

8th Grade Course Offerings

ENGLISH (ELA)

This course presents essential literacy skills: composition, reading, speaking, and listening. Students experience various types of writing, focusing on reflective and persuasive writing, with text-dependent analysis specifically in using reliable sources for evidence for the persuasive unit. Seeking in-depth comprehension of literature through works of short stories, modern prose, and nonfiction, students learn to analyze texts, making inferences and developing critical thinking skills. Applied grammar practice, vocabulary study, and independent reading strengthen the curriculum.

ELL ENGLISH I, II

The English Language Learner course strives to develop effective communication skills in speaking, listening, reading, and writing English. The classes are available to limited English proficient students as determined by the Nebraska State ELPA21 Summative or Screener tests and teacher recommendations.

INTEGRATED SCIENCE

Eighth grade science is an integrated curriculum. Classes will discover technology's impact on science through hands-on experiences. They will also look at how scientists from different cultures have contributed to scientific theories of today. All this will be done in conjunction with state standards and testing as required in Nebraska.

PRE-ALGEBRA

Pre-Algebra is designed to help students prepare for the abstract thinking concepts presented in Algebra 1 and higher levels of mathematics. The topics covered in this course are the following: Real Numbers, Analyze and Solve Linear Equations, Investigate Bivariate Data, Congruence and Similarity, Pythagorean Theorem, Surface Area and Volume.

ALGEBRA 1

This course is designed for those students who have a strong background in mathematics and have demonstrated above average ability. Algebra 1 is designed to utilize the concepts from basic mathematics and apply them in an abstract setting. Material presented will help prepare the learner for topics covered in higher levels of mathematics.

AMERICAN STUDIES

American Studies will be a hybrid study of American History and Civics. Emphasis will be on gaining an understanding of our history as a nation from colonial times through the Civil War as well as the role of citizens in our nation. An understanding of our Constitution and the rights and responsibilities of citizens will be a theme throughout the year as well as the need for citizens to be aware of current happenings around the world.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

This program consists of the basic fundamentals of team sports, individual physical activities, and lifetime activities. Emphasis is placed on skill progression and techniques. All students will be participating in the fitness gram test. These tests include the pacer test, curl-up test, push-up test, sit 'n reach test, and 12 minute run test. All eighth graders are introduced to basic first aid, CPR skills, and the fundamental use of a heart defibrillator.

CAREER CONNECTIONS

This course is designed to effectively explore careers while using the Nebraska Career Education Model and related resources. Students will be exposed to the six different career fields and meet experts in these fields. A focus will be to discover the relationship between personal-social qualities, interests and skills to a wide variety of careers and postsecondary options from which to choose. Students will learn and have opportunities to practice the Nebraska Career Readiness Standards of Practice, which are current expectations on today's workplace. Students will draw upon these conclusions to develop a Personal Learning Plan to transition into high school with a broad career cluster focus.

8th GRADE ELECTIVES

SEMESTER CLASSES:

21st CENTURY LIVING

This is a course designed for eighth graders as an orientation to Family and Consumer Sciences. Its purpose is to introduce students to the many current subject areas, issues, trends, and careers to be better prepared for life in the 21st Century. This class will cover topics of family living, food and nutrition, clothing repair and construction, child development, interior design, and decision-making skills. Students will take part in many activities that will involve problem-solving and critical-thinking skills.

ART

The eighth grade art class allows the student the opportunity to investigate, critique and create original works of art through the media of drawing, painting, clay, sculpture, computer generated work and photography. Students will study and examine specific art periods, styles, and artists that will enhance the student's background knowledge needed to add and develop a deeper growth and knowledge for art understanding and studio creation.

HAL

Students must be identified as gifted to participate in HAL classes.

The Junior High 8th Grade HAL course is an elective class and meets every day for a semester. HAL students will work on a variety of topics to enhance their skills. Activities will be heavily technology based including Stop Motion, coding, college preparedness, and work in the Makerspace/Creation Station.

Exploring Business

In this 8th grade class, students will catch a glimpse into the world of business and begin to explore all of its functions and purpose in our daily lives. Students will develop a basic understanding and skills in economics, money, financial literacy, entrepreneurship and career opportunities.

DRAMA

This class is designed for students with an interest in the art of drama. This class will teach students about theatre history, on-stage movement, voice, characterization, and backstage technical theatre. Students will have hands-on experience in improvisation, performing a monologue, duet scene acting, and working on a backstage crew. **In drama, one of the technical crews we explore is stage makeup. All drama students are required to learn to apply and wear stage makeup.** At the end of the semester there will be a full production play in which all students will perform.

World Cultures with an emphasis on French Language and Culture

Students will develop a knowledge and appreciation for many global cultures, with an emphasis on French-speaking communities. Students will also learn some basic vocabulary, spelling, pronunciation, and phrases in the French language and possibly help students be better prepared for French I in high school.

INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGY

Eighth grade Industrial Technology is a semester long course in which students will be exposed to application of measurement and an understanding of tools and the safe operation of each. Students will know safe lab techniques and procedures and be able to understand the technical communication of the lab. Students will understand the different material types and properties as well as how to process those materials. Students will also be exposed to the different career opportunities that this field has to offer.

Maker Space Art

Prerequisite: Art 8 or concurrently enrolled in Art 8

This is an eighth grade art class that will allow students the opportunity to continue exploring art through advanced problem solving. Students will utilize the Maker Space with the use of the laser cutter, 3D printer, vinyl and CNC machines, as well as other art materials. Students will work on creativity and designing original works of art. **This class will be limited to 18 students.**

SPANISH CULTURE AND LANGUAGE

Students will develop a knowledge and appreciation for Spanish-speaking cultures and will learn some basic vocabulary, spelling, pronunciation, and phrases that are useful for beginning learners. This class should make a student more aware of the many Spanish-speaking cultures as well as possibly help students be better prepared for Spanish I in high school. This course is usually not recommended for those who speak Spanish very well.

LEARNING STRATEGIES READING/VOCABULARY BUILDING

By Teacher Recommendation - This course is designed to assist students with reading and vocabulary strategies to enhance their comprehension of learning materials in their content classes. Throughout this semester long class students will be introduced to strategies such as SQ3R, Multipass, and Before/During/After Reading Strategies using Higher Order Thinking Skills. Students will learn that reading is more than just decoding and phonics. This course will also stress vocabulary using Marzano's 6 Step Process for Vocabulary Instruction.

LEARNING STRATEGIES WRITING I

New By Teacher Recommendation - This research based course from Kansas University is designed to help students who struggle with expressing their ideas in written form. Writing I helps students recognize and write 6 sentence patterns using simple and compound sentences. This course will help students better meet the writing demands in their classes for daily work and essay tests. Writing I helps students recognize and write 14 sentence patterns using simple, compound, complex and compound-complex sentences.

LEARNING STRATEGIES WRITING II

By Teacher Recommendation - This course incorporates the research based Paragraph Writing Strategy and Theme Writing Strategy from Kansas University. The Paragraph Writing Strategy is designed to be used by students to organize and write paragraphs and essays in order to be able to respond more efficiently to the complex writing demands in secondary and postsecondary settings. Students will learn how to list ideas related to a topic, plan the point of view and the verb tense to be used in the paragraph, plan the sequence in which ideas will be expressed, and write a variety of topic, detail, and clincher sentences. The Theme Writing Strategy will teach students how to use a set graphic organizer (TOWERS) to develop their writing in an organized sequential format. **Writing Strategies I is encouraged first, but not required.**

INTRO TO STRENGTH & CONDITIONING

The class is designed for beginning weight training students. Class participants are expected to dress out and participate daily. Students undergo a battery of physical tests including vertical jump, pacer test, curl-up test, push-up test, sit n reach test, 12 min run test. Emphasis will be placed on safety, use of proper lifting techniques, establishing workout routines, cardiovascular endurance (running) and record keeping. Class participants will be involved in physical conditioning and general skills activities that will help improve flexibility, coordination, footwork, power and strength for all sports activities. All students will be provided a structured lifting program and are expected to follow the program. Free weights, machines and other workout instruments will be incorporated into each student's workout routines. If you enjoy physical challenges, occasionally sore muscles as well as improved athletic fitness this is the class for you.

FULL YEAR CLASSES:

Spanish I

This course is a high school level course. It is an introduction to the Spanish language with emphasis on oral comprehension and mastery of basic vocabulary and elementary grammatical concepts. This course would be an excellent background if pursuing a Bachelor of Arts degree in college. Students will be expected to participate daily in class through oral and written work in the language. This would count for high school elective credit. Prerequisite is an A/B English average as well as teacher recommendation.

COMMUNICATIONS PRODUCTIONS

Communications Productions is a year-long class that will focus on several media facets to deliver information. This class will create the yearbook, newscasts, newsletters, and other forms of communication. **Entrance into this class will be based upon an application process.**

BAND

The concert band is composed of 8th grade students. Prior musical experience on a band instrument is required. It is expected that the students will be able to perform at an acceptable level any and all assigned music or lesson material. Concerts, festivals, ensembles, solos, and lessons are required class activities. Marching band is composed of all seventh and eighth grade band students. Marching band activities could include the Lions Club parade and selected home Junior High football games.

CHORUS

Chorus is a non-audition ensemble which is open to all 8th grade students. Literature is chosen from various time periods, languages and genres in order to provide students with a strong choral foundation. Students will explore basic concepts of music theory, tone color and vocal production. Students will have the opportunity to perform in public concerts during the school year, including one competition. All performances require dress clothes and are a graded part of the class.

ORCHESTRA

This class is open to all string instrument players in the 8th grade. The group performs four times per year in concerts and at a contest festival. Solo and ensemble playing is encouraged. Instruction on string performance techniques and rehearsal of concert music are the major study areas. The "Essential Technique for Strings" intermediate level book is required. Wind and percussion players are occasionally selected from the band to rehearse and perform with the strings. Prior musical experience on a string instrument is STRONGLY suggested, but students who are beginning an orchestral instrument are encouraged to contact the teacher to make arrangements.