generic conventions and the resources of language contribute to effectiveness in writing. Critical thinking skills will be emphasized to prepare students for high school AP English courses and the AP English Literature and Composition exams, which are components of the Distinguished Achievement Program (DAP).

**Reading Lab (Full Year):**

*This course is a supplement to the student's regular grade-level reading course and is taken in place of an elective.*

The class focuses on equipping students with the skills and strategies necessary to build independent reading fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension of multiple genres. Students divide their time between independent reading, teacher-directed small group sessions, and individualized computer interaction. This course utilizes the Achieve 3000 instructional program designed for students who experience difficulty in reading, in addition to the iStation reading program. This class will provide students with additional support to help ensure success through the use of individualized, targeted instruction and interventions.

**Math 8 (Full Year):**

Within a well-balanced mathematics curriculum, the primary focal points of Math 8 representing, applying, and analyzing proportional relationships; using expressions and equations to describe relationships including Pythagorean Theorem; making inferences from data; and financial literacy.

**Pre-AP Math 8 (Full Year):**

Pre-AP Math 8 provides capable students with a course designed to prepare them for Pre-AP Algebra I and other rigorous advanced course work in the future. In addition to the primary focal points of representing, applying, and analyzing proportional relationships; using expressions and equations to describe relationships including Pythagorean Theorem; making inferences from data; and financial literacy, the curriculum will include a rigorous problem solving component. Students should expect an additional time requirement and be willing to work independently.

**Pre-AP Algebra I (Full Year):**

*Prerequisite: Successful completion of Math 8, Pre-AP Math 8, or 80% or higher score on 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Math Credit by Examination (CBE)*

Pre-AP Algebra I students will expand on concepts covered in regular Algebra I (functional relationships and problem solving in real situations, including, but not limited to the following: table building, coordinate graphing, equation writing and solving, operations on polynomials, factoring, and real number computation) with an intense focus on high level application, problem solving, and higher order thinking processes. Students will also develop strategies that prepare them for future Advanced Placement math courses.

Please note: This course will require a STAAR End of Course Exam, will count for high school credit, and the grade earned will be applied to high school GPA.

**Pre-AP Geometry (Full Year):**

*Prerequisite: Pre-AP Algebra I*

At the middle school level, Pre-AP Geometry will be taught in an on-line format. Pre-AP Geometry covers the same topics of regular geometry (deductive and inductive reasoning, lines and angles, triangles, parallel lines, quadrilaterals, area, polygons, circles, and geometric solids) with an intense focus on problem solving, formal proof, logic, and application. Students must have a strong background in algebra and be very comfortable solving equations, working with variables, solving systems of equations, and factoring. Pre-AP Geometry will include deep study of the same topics found in regular Geometry. Students will also develop strategies that prepare them for future Advanced Placement math courses.

Please note: This course will count for high school credit, and the grade earned will be applied to high school GPA.

**Math Lab:**

*This course is a supplement to the student's regular grade-level math course and is taken in place of an elective.*

Math Lab provides a rich, supportive curriculum to assist students in mastering foundation concepts through problem solving, reinforcement of skills, and the use of small group instruction. This class will provide students with additional support to help ensure success through the use of individualized, targeted instruction and interventions.

**Science 8 (Full Year):**

Science 8 is interdisciplinary in nature; however, much of the content focus is on Earth and space science. The strands for Grade 8 include:

- A. Scientific investigation and reasoning- allows students to develop a rich knowledge of science in the natural world by becoming familiar with modes scientific of inquiry and the diverse ways scientists study the natural world.
- B. Matter and energy- students recognize that matter is composed of atoms and examine information on the Periodic Table to recognize that elements are grouped into families.
- C. Force, motion, and energy- students experiment with the relationship between forces and motion through the study of Newton's three laws and learn how these forces relate to geologic processes and astronomical phenomena.
- D. Earth and space- students identify the role of natural events in altering Earth systems, interpret land and erosional features, learn that stars and galaxies are part of the universe, use data to research scientific theories of the origin of the universe and learn how interactions in solar, weather, and ocean systems create changes in weather patterns and climate.

**Pre-AP Science 8 (Full Year):**

Pre-AP Science 8 provides capable students with skills designed to prepare them for the rigor and depth of the Advanced Placement program. In addition to the strand foci outlined in on level courses, Pre-AP courses are differentiated through a combination of the following:

- the depth of content presentation
- greater student responsibility for his/her learning
- slightly faster pacing
- greater complexity of thought
- development of higher-level cognitive understanding, as demonstrated through discussion and essay writing

Pre-AP Science 8 curriculum also includes a wide variety of content-focused laboratory investigations as well as a strong emphasis on expository writing in the form of lab reports. Students enrolled in Pre-AP Science 8 will also compete in the district science fair.

### **US History 8 (Full Year):**

Students study the history of the United States from the early colonial period through Reconstruction. The content in US History 8 builds upon that from Grade 5 but provides more depth and breadth. Historical content focuses on the political, economic, religious, and social events and issues related to the colonial and revolutionary eras, the creation and ratification of the U.S. Constitution, challenges of the early republic, the Age of Jackson, westward expansion, sectionalism, Civil War, and Reconstruction. Students describe the physical characteristics of the United States and their impact on population distribution and settlement patterns in the past and present. Students analyze the various economic factors that influenced the development of colonial America and the early years of the republic and identify the origins of the free enterprise system. Students 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 and other historical documents. Students evaluate the impact of Supreme Court cases and major reform movements of the 19th century and examine the rights and responsibilities of citizens of the United States as well as the importance of effective leadership in a constitutional republic. Students evaluate the impact of scientific discoveries and technological innovations on the development of the United States. Students use critical-thinking skills, including the identification of bias in written, oral, and visual material. The students will use of a variety of rich primary and secondary source material such as the complete text of the U.S. Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, landmark cases of the U.S. Supreme Court, biographies, autobiographies, novels, speeches, letters, diaries, poetry, songs, and artworks.

### **Elective Courses**

**NOTE:** COURSE OFFERINGS IN THE ELECTIVE AREAS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE AND/OR OMISSION DUE TO AN INSUFFICIENT AMOUNT OF STUDENT REQUESTS, LACK OF QUALIFIED PERSONNEL TO TEACH THE CLASS, OR FUNDING. THE STUDENT WILL BE PLACED IN THE NEXT ELECTIVE CHOICE ON THE SCHEDULE CARD FILLED OUT BY THE STUDENT AND PARENT.

### **MIDDLE SCHOOL ATHLETICS (Full Year)**

#### **UIL Middle School Competitive Sports Information**

Frisco ISD offers the following competitive sports to middle school students:

Football	Girls' Volleyball	Basketball	Tennis
Cross Country	Track	Soccer	

### **Athletic Class Period (Full Year):**

UIL competition and off-season conditioning are the focus of our athletic programs. To be enrolled in the athletic class period boys must participate in either football or basketball and girls must participate in either volleyball or basketball. Participation in Cross Country, Track and Soccer will occur exclusively before or after the regular school day. Students are required to maintain passing grades and outstanding behavior to participate in the athletic programs.

In order to meet the UIL age requirements for 7th grade athletics a student cannot have reached their 14th birthday on or prior to September 1st of the current school year. In order to meet the UIL age requirement for 8th grade athletics a student cannot have reached their 15th birthday on or prior to September 1st of the current school year.

### **Tennis (Full Year):**

The middle school tennis class will develop players that are proficient in executing proper stroke techniques. Proper stroke techniques will be reinforced through instruction and participation in various drills. In addition, the middle school tennis players will be instructed on the rules and procedures needed to successfully participate in matches independently. Students involved in middle school tennis will be encouraged to play additional sets/matches outside of the school day.

### **Advanced Tennis (Full Year):**

*Pending Coach Approval*

Advanced middle school tennis students participate at a higher level by playing competitively.

### **Beginning Band (Full Year):**

This course is designed to introduce students to the basic fundamentals of band instruments (Brass, Woodwind and Percussion.) The course covers care of instruments, correct playing position, reading music and awareness of rhythm and pitch. Students will be placed into appropriate band classes upon taking an instrument test.

### **Concert Band (Full Year):**

This course is an extension of beginning band. The course covers care of instruments, correct playing position, reading music and awareness of rhythm and pitch. In class pull outs are also employed to strengthen instrument skills as music becomes increasingly more difficult.

### **Symphonic Band (Full Year):**

This course is designed to meet the needs of the advanced band student. The course covers care of instruments, correct playing position, reading music and awareness of rhythm and pitch. Weekly sectionals are also employed to strengthen instrument skills as music becomes increasingly more difficult.

### **Symphonic Winds (Full Year):**

This course is designed to meet the needs of the advanced band student. The course covers care of instruments, correct playing position, reading music and awareness of rhythm and pitch. Weekly sectionals are also employed to strengthen instrument skills as music becomes increasingly more difficult.

### **Concert Choir:**

Male and female singers will develop proper vocal technique and music reading skills. Students will perform a wide variety of music, giving performances in concert throughout the year. Students may have the opportunity to participate in UIL and other music festival competitions.

### **A Cappella Choir:**

Male and female singers will continue to develop and master vocal technique and sight reading skills learned in previous years. Students will perform more advanced music. Students will perform in concerts throughout the year; participate in UIL and other music competitions. Prerequisite – audition with director and previous choral singing experience.

### **Beginning Orchestra (Full Year):**

Beginning Orchestra is open to all 6th, 7th and 8th grade students who would like to further their musical knowledge or begin instruction on violin, viola, cello or bass. No prior experience is necessary (Students with prior string experience read NOTE below). In these classes, we start from scratch with everything including posture & position – how to hold the instrument and bow; music literacy – how to read music; intonation and tone production – how to play in tune with the best sound. We also will learn the history behind the music we play, and much more. These classes meet daily and focus on establishing and developing basic musical and performance skills. This orchestra will have four concerts each year, plus one festival in the Spring. Students will be placed in classes according to instrumentation (i.e. violins/violas or cellos/basses) focusing solely on their particular instrument pedagogy. Prior to enrollment, a “try the instrument fair” is scheduled to allow the student to have a “hands on” trial time. The director is always available to answer questions on instrument selection, instrument sizing, rentals, reconditioning of previously owned family instruments, instrument purchase and scholarship opportunities (It is strongly recommended that parents meet with the director prior to purchasing an instrument).

NOTE: Students with previous string experience or those students with previous musical experience (i.e. piano, band instrument) may elect to study privately during the summer and audition in early August for placement in Concert or Symphonic Orchestra.

### **Concert Orchestra (Full Year):**

Concert Orchestra is composed of students with one or more years of string playing experience, in grades 6th 7th or 8th grade. In this orchestra, the students continue their musical development by learning new techniques and faster, more complex rhythms. Students at this level are studying shifting and vibrato, and are committed to continuing their interest in

improving their skills in orchestra. The Concert Orchestra will perform four concerts each year, plus one festival in the spring. This orchestra will also participate in the UIL Concert and Sight-Reading Competition in March. Students may also elect to participate in the All-Region Orchestra, and Solo & Ensemble Contest to further develop their individual musicianship. It is highly encouraged for students in Concert to take private lessons on their stringed instrument for mastery of technique and skill.

### **Symphonic Orchestra (Full Year):**

Symphonic Orchestra is comprised of advanced string players at VMS. This class will work toward competency in all major two octave scales, complex rhythms, vibrato, shifting and sight reading skills. These students show commitment to their orchestra by attending all scheduled rehearsals, sectionals, and concerts throughout the year, while maintaining a disciplined practice routine. This group is comprised of mostly 7th and 8th graders, admitted through audition. The main purpose is to be prepared for high school orchestra, so the expectation of practice and work ethic will be very high. Students will learn advanced techniques as well as perform increasingly difficult music as the year progresses. These members will also participate in the UIL Concert and Sight-Reading Competition in March. Symphonic students are strongly encouraged to try out for All-Region Orchestra, and Solo & Ensemble Contest. It is also highly encouraged for all Symphonic students to take private lessons on their stringed instrument.

### **Chamber Orchestra (Full Year):**

Chamber Orchestra is comprised of the most advanced string players at VMS. Students show competency in all major two octave scales, complex rhythms, vibrato, shifting and sight reading ability. These students show commitment to their orchestra by attending all scheduled rehearsals, sectionals and concerts throughout the year, while maintaining a disciplined practice routine. Only 7th and 8th graders are admitted into this group, through audition. Students will be challenged with upper level literature that will refine their musicianship skills and overall playing technique. These members will participate in the Elementary tours in December, UIL Concert and Sight-Reading Competition in March, as well as other festivals, playing engagements and competitions through the year. Chamber students will be expected to try-out for All-Region Orchestra, and perform at the Solo & Ensemble Contest. It is also expected that all Chamber students take private lessons on their stringed instrument.

### **Theater Arts I (Grades 7-8) (Full Year):**

Theater Arts I is designed to introduce the student to the many performing and technical aspects of theater. Students will learn basic acting techniques, (stage movement, developing voice, memorizing lines, etc.), Improvisation, mime techniques, character development, basic scene study, (group and individual monologues), script analysis and performance critiquing. In small ensembles, duets and individually, students will prepare and perform scenes in class demonstrating these skills.

### **Theater Arts II (Grades 7-8) (Full Year):**

*Prerequisite: Theater Arts 6 or Theater Arts I*

Theater Arts II builds upon the skills learned in Theater Arts I. Students will continue to strengthen their acting skills in a variety of theatrical experiences, including reading and writing plays, as well as memorized and improvisational performance..

### **Theater Production (Grades 7-8) (Full Year):**

*Prerequisite: Theater 6 or Theater I and AUDITION required*

Students are required to audition and get parental consent to participate in this class as it requires a commitment different from the other theater classes. Unlike the other classes, this class requires rehearsals and performances outside of regular school hours. These performances include the UIL One-Act Play Competition. Building on the skills taught in Theater I, the students will further their dramatic technique through play productions implementing the roles of actor, director and technician. This comprehensive theater study will encourage artistic discipline, sensory awareness and theater appreciation.

### **Technical Theater (Full Year):**

Students will learn the basics of technical theater including the techniques to manage and implement lights, sound, props, costumes, and sets in a production. They will learn the fundamentals of drawing and designing all the technical aspects

for shows through individual and group projects in the class room as well as on the stage. Students will also have hands-on experiences in set, prop and costume construction (you will create things for a production), as well as make-up/hair design application for characters (both regular and special effects). This class allows you to expand your creativity, build teamwork skills, and develop a greater appreciation of drama behind the curtain. (No previous theater class required.)

### **Art I (Full Year):**

Art I will emphasize drawing techniques and design principles while studying the elements of art and various artists. Students will also work with clay, paper collage and various painting media.

### **Art II (Full Year):**

*Prerequisite: Art I*

Art II will expand on the principles and elements, while spending more time on art history and techniques of drawing and painting. The focus for the first semester will be two-dimensional work and design; second semester will include ceramics, printmaking, sculpture and weaving.

### **Introduction to Spanish (Full Year):**

Exploratory Spanish is an exploratory Spanish course that begins the development of the basic language skills: listening, reading, writing and speaking. This is accomplished through the use of oral drills, vocabulary building, simple composition, reading assignments, dialogue, and creative writing. The course also stresses cultural awareness and understanding of the Spanish-speaking world and its impact on the United States. Students may take this course prior to taking the High School Spanish 1 Course.

### **High School Spanish I (Full Year):**

Spanish I works on the development of the four basic language skills: listening, reading, writing and speaking. This is accomplished through the use of oral drills, vocabulary building, simple composition and reading assignments, dialogue, and creative writing. The course also stresses cultural awareness and understanding of the Spanish-speaking world and its impact on the United States. This is a high school credited course. High school credit and grade points are awarded by semester. Students who elect to take this high school level course, designed to provide a solid foundation for success in Spanish II, should expect high standards and rigor, and an additional time requirement. Students may not retake Spanish I in high school if they receive credit for Spanish I in middle school. This course will follow high school grading and retest regulations.

### **Multimedia I/Video Production I (Full Year):**

#### **Multimedia I-One Semester**

This course introduces the concepts of graphic design using Microsoft Office PowerPoint and the software Adobe Photoshop Elements. Using these software applications students will learn how to manipulate text, graphics, create animated GIFs and other various design projects. Students will learn the techniques needed to use digital cameras and scanners in their projects. Project organization techniques and storyboarding concepts will be introduced.

#### **Video Production I-One Semester**

This course is designed for students to investigate and increase their understanding of creating video projects from the initial planning stages to the final production phase. Scriptwriting and storyboarding concepts will be introduced. Students will learn basic video camera techniques (shot types, rule of thirds, etc.) needed for producing a quality video project. Using the software application iMovie, students will learn introductory editing techniques that will allow them to create and produce their videos.

### **Robotics (Full Year):**

Students will learn to design, build, program, and run NXT robotic bricks using Lego Mindstorms kits. Using curriculum developed by Carnegie Mellon Robotics Academy, students will learn simple machine concepts while developing an understanding of mechanical principles and related problem solving skills. In addition, students will learn how to program using Mindstorms NXT-G, a specialized software package developed by NASA scientists. This will allow them to use their imaginations to build and program unique robots for challenges such as Twister, Sumo, Charades, Soccer, Maze, Green City and Parking Bay.

### **Broadcast (Full Year): APPLICATION REQUIRED**

*Prerequisite: Multimedia I/Video Production I*

*Students must apply for admission to this course.*

In this course, students will use the software applications Adobe Photoshop Elements and Final Cut Express to learn how to integrate digital graphics and video segments to create their projects. Students will be responsible for producing a campus broadcast that will be presented to the students, staff and community. Higher level movie editing techniques will be introduced, and students will have the opportunity to learn quality journalism techniques such as interviewing, camera presence and script writing.

### **Digital Graphics and Animation (Full Year):**

This course is designed for students to incorporate art and technology. Students will learn basic animation and design techniques and terminology. Students will create an original character, design comic strips, study the principles and history of animation, and draw daily in a sketchbook. Students will be introduced to the basic concepts of animation by using the software application Toon Boom: Flip Boom All Star. Moving on to the next level students will learn higher level animating skills using the software Animation Master, a state-of-the-art modeling, animation and rendering software program.

### **Skills for Independent Living I (Full Year):**

This laboratory course will enable students to investigate concepts and career areas in clusters such as: early childhood development, family and consumer sciences, hospitality, business, culinary arts, personal finances, and human services.

### **Yearbook (Full Year)**

*Application Required*

Students will use school designated software to design an all-digital, state-of-the-art yearbook for the upcoming school year. Combining journalism techniques, digital photography and Macintosh computers, students will learn skills they can use in their high school years.

### **Student Aide (Full Year):**

*Application Required*

Office aides are responsible for completing office tasks that are assigned to them. Some of these assignments could include delivering items to students/teachers, filing, stuffing envelopes, giving new students tours, making copies, sorting mail and other assigned tasks from the front office staff.

### **Health and Teen Leadership (Full Year Course Paired together as 1):**

#### **Health Education (One Semester):**

Students enrolled in this course will develop knowledge and skills to address adolescent health issues. Students gain a better understanding of the knowledge and behavior they use to safeguard their health, particularly pertaining to health risks. Major areas of study will include fitness, nutrition, mental/emotional health, substance abuse, and interpersonal relationships. High school credit (.5) and high school GPA points will be awarded.

#### **Teen Leadership (One Semester):**

Teen Leadership is a program in which students develop leadership, personal, and business skills. They learn to develop a healthy self-concept, healthy relationships, and learn to understand the concept of personal responsibility. Students will develop skills in public speaking and communication and an understanding of personal image. They will also develop an understanding of the effects of peer pressure and will develop skills to counteract those effects. Finally, they will develop an understanding of the need for vision in goal setting, both personally and professionally.