

Alamo Heights Junior School

2017 – 2018



Course Description
Booklet

www.ahisd.net

Alamo Heights Junior School

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Note: Alamo Heights ISD does not discriminate on the basis of sex, disability, race, color, age, or national origin in the educational programs, activities, or employment as required by Title IX, Section 504 and Title VI. Courses described in this booklet will not be taught if enrollment is insufficient.

ADVANCED GT COURSE PLACEMENT PROCESS

Prerequisite: Student must meet criteria established by the AHISD Board of Trustees for placement in Advanced GT courses (see next page for more information).

For additional information and links, select the GT Placement link on the AHJS webpage.

The placement process includes:

- **Parent Inquiry** is made concerning student's eligibility for GT screening.
Typically, the parent will be given Permission to Screen / Test form by the guidance counselor when counselors visit classrooms to discuss course placements in the fall for placement the following year. All forms are on our webpage and communicated through our Monday Mail distribution.
- **Screening** (and sometimes **Testing**) takes place.
- Placement Committee meets to review the **Student Summary Profile** to see if the student meets the AHISD Board-approved criteria in the following areas:
 - Objective Information
 - Standardized Ability Test scores (i.e. CogAT)
 - Standardized Achievement Test scores (i.e. Iowa reading and math)
 - Subjective Information
 - Student Rating Scale completed by classroom teacher
 - Semester grade average
- If a student qualifies for GT, a **Permission to Enter Form** is sent home.
- Other Placement Review options that are sometimes employed include:
 - Appeal
 - Probation
 - Furlough
 - Exit
- Students in PreAP/ GT Courses must maintain a 65 at the end of the first nine weeks and a semester average of 70 to remain in the course for the spring.

GIFTED EDUCATION INFORMATION

Gifted Education Definitions:

"Gifted and talented student" means a child or youth who performs at or shows the potential for performing at a remarkably high level of accomplishment when compared to others of the same age, experience, or environment and who exhibits high performance capability in an intellectual, creative, or artistic area, possesses an unusual capacity for leadership, or excels in a specific academic field.

Education Code 29.121

Students who participate in services designed for gifted/talented students will demonstrate skills in self-directed learning, thinking, research, and communication as evidenced by the development of innovative products and performances that reflect individually and creativity and are advanced in relation to students of similar age, experience or environment (from the *Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students*).

"A gifted person is someone who shows, or has the potential for showing, an exceptional level of performance in one or more areas of expression."

National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC)

General Statement:

"Some of these abilities are very general and can affect a broad spectrum of the person's life, such as leadership skills or the ability to think creatively. Some are very specific talents and are only evident in particular circumstance, such as a special aptitude in mathematics, science, or music. The term giftedness provides a general reference to this spectrum of abilities without being specific or dependent on a single measure or index. It is generally recognized that approximately five percent of the student population, or three million children, in the United States are considered gifted." (NAGC)

GT vs. Non-GT Sections

GT sections of Pre-AP courses are expected to be different in the way content is covered, in the processes that are used, and in the products that are created. GT will be taught using techniques that are considered best practices for GT students. Although the curriculum and general grading standards will be very similar to non-GT courses, the instruction and work will be differentiated to meet the learning needs of GT students. Different, however, should not simply mean "more work" or "outrageously challenging," but it refers to *different* types of assignments, products, processes, pacing, etc. Non-GT sections of PreAP maintain a high level of intellectual challenge and academic rigor.

AHISD Board Policy

The District shall provide an array of learning opportunities for gifted / talented students in kindergarten through grade 12 and shall inform parents of the opportunities. Options shall include:

1. Instructional and organizational patterns that enable identified students to work together as a group, to work with other students, and to work independently.
2. A continuum of learning experiences that leads to the development of advanced-level products and performances.
3. In-school, and when possible, out-of-school options relevant to the students area of strength that are available during the school year.

Opportunities to accelerate in areas of strength.

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Alamo Heights Junior School

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19 TAC 89.3

Students must meet criteria established by the AHISD Board of Trustees for placement in any Advanced GT course.

Updated 01/30/17 YTP

GRADE LEVEL VS PRE-AP PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

What is the Grade Level Program?

The Grade Level Program at Alamo Heights High School introduces college preparation in curriculum that exceeds the required Texas standards. With extensive teacher support and review to ensure course mastery, the Grade Level Program provides opportunities for students to develop academic and scholarly skills. Students are challenged to work collaboratively and independently toward their pursuit of personal growth and excellence. These courses instruct the knowledge and skills necessary for success in entry-level college and university courses, as well as career readiness.

What is the Pre-AP Program?

The Pre-AP Program allows students to participate in college preparatory courses while in junior school. Pre-AP courses simulate the college environment, training students for the college setting. Pre-AP courses introduce concepts and prepare students for the challenging curricula of high school AP courses. Because the AP curriculum is standardized across the nation, and the depth and breadth of these challenging courses are uniformly recognized, colleges and universities look favorably on students who have completed this course work.

What are the differences between the Grade Level Program and the Pre-AP Program?

Grade Level Junior School Course:

- **Pace/Assessment** – Course objectives are covered at a moderate pace. Unit tests are given approximately every 2-3 weeks. Daily grades are taken more regularly. In order to reinforce material instructed in class, a student is assigned, on average, up to 110-120 minutes of homework weekly.
- **Student Characteristics** – Student is on grade level and shows average interest in the subject. Student is expected to develop good time management and organizational skills.
- **Depth** – Course objectives are aligned with TEKS and are expanded with AHISD expectations.
- **Expectations** – Student should attend class daily; make good use of time, and complete assignments and homework.

Pre-AP Junior School Course:

- **Pace/Assessment** – Course objectives are covered at an accelerated pace. Unit tests, given approximately every 2-3 weeks, are longer in length and are designed to emphasize a high level of critical thinking. Because of the depth and complexity of Pre-AP classes, the workload is more challenging; a student can expect up to 180-240 minutes of homework per week.
- **Student Characteristics** – Student is above grade level and shows considerable interest in the subject. Student should be self-directed, self-motivated, and accomplished in time management and organizational skills.
- **Depth** – Course objectives are aligned with TEKS and extended in depth and content with AHISD and AP College Board expectations.

- **Expectations** – Students should attend class daily, complete all assignments on time, and devote significant time outside of class for research, projects, and extended writing and reading assignments.

Who can enroll in a Pre-AP course?

Any student can enroll in a Pre-AP. In determining a proper choice of level, students should consider their grades and interest in prior courses. Teachers and counselors can help students make informed decisions on the appropriate level of course. Students are cautioned to choose their classes carefully and to pay attention to their overall class load and extra-curricular load.

Dual Language/Spanish Immersion Information

AHISD Dual Language Program Philosophy

We promote both Spanish and English as languages of equal value. We believe that by placing importance on both languages, we are not only preparing our students for the multi-lingual, multicultural world in which we live, but we are also teaching them the importance of other cultures in our increasingly global society. Dual Language classes in grades 1-5 are comprised of English Language Learners (ELL) and native English speakers. Spanish Immersion classes in grade 1-5 are comprised of native English speakers. In the sixth grade, both sets of student join together into the Language Program.

Program Goals

To promote high academic achievement for all students
To develop first and second language skills for bilingualism and bi-literacy
To promote cross-cultural understanding for all students

Instructional Time of Language Program

Instructional time in Spanish/English based on course enrollment (2-3 courses delivered in Spanish per school year. 1 core content area course and 1-2 elective area course/s) courses vary dependent on English Learner's English and/or Spanish proficiency based on TELPAS.

During school year student arrivals or transfers into Language Program:

English Learner students in 6th - 8th grade:

Newcomers to US schools. Previous participation in a bilingual program at another district/school
Spanish fluency/capacity for academic performance in Spanish

Non-English Learner students in 6th -8th grade:

Previous participation (with documentation) and success in bilingual Dual Language or Spanish Immersion Program at another district/school
Spanish fluency/capacity for academic performance in Spanish as measured by Woodcock-Munoz Language Survey

Features of AHISD Dual Language/Spanish Immersion Education Program

The District provides an array of learning opportunities for Dual Language/Spanish Immersion students at the Junior School. Options include:

1. Teaching Strategies for Language & Content – cooperative learning, thematic units, hands-on materials, visual and graphic displays, language-rich environments; language comprehension strategies (repetition and rephrasing); varied opportunities for reading, writing and speaking in both English and Spanish.

2. Separation of Languages by Teachers & Students – teachers teach for extended periods of time in one designated language and encourage both native speakers and second-language learners to communicate in the language of instruction to the best of their ability.
3. Integration of Students – students from both language backgrounds learn together for significant portions of the day.
4. Family & Community Involvement – parental and community support is important; a serious effort will be made to ensure that both languages and cultures are equally valued; families are included in school decision-making processes.

SUGGESTED CORE CONTENT PATHWAY FOR 6TH STUDENTS IN DUAL LANGUAGE/SPANISH IMMERSION

- One course of **English**: English 6 (*GL*) and/or *ESL (*Beginning to Intermediate or Advanced or Advanced High*)
- One course of **Reading**: Spanish (or English, if ELL*)
- One course of **Math**: All Math Courses are taught in English
- One course of **Science**: PreAP/GT Spanish (or English, if ELL*)
- One Course of **Social Studies**: PreAP/GT Spanish (or English, if ELL*)

*based on LPAC committee recommendation (for ELL only)

SUGGESTED CORE CONTENT PATHWAY FOR 7TH AND 8TH STUDENTS IN DUAL LANGUAGE/SPANISH IMMERSION

- One course of **English**: English 7 (*GL* or *Pre-AP/GT*) or *ESL (*Beginning to Intermediate or Advanced or Advanced High*)
- One course of **Math**: All Math Courses are taught in English
- One course of **Science**: PreAP/GT Spanish (or English, if ELL*)
- One Course of **Social Studies**: PreAP/GT Spanish (or English, if ELL*)

*based on LPAC committee recommendation (for ELL only)

Contact Information:

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HOMEWORK GUIDELINES

Junior School Homework Guidelines: Grading

- All homework impacts learning and will be assessed, but not all homework needs to be recorded as a grade.
- Homework should be assessed by the teacher and returned to the student quickly, in time to impact learning. Homework should be returned prior to a summative assessment so that meaningful learning can occur.
- Homework, generally, is formative assessment of what a student knows at a particular point in time. While it may be graded, grades on homework for formative assessment should not count as more than 20% of the student's cycle grade.
- Meaningful and purposeful homework enhances learning and provides feedback about learning. When completed late, but prior to the summative assessment, it should be accepted and graded. Teachers are not required to give full credit to late work.
- If teachers assign group work outside of class, they should secure parent permission for students to work in groups. Students should have the option to work individually.
- For completion grades, teachers should still assess the work and provide feedback to students.

Junior School Homework Guidelines: Resources

- Check teacher web pages for information regularly.
- Each of the following core departments of English, math, science, social studies, and LOTE will provide homework help, such as lunch bunch, tutoring, study hall, etc.
- Students may be required to attend homework help sessions.
- The library is open before school, at lunch, and after school. Consult the junior school website for library hours. <http://www.ahisd.net/campuses/ahjs/library.htm>

Junior School Weekly Target Times Per Course*							
		RDG	ELA	SC	SS	MATH	LOTE
Grade Level	6 TH GRADE	80	40	40	40	100	
	7 TH GRADE	100	50	50	50	110	
	8 TH GRADE		90	60	60	120	60
PreAP	6 TH GRADE	80	40	40	40	100	
	7 TH GRADE	120	60	60	60	120	
	8 TH GRADE		110	100	100	150	80
*The times listed above are not weekly maximums; they are averages over a unit of study							
**Courses not listed here should use course guidelines for similar courses. For example, speech should follow grade level ELA, food science should follow grade level science, etc.							
*** ELA= English Language Arts; SC = Science; SS =Social Studies; LOTE = Languages Other Than English							

**Taken from Alamo Heights ISD 'Guidelines for Meaningful and Purposeful Homework'.*

**Indicates throughout this handbook that the course has a prerequisite.*

NEW COURSES OFFERED FOR 2017-2018

GRADE 7th & 8th

Elective- Environmental Science

COURSE DESCRIPTION	This is an elective laboratory course that investigates processes that affect the earth's environment and explores solutions to environmental challenges. Topics covered include ecology, aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems, water and air pollution, atmospheric science, waste disposal, conservation of resources, alternative fuel sources, and the earth's energy sources.
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GRADE 8th

Algebra I Grade Level

COURSE DESCRIPTION	The Algebra I grade level course will serve students who completed PreAP or GT Pre-Algebra in the 7 th grade but who may need a moderated pace and deeper review of Pre-Algebra skills to be successful in mastering the content of Algebra I in 8 th grade. Prerequisite: Students Must have successfully completed 7th PreAP Math.
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COURSES

ENGLISH

ENGLISH 6

COURSE DESCRIPTION	English 6 is a course that challenges students to write in a variety of modes throughout the year while utilizing correct and standard spelling, mechanics, and usage. These modes represent both the creative, storytelling side of writing (poetry, personal narratives, and short stories), as well as the expository and more practical writing side (persuasive essays and letter-writing). Students are encouraged to think creatively and critically throughout the writing process from choosing writing topics to crafting a final written product. Students also demonstrate clear focus, speaking effectively to communicate, and listening in both formal and informal situations.	
	ENGLISH 6	ENGLISH 6 GT/ PreAP
PACE	Skills are introduced, modeled, practiced, and reviewed. Repetition and review occurs as needed. Skills are then embedded and practiced within the writing process throughout the year.	Curriculum is accelerated; the expected rate of reading and writing is beyond proficient. Students experience more independent tasks.

ENGLISH 7

COURSE DESCRIPTION	The goal of English 7 is to develop writing craft and critical thinking and reading skills. Students will study and write in a variety of genres: memoir, poetry, short stories, novels, literary analysis, and essay. The focus throughout is on practicing the writing process (prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing), deepening the reading/writing connection, and using discussion about literature to enhance both writing and community life.	
	ENGLISH 7	ENGLISH 7 GT/ PreAP
PACE	Skills are introduced, modeled, practiced extensively, and reviewed. Repetition and re-teach occurs regularly. Skills are embedded and practiced in a spiraling mode throughout the year.	Curriculum is accelerated; the expected rate of reading and writing is beyond proficient. Students experience more independent tasks.

ENGLISH DYSLEXIA 7

COURSE DESCRIPTION	<i>Course description will be complete by the week of February 27 and communicated to parents of students in the dyslexia program by the teacher.</i>
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ENGLISH 8

COURSE DESCRIPTION	In the eighth grade English course, students study literature, writing, and research. They will write for various purposes and in many genres, using critical and analytical thinking in their writing about and discussions of short stories, drama, poetry, and novels. The students will read selections from their literature textbook as well as other selected books during the year. Students will take STAAR Reading in April and must pass this assessment in order to be promoted to ninth grade.	
	ENGLISH 8	ENGLISH 8 GT/ PreAP 8
PACE	Skills are introduced, modeled, practiced extensively, and reviewed. Repetition and re-teach occurs regularly. Skills are embedded and practiced in a spiraling mode throughout the year.	Curriculum is accelerated; the expected rate of reading and writing is beyond proficient. Students experience more independent tasks. The reading of simultaneous texts is occasionally expected.
ENGLISH DYSLEXIA 8		
COURSE DESCRIPTION	<i>Course description will be complete by the week of February 27 and communicated to parents of students in the dyslexia program by the teacher.</i>	

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

	BEGINNING TO INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED	ADVANCED HIGH
COURSE DESCRIPTION	Students in ESL I have English skills at a beginning to intermediate level. Some students are recent arrivals with no English knowledge. Others are limited-English with limited proficiency in reading, writing, listening, and speaking. ESL focuses on acquiring conversational and academic English via phonics, pronunciation, vocabulary development and grammar. ESL offers culturally responsive instruction and includes cultural adjustment support.	Students in ESL have the English skills at an advanced level. ESL counts as their English course. Most of the students have been in the U.S. schooling for more than three years and take the STAAR on grade level. ESL focuses on providing comprehensive input using the TEKS along with higher order thinking skills. Linguistically, the students work on developing cognitive academic language, while strengthening their communication skills. There are more proficient speakers of English in this class, allowing for meaningful interaction between peers. Native culture and language are integrated via multicultural lessons.	Students in ESL have English skills at an advanced-high level. ESL counts as their English course. These are the transitional students: they are almost ready to exit the ESL program but need the extra support for an additional year. Students take STAAR on grade level. Linguistic development focuses on cognitive academic language via enhanced English literacy.
PACE	There are typically three weeks per unit of study.	This curriculum is similar to 6th grade English/Reading, but targeted for English language learners (ELL).	This curriculum is similar to 7th grade English/Reading but targeted for English language learners (ELL); therefore, ELL strategies are utilized.

READING

READING 6

COURSE DESCRIPTION	Reading 6 offers instruction in fluency, vocabulary development, comprehension skills, media literacy, literary devices and terms, and research through fiction and nonfiction text studies. Students are engaged in independent reading daily using self-selected texts. Students develop higher level thinking skills necessary to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate various forms of texts on an instructional and independent level. Students develop their confidence and enjoyment of reading.	
	READING 6	READING 6 Dual Language/Spanish Immersion PreAP/GT *
PACE	Skills are introduced, modeled, practiced extensively, and reviewed. Repetition and re-teach occurs regularly. Fluency continues to develop.	*This curriculum mirrors the 6 th grade Reading course; however, instruction and student work is primarily in Spanish only. Language program goals are integrated throughout.

READING DYSLEXIA 6

COURSE DESCRIPTION	(This is for a child who may have graduated from dyslexia program in fifth grade, but needs a year of support transitioning to the JS. MOST of these students should be able to exit from dyslexia support classes after this year. Also appropriate for newly identified students in sixth grade) This reading course is provided for sixth grade students with district identified dyslexia needs. This small group reading course is designed for students transitioning to the secondary level, who need support in specific English and Reading skills, such as comprehension, vocabulary, grammar and writing, with the use of technology and accommodations. This course takes the place of other grade level reading classes.
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READING 7

COURSE DESCRIPTION	Reading 7 course provides STAAR intervention and continued development of reading strategies. Instruction and enrichment in increasing fluency and enhancing comprehension are included. Novels, a variety of expository texts, and technology integration are utilized to support learning. Deeper comprehension application to future expository text learning for high school and college readiness is provided. This course provides strategic reading instruction for their classroom reading as well as for their personal reading. This is a required course for students who did not meet STAAR expectations in reading.
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READING 8

COURSE DESCRIPTION	Reading 8 course provides STAAR intervention and continued development of reading strategies. Instruction and enrichment in increasing fluency and enhancing comprehension are included. Novels, a variety of expository texts, and technology integration are utilized to support learning. Deeper comprehension application to future expository text learning for high school and college readiness is provided. This course provides strategic reading instruction for their classroom reading as well as for their personal reading. This is a required course for students who did not meet STAAR expectations in reading.
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MATH

MATH 6

COURSE DESCRIPTION	The Mathematics 6 course includes a study of the concepts and skills associated with the understanding of numbers, the place-value system, the four basic operations (addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division) of whole numbers, decimals, fractions and integers. Students will study problem solving techniques, financial literacy, measurement concepts using both metric and customary units, properties and relationships of geometric shapes, representation of numbers on a line, percent, and ratios to describe proportional relationships. Emphasis is placed on algebraic reasoning and using ratios to describe direct proportional relations. Sixth grade GT/ PreAP Math is an accelerated curriculum that combines the 6 th grade curriculum with additional concepts from the 7 th grade curriculum. Additional emphasis is placed on algebraic thinking and higher-level thinking skills.	
	MATH 6	MATH 6 GT/ Pre-AP
PACE	Units of study approximately range from two–four weeks. Typically, a new topic or expansion of topic will be every other day.	Units of study approximately range from two–three weeks. Typically, a new topic or expansion of topic will be covered each day.

MATH 7

COURSE DESCRIPTION	The Mathematics 7 course is designed to give students the fluency in number operations and an introduction to the foundational concepts they require for success in Pre-Algebra. Students will develop skills with a variety of different number forms including fractions, decimals, percents, and integers, will compare, order, convert between different forms, and solve application problems using these different forms of numbers. Algebraic concepts will include writing, manipulating and solving simple equations, including those that display proportional relationships. Geometric concepts focus on attributes and measurement of 2- and 3-dimensional figures. In addition, students will explore concepts of probability, data analysis, charts and graphs, and statistics. This course emphasizes real-world applications and will use their foundational skills in conjunction with problem-solving strategies and conceptual understanding. Seventh grade GT/ PreAP Math is an accelerated course of comprehensive content that includes all standard topics of junior high school mathematics. This course enables the students to make the transition from elementary school mathematics to algebra in one year. Emphasis is placed on pre-algebra skills and concepts such as variables, equation solving, and problem solving. Topics of instruction include but are not limited to positive and negative numbers, rational numbers, geometric figures, ratio, proportion, percent, scientific notation, functions, equations and inequalities, the coordinate plane, area and volume, right triangles, statistics and probability, and trigonometric ratios.	
	MATH 7	MATH 7 Pre-Algebra GT/ PreAP
PACE	Units of study last, on average, every two–four weeks. Typically, a new topic or expansion of topic will be every other day.	Units of study last, on average, every two–three weeks. Typically, a new topic or expansion of topic will be covered each day.

	MATH 8 PRE-ALGEBRA
COURSE DESCRIPTION	Pre-Algebra is a course designed to introduce students to basic algebra concepts. Students will develop skills to manipulate and solve equations with different forms of numbers and variables. Many of the concepts will build upon proportional relationships including similar figures, percentages, and predicting with probability. Units will include rational numbers, comparing and ordering different forms of numbers, statistics, charts and graphs, probability, and geometry. The entire course will emphasize real-world application problems as well as theoretical understanding. Students will be expected to use their foundational skills to develop problem-solving strategies.
PACE	Units of study approximately range from two–four weeks. Typically, a new topic or expansion of topic will be covered each day.

	ALGEBRA I GT/ Pre-AP
COURSE DESCRIPTION	Algebra I is the foundation course in the formal mathematics sequence. Students use a variety of representations (concrete, numerical, algorithmic and graphical), tools and technologies. Students will model mathematical situations to solve meaningful real world problems with a focus on linear and quadratic functions, real numbers, operations with algebraic expressions, solving and graphing equations and inequalities in one or two variables, factoring polynomials, radicals and exponents. This course is intended to provide the mathematics necessary for the successful study of Geometry and Algebra II.. Prerequisite: Students Must have successfully completed 7th PreAP Math.
PACE	New sections are covered, on average, every day. The pace is an accelerated level of Algebra I.

Algebra I Grade Level
The Algebra I grade level course will serve students who completed PreAP or GT Pre-Algebra in the 7 th grade but who may need a moderated pace and deeper review of Pre-Algebra skills to be successful in mastering the content of Algebra I in 8 th grade. . Prerequisite: Students Must have successfully completed 7th PreAP Math.

SCIENCE

SCIENCE 6			
COURSE DESCRIPTION	This course emphasizes problem solving using an inquiry-based approach with a focus on physical science. Content strands include <i>scientific investigations and reasoning</i> , whereby students conduct laboratory and field investigations on the following concepts: <i>matter and energy, force, motion, and energy types, earth and space</i> , and <i>organisms and the environment</i> . Mathematics and technology are embedded in this curriculum. Overarching concepts include change and constancy, patterns and cycles, systems, models, and scale.		
	SCIENCE 6	SCIENCE 6 Dual Language/Spanish Immersion PreAP/GT *	SCIENCE 6 GT/ PreAP
PACE	It is typical to explore units within the content strands for sixth grade in four to six week time frame.	*This curriculum mirrors the 6 th grade Science course; however, instruction and student work is primarily in Spanish only. Language program goals are integrated throughout.	It is typical to explore units with the content strands for sixth grade in three to five week time frame.
SCIENCE 7			
COURSE DESCRIPTION	This course emphasizes problem solving using an inquiry-based approach with a focus on organisms and the environment. Content strands are emphasized with more depth at the 7th grade level to include <i>scientific investigations and reasoning</i> , whereby the student conducts laboratory and field investigations on the following concepts: <i>matter and energy, force, motion, and energy types, earth and space</i> , and <i>organisms and the environment</i> . Mathematics and technology are embedded in this curriculum. Overarching concepts include change and constancy, patterns and cycles, systems, models, and scale.		
	SCIENCE 7	SCIENCE 7 Dual Language/Spanish Immersion PreAP/GT *	SCIENCE 7 GT/ PreAP
PACE	It is typical to explore units within the content strands in a three week time frames.	*This curriculum mirrors the 7 th grade Science course; however, instruction and student work is primarily in Spanish only. Language program goals are integrated throughout.	It is typical to explore units with the content strands in two to three-week time frames.

SCIENCE 8		
COURSE DESCRIPTION	This course emphasizes problem solving using an inquiry-based approach with a focus on earth and space science. Content strands are emphasized with more depth at the 8th grade level to include <i>scientific investigations and reasoning</i> , whereby the student conducts laboratory and field investigations on the following concepts: <i>matter and energy, force, motion, and energy types, earth and space</i> , and <i>organisms and the environment</i> . Mathematics and technology are embedded in this curriculum. Overarching concepts include change and constancy, patterns and cycles, systems, models, and scale.	
	SCIENCE 8	SCIENCE 8 GT/ PreAP
PACE	It is typical to explore units within the content strands for eighth grade in two to three week time frames.	It is typical to explore units within the content strands for eighth grade in one and a half to two week time frames.

STEM 8 PreAP Science	
COURSE DESCRIPTION	Through the incorporation of the eighth grade Science TEKS, along with components of technology, engineering, and math, students will have the opportunity to engage in a rigorous, project-based classroom environment as they are presented real-world problems and asked to use STEM thinking and hands-on skills to create solutions. <u>This class will count as an eighth grade PreAP science credit.</u>

SOCIAL STUDIES

SOCIAL STUDIES 6			
COURSE DESCRIPTION	<p>This course involves the study of people, places, and societies of the contemporary world from the following regions of the world: Europe, Russia and the Eurasian republics, North America, Central America and the Caribbean, South America, Southwest Asia-North Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, East Asia, Southeast Asia, Australia, and the Pacific Realm. Units of study include all of the following: the influence of individuals and groups on historical and contemporary events in those societies and identifying the locations and geographic characteristics of various societies, different ways of organizing economic and governmental systems, including limited and unlimited government, and the nature of citizenship in various societies, comparisons of institutions common to all societies such as government, education, and religious institutions, how levels of technology affect the development of the various societies and identifying different points of view about events and finally the concept of frame of reference is introduced as an influence on an individual's point of view.</p>		
	SOCIAL STUDIES 6	SOCIAL STUDIES 6 Dual Language/Spanish Immersion PreAP/GT *	SOCIAL STUDIES 6 GT
PACE	Typical pace on average is three to five weeks per unit of study.	*This curriculum mirrors the 6th grade Social Studies course; however, instruction and student work is primarily in Spanish only. Language program goals are integrated throughout.	Concepts are aligned with AHISD expectations. The course emphasizes critical thinking skills. Typical pace on average is three to four weeks per unit.

TEXAS HISTORY 7

COURSE DESCRIPTION	This course focuses on the history of Texas from early times to the present, examining the full scope of Texas history, including Texas as a Republic, Early Statehood, Texas in the Civil War and Reconstruction, Cotton, Cattle and Boxcars, Age of Oil, Texas in the Great Depression and World War II, Civil Rights and Conservatism, and Contemporary Texas eras. The focus in each era is on key individuals, events, and issues and their impact on Texas. Units of study will include the following: the distribution of population within and among the regions and the factors that caused Texas to change from an agrarian to an urban society; the structure and functions of municipal, county, and state governments, including the influence of the U.S. Constitution on the Texas Constitution, and an examination of the rights and responsibilities of Texas citizens; a study of primary and secondary sources that examine the rich and diverse cultural background of Texas to identify the different racial and ethnic groups who settled in order to build a republic and then a state; and the impact of scientific discoveries and technological innovations on the development of Texas in various industries, such as agriculture, energy, medicine, technology, and aerospace.		
	TEXAS HISTORY 7	TEXAS HISTORY 7 Dual Language/Spanish Immersion PreAP/GT *	TEXAS HISTORY 7 GT
PACE	Typical pace on average is three to five weeks per unit of study.	*This curriculum mirrors the 7th grade Social Studies course; however, instruction and student work is primarily in Spanish only. Language program goals are integrated throughout.	Concepts are aligned with AHISD expectations. The course emphasizes critical thinking skills. Typical pace on average is three to four weeks per unit.

U. S. HISTORY 8

COURSE DESCRIPTION	This course involves the study of the history of the United States from the early colonial period through Reconstruction. Historical content focuses on the political, economic, 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, westward expansion, sectionalism, Civil War, and Reconstruction. Students explore the physical characteristics of the United States and their impact on population distribution and settlement patterns in the past and present. Units of study include all of the following: analyzing the various economic factors that influenced the development of colonial America and the early years of the Republic; identifying the origins of the free enterprise system; examining 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; evaluating the impact of Supreme Court cases and major reform movements of the 19 th century and the rights and responsibilities of citizens of the United States, as well as the importance of effective leadership in a democratic society; evaluating the impact of scientific discoveries and technological innovations on the development of the United States. In addition, students evaluate bias in written, oral, and visual material.		
	US HISTORY 8	US HISTORY 8 Dual Language/Spanish Immersion PreAP/GT *	US HISTORY 8 GT/ PreAP
PACE	Typical pace on average is three to five weeks per unit.	*This curriculum mirrors the 8 th grade US History course; however, instruction and student work is primarily in Spanish only. Language program goals are integrated throughout.	Concepts are aligned with AHISD expectations. The course emphasizes critical thinking skills. Typical pace on average is three to four weeks per unit.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

The Special Education department at the Alamo Heights Junior School offers co-teach support in the general educational setting for Math, English, Social Studies and Science. Co-teaching is a method of delivering instruction in which general and special educators share responsibility for planning, delivery and evaluation of instructional techniques for a group of students. General and special educators work collaboratively to facilitate the mastery of student goals as determined by the IEP committee in an integrated setting.

ENGLISH 6, 7, 8 RESOURCE

COURSE DESCRIPTION	ENGLISH 6, 7, 8 RESOURCE	
	This course is designed for the special education student who needs significant support in the area of language arts. Students are given opportunities to develop and strengthen reading, vocabulary, writing, spelling, grammar, and oral communication skills by taking into consideration each student's strengths and readiness levels.	

READING 6, 7, 8 RESOURCE

COURSE DESCRIPTION	READING 6, 7, 8 RESOURCE	
	This course is designed to remediate reading difficulties. Students learn word attack skills, including phonemic awareness, structural analysis, and contextual cues. Vocabulary development and comprehension skills are also emphasized. Reading skills are applied to a variety of practical situations. In addition, students are exposed to a variety of genres.	

MATH 6, 7, 8 RESOURCE

COURSE DESCRIPTION	MATH 6, 7, 8 RESOURCE	
	This course is designed for the special education student, who needs significant support in mathematics. This class offers a modified curriculum, which provides students with opportunities to strengthen their basic skills in math calculations, math reasoning and other life-related mathematical processes for their levels of abilities. A hands-on approach to learning is stressed.	

ALTERNATE CENTERED EDUCATION (ACE)

COURSE DESCRIPTION	The ACE class is designed for the special education student who requires additional support and structure in the school environment. Content and curriculum for this highly structured class are modified for each student according to his/her individual needs. This behavior modification class stresses self-responsibility. Students likely to be placed in the ACE program are those experiencing affective/behavioral difficulties that impede academic progress.
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STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM (SST)

COURSE DESCRIPTION	Student Support Team (SST) class is dedicated to helping students with disabilities reach the highest level of independence they can possibly reach. With the support of paraprofessionals and peer tutors, students receive individual instruction in: functional academics, domestic skills, vocational skills, recreation and leisure skills, and community skills. These skills assist our students to become more productive and independent in all life environments.
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HEALTH / TECHNOLOGY

HEALTH	
COURSE DESCRIPTION	The main focus of the Health Education component is for students to acquire comprehensive health information and the skills necessary to become health adults. Life skills will be emphasized in the following areas: 1) nutrition; 2) physical fitness; 3) growth and development; 4) healthy relationships and 5) managing stress. In all of these areas, students will need to analyze information and apply critical-thinking, decision-making, goal setting and problem solving skills for promoting a lifetime of healthy decision-making.

TECHNOLOGY APPLICATIONS	
COURSE DESCRIPTION	The technology applications curriculum has four strands: foundations, information acquisition, work in solving problems, and communication. This nine week project based course in technology applications includes: 1) improving keyboarding skills, web browsing, using application software (word processing, spreadsheets, publishing and presentations), as well as working with graphics/animation software; 2) the nine areas of digital citizenship (online etiquette, online communication, online education, online access, online commerce, online responsibility, online rights, online safety and online security), with an emphasis on Cyber bullying Prevention and Awareness; and 3) file handling by locating, storing, retrieving and acquiring desired information on LANs and the Internet. Upon completion of course, students should have knowledge of technology-related terms, concepts, data input strategies, making informed decisions about technologies and their applications and demonstrate the ability to select and use software for a defined task.

INTERMEDIATE COMPUTERS GRADE 7*	
COURSE DESCRIPTION	This one semester course is designed for students who have made a B or better in their Technology Applications course. This is a project-oriented class where students will enhance their computer knowledge and identify an area of personal interest from exposure to digital animation, video production, graphic design, 3D Modeling, web design, and block programming. *Prerequisite: Technology Applications.

ADVANCED COMPUTERS GRADE 8*	
COURSE DESCRIPTION	This one semester course is designed for students who have made a B or better in the Intermediate Computers course. This is a project-oriented class where students will enhance their computer knowledge at an advanced level and identify an area of personal interest from exposure to digital animation, video production, graphic design, 3D Modeling, web design, block programming, and coding. Students taking this course will have a better understanding of their interests as they enter high school and select their electives. Students are expected to create a digital portfolio that can be presented at the high school level. *Prerequisite: Intermediate Computers.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION 6 / PE 4 LIFE / ATHLETICS

PHYSICAL EDUCATION 6	
COURSE DESCRIPTION	The Physical Education curriculum is designed to guide students in the process of being physically active over their lifetime. The area of focus is on the five health-related components of fitness, which include cardiovascular endurance, muscular endurance, muscular strength, flexibility, and body composition. Through wellness and health units, individual sports and team sports, cooperative and team building activities, students gain the knowledge and skills to continue being active throughout their lifetime. A school-wide intramural all-star program in team sports is also provided for those students chosen by their peers and/or coach to represent their class in a particular sport. This is a semester class.

PE 4 LIFE 7 & 8	
COURSE DESCRIPTION	This is a Physical Education class designed to prepare students for a lifetime of sport and activity participation while having fun. This fun, no experience necessary, curriculum is designed for the students to have a variety of activities to choose from. The state required TEKS will be taught through the following activities & more: Hiking, badminton, camping, flag football, archery, tennis, bowling, ping pong, volleyball, washers, skating, dance, ultimate Frisbee, basketball, & jump rope.

ATHLETICS* 7 & 8	
COURSE DESCRIPTION	Athletics is offered in place of Physical Education to seventh and eighth graders as a full year or fall semester course. Athletics is a rigorous course designed for those students who will participate in UIL competitive football, volleyball, basketball and/or track. When one of these sports is in season, class time as well as before or after school time will be used for practice. When not participating in a seasonal sport, athletes will concentrate on weight -lifting, conditioning, and agility drills. Students interested in participating in school-sponsored teams and being in athletics must meet established criteria. Requirements: (1) Students enrolling in athletics for the first time must obtain a physical examination. A report of the doctor's exam must be on file in the coach's office by the first day of school. Forms are available through the school's coaches, counselors and on the athletic web page. (2) Students must maintain passing grades in all classes and compete in at least one of the team sports.

ELECTIVE COURSES

Alamo Heights Junior School offers a wide variety of electives. A determination is made as to the number of students interested in certain electives. An elective schedule for the next year based on these figures is then planned out. Staff is assigned based on choices; therefore, the student should give careful consideration to his/her selections. An asterisk (*) indicates those courses that require a teacher recommendation, a prerequisite course, or prior experience.

6TH GRADE ELECTIVE COURSES

INTERRELATED ARTS 6	
COURSE DESCRIPTION	This course is designed as an exploratory elective to provide sixth grade students with the opportunity to experience two different fine arts areas (art and theatre arts) within one school year. Each section will be divided into two 18-week segments as described below. These two courses comprise a full year course. Below is a description of each of these courses.

ART 6	
COURSE DESCRIPTION	This semester course is designed as an introductory Art studio experience meant to provide 6th graders with an opportunity to explore a variety of media and methods. Creativity is emphasized in each carefully crafted instructional unit. Art appreciation, Art History, media application, skill development, and instruction in the Elements of Art and Principles of Design are embedded in each lesson.

THEATRE ARTS 6	
COURSE DESCRIPTION	This course is a performance-oriented course, designed to develop self-confidence and social skills. Students are exposed to the basic principles of voice improvement, public speaking, physical articulation and the play production process. This is an eighteen-week course and one half of Interrelated Arts.

CHOIR 6 – FULL YEAR	
COURSE DESCRIPTION	Students are given the opportunity to explore their singing voices, to sing a variety of music styles, and to learn basic composition skills. Emphasis is given to proper singing technique, and good sight-reading skills. There will be one required concert for each 9-week grading period. Other performance opportunities may present themselves during the year. Students are encouraged to participate in many other events and activities including social opportunities, community performances, and solo and ensemble competitions. They are also given opportunities to attend music festivals. This is a full-year course.

BAND 6

COURSE DESCRIPTION	<p>This beginner band course is a positive, fun, musical experience geared for all students in the sixth grade wanting to play an instrument and be a part of the largest organization on campus. Students are matched to the various instruments according to ability and interest. The curriculum includes: concert performances, competitions, and festival contests. This is a full-year course.</p>
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STRINGS 6

COURSE DESCRIPTION	<p>This course is a continuation of the strings classes from elementary school plus the introduction of being a member of a string orchestra. Sixth grade strings is a fun, positive and rewarding experience. Students will be members of one of the most successful organizations at the Junior School. Opportunities for enrichment are abundant. Students must be currently enrolled in fifth grade strings to be eligible for enrollment in sixth grade strings. Attendance to scheduled performances is required. This is a full year course.</p>
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7TH & 8TH GRADE ELECTIVE COURSES: FULL YEAR

ART PORTFOLIO 8*	
COURSE DESCRIPTION	<p>This year long course is open to 8th graders who meet the prerequisite. Emphasis will be on the advanced application of media with focus on the development of an artist's portfolio of work. Students will experience a variety of activities and expand skills in 2-dimensional and 3-dimensional art making. Art history and criticism will be part of every studio lesson. This class is designed for students who desire to pursue Art throughout high school, as a life interest, or for those who wish to explore art careers. Students will visit area museums, participate in guest artist lectures, and have opportunities to be a part of unique local art opportunities and events throughout the school year.</p> <p>*Prerequisite: 8th graders who have had two semesters of Art with a Art average of 80 or above may choose to take this course. Students who do not meet the prerequisite criteria may apply for consideration by presenting a portfolio of his/her artwork to the instructor.</p>

THEATRE ARTS 7 & 8	
COURSE DESCRIPTION	<p>In this full year course, students will develop a deeper appreciation for theatre and various forms of entertainment. Students will be expected to present, demonstrate, dramatize, animate, create, and design performances that will enhance their ability to communicate in a theatrical form. These experiences will assist students in building positive self-concepts and further their interest in theatre arts.</p>

THEATRE PRODUCTION 7 & 8	
COURSE DESCRIPTION	<p>Students will participate in the development and performance of several dramatizations during this full year course. Actors will construct, interpret, and portray characters from literature. Designers will create and construct sets, costumes, lighting, and sound necessary for performance. Most rehearsals will happen within the class time frame. However, after school rehearsals should be expected for additional preparation. Performances will be held during the class/school day with additional offerings of evening exhibitions.</p>

BAND 7 & 8*

COURSE DESCRIPTION	<p>The band program is designed for students with at least one year of previous experience on band instruments. The band experience includes a thorough review of the basics of wind and/or percussion performance and further development of these to the highest levels of technical skill. Students will be placed by audition into appropriate sections for daily instruction based on instrumentation needs and skill level of the student. Additional rehearsals and weekly sectionals outside of the school day will be scheduled as needed throughout the year to prepare for concert and contest performances. The performance opportunities are many and varied to include large and small group ensembles, concert performances, U.I.L. and festival contests, and competitions.</p>
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STRINGS 7 & 8*

COURSE DESCRIPTION	<p>This course is designed for students who are currently enrolled in strings playing violin, viola, cello or bass. There will be two strings classes scheduled for 7th grade students and two strings classes scheduled for 8th grade strings students. Each class will perform as an independent group. Student placement in the two classes for each grade level will be at the director's discretion based on behavior, playing ability, attendance, academic performance in other classes, etc. Outside attendance at scheduled rehearsals and concerts is required.</p>
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BOYS CHORUS 7 & 8

COURSE DESCRIPTION	<p>The Boys' Choir is composed of 7th and 8th grade boys. This group performs solo, as well as in combination with the Girls Choir. Class emphasis focuses on the adolescent boys' changing voice and the unique demands and opportunities that this particular age group must face. Students participate in seasonal concerts throughout the year as well as other special performances, such as UIL Concert and Sight Reading. Students also have the opportunity to audition individually for TMEA All Region Honor Choir. Students are also encouraged to participate in many other events and activities such as community performances and solo and ensemble competition. They are also given opportunities to attend music festivals. This is a full-year course.</p>
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GIRLS CHOIR 7 & 8

COURSE DESCRIPTION	<p>The Girls' choir is composed of 7th and 8th grade girls. This ensemble performs solo as well as in combination with the Boys Choir. Class emphasis focuses on the adolescent girl's changing voice and the unique demands and opportunities that this particular age group must face. Students participate in seasonal concerts throughout the year as well as other special performances, such as UIL Concert and Sight Reading. Students also have the opportunity to audition for TMEA All Region Honor Choir. Students are encouraged to participate in many other events and activities including social opportunities, community performances, and solo and ensemble competitions. They are also given opportunities to attend music festivals. This is a full-year course.</p>
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OFFICE ASSISTANT*	
COURSE DESCRIPTION	Eighth grade office assistants work in the office areas with the principal, assistant principals, guidance counselors, and secretaries. Students' jobs include a variety of tasks, such as taking telephone messages, delivering messages, showing new students around campus, keeping records, alphabetizing, and helping with general office procedures under supervision. The school depends on the student to be trustworthy, tactful, and responsible. Criteria includes student screening for academic standing, demonstration of responsible leadership, display a respectful appearance, and are courteous to other students and adults.

TEACHER ASSISTANT*	
COURSE DESCRIPTION	Eighth grade students may apply to assist P.E. teachers in their classrooms. Criteria includes: student's academic standing, demonstration of responsible leadership, trustworthiness, cooperation and the ability to get along well with other students and adults.

LIBRARY ASSISTANT*	
COURSE DESCRIPTION	Eighth grade library aides learn skills to help other students and teachers locate and use library materials and computers. They assist in the daily functioning of the library by checking out books and audio-visual materials, shelving, processing, running errands, and helping with other procedures and special projects. The school and library depends on these student aides to be trustworthy, tactful, and responsible.

PEER TUTOR*	
COURSE DESCRIPTION	Student Support Team (SST) Peer Tutoring is available to eighth grade students who wish to have an opportunity for service in the educational programming of students with a disability. Peer tutors have two major roles: trainers and advocates. As trainers, tutors will have the opportunity to work with peers that have a disability in various classroom arrangements. Training in classroom activities may occur in an inclusive class, physical education class, during lunch, or in the SST classroom. As advocates, peer tutors will set the example to others that people with a disability need the same consideration and respect that all people deserve. Course requirements include peer tutor interaction with student, writing a daily journal, disability project, two exams and exhibiting responsible and appropriate behavior. Prerequisite: Application, teacher evaluation, and interview are necessary prior to admittance to this course. Peer Tutors are also required to attend a one-day training in the summer, which occurs 2 weeks prior to the beginning of school.

ACADEMIC UIL

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides structured opportunities for 7th and 8th grade students to increase their knowledge and skills in the areas of spelling, math, physical science, and history in preparation for participation in University Interscholastic League (UIL), Science Bowl and Science Olympiad competitions in Texas. Students learn the important knowledge and skills inherent in these contests and take practice tests similar to those administered at the academic meets.

BOOK STUDY

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed for students who have a love for reading and would like the opportunity to read various novels and explore the themes, conflicts, and other literary devices captured within them. Students will have the opportunity to share their thoughts, questions, and recommendations regarding books they have read independently as well as in the classroom. Students will have the opportunity to read books of their choice independently and then participate in small groups to debrief relating topics with other students. The class will also consist of reading a novel together and analyzing it as a whole.

ADVANCED JOURNALISM 7 & 8*

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Students will engage in authentic writing and editing tasks as they assume increasing responsibility for the management of AHJS print and online publications. Students will internalize various aspects of the writing process as they work to generate original content, and also as they receive and edit submissions from AHJS staff and students. Students will apply and deepen their knowledge of proper grammar as they proofread submissions. Class participants will evaluate, revise and edit the content of weekly and/or monthly publications as they consider and prioritize the communication needs of the school community. Media literacy skills will be incorporated on a regular basis as students make decisions about the layout and visual aspects of the school's communication materials. Students will learn to work within timelines in order to complete and publish work by a scheduled deadline. Pre-requisite includes providing a student writing sample.

Elective- Environmental Science 7 & 8*

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This is an elective laboratory course that investigates processes that affect the earth's environment and explores solutions to environmental challenges. Topics covered include ecology, aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems, water and air pollution, atmospheric science, waste disposal, conservation of resources, alternative fuel sources, and the earth's energy sources. Pre requisite: Must be a 7th or 8th grade student.

7TH & 8TH GRADE ELECTIVES: SEMESTER COURSES

ART I

COURSE DESCRIPTION	
	This semester course is available to any 7th or 8th grader wanting to improve his/her artistic skills. Focus will be on the development of drawing and painting with a variety of media and techniques. Students will be introduced to basic clay forming, hand-building applications, and basic glazing as well. The Elements of Art and Principles of Design will be explored through historical and current event topics as well as in lessons about artists and changes in art making through time. Students will develop hands-on tangible works of fine art through studio lessons in a Discipline Based Art Education setting.

ART II*

COURSE DESCRIPTION	
	This semester long course is available to 7th or 8th graders meeting the prerequisite. Students will continue practicing the drawing, painting, and ceramic concepts and techniques learned in Art 1. Focus will be on the extended and more advanced application of media. The Elements of Art and Principles of Design will be explored in-depth through lessons about art criticism and the critical evaluation of art. Art appreciation, Art History, artists, and changes in art making through time will be learned through personally relevant studio activities in this Discipline Based Art Education setting. *Prerequisite: Art 1

WORLD ART

COURSE DESCRIPTION	
	This semester course is open to any seventh or eighth grader wanting to explore his/her creative side. Focus will be on the visual art and craft making of various cultures around the world. Students will be able to identify various cultures, share interesting facts about each location, and will produce works of art inspired by the people and places within each lesson. Project focus and media will vary according to the culture studied, but may include painting, drawing, printmaking, sculpture, fibers, Art History, criticism, and the unique history that developed and identifies each location.

JAZZ BAND*

COURSE DESCRIPTION	
	This spring semester course is open to seventh and eighth graders. The class will be performance-based with concerts throughout the spring at school and in the community. Through performance, students will learn jam and rock styles, improvisation, and pop music history. Jazz band will use the following instruments: saxophone, trombone, trumpet, drum set, piano, guitar, and bass guitar. Flute and clarinet players who choose jazz band will be taught to play saxophone. Jazz band will meet as a class during the second semester. Prerequisite: Teacher recommendation is required.

INTERMEDIATE COMPUTERS*

COURSE DESCRIPTION	This one semester course is designed for students who have made a B or better in their Technology Applications course. This is a project-oriented class where students will enhance their computer knowledge and identify an area of personal interest from exposure to digital animation, video production, graphic design, 3D Modeling, web design, and block programming. *Prerequisite: Technology Applications.
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ADVANCED COMPUTERS*

COURSE DESCRIPTION	This one semester course is designed for students who have made a B or better in their Intermediate Computers course. This is a project-oriented class where students will enhance their computer knowledge and identify an area of personal interest from exposure to digital animation, video production, graphic design, 3D Modeling, web design, and block programming. *Prerequisite: Technology Applications.
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ACADEMIC UIL

COURSE DESCRIPTION	This course provides structured opportunities for 7th and 8th grade students to increase their knowledge and skills in the areas of spelling, math, physical science, and history in preparation for participation in University Interscholastic League (UIL), Science Bowl and Science Olympiad competitions in Texas. Students learn the important knowledge and skills inherent in these contests and take practice tests similar to those administered at the academic meets.
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BOOK STUDY

COURSE DESCRIPTION	This course is designed for students who have a love for reading and would like the opportunity to read various novels and explore the themes, conflicts, and other literary devices captured within them. Students will have the opportunity to share their thoughts, questions, and recommendations regarding books they have read independently as well as in the classroom. Students will have the opportunity to read books of their choice independently and then participate in small groups to debrief relating topics with other students. The class will also consist of reading novels together and analyzing them as a class.
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8th grade LANGUAGES OTHER THAN ENGLISH: FOREIGN LANGUAGES

	FRENCH I	PRE-AP FRENCH I
COURSE DESCRIPTION	<p>8th grade students will be introduced to the necessary, exciting and challenging skill of communication in French. Students engage in interactive activities promoting their acquisition of speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. Students are expected to communicate about their immediate world, which includes their personal interests, school life, family, friends, community and self. Grammar and vocabulary are embedded within a wide variety of academic and cultural topics and are practiced through the imitation and repetition of specified concepts and sentences resulting in the students' ability to create and express their own thoughts about specific topics. Additional classroom activities provide an understanding of the civilizations, customs and cultures of the French-speaking people.</p>	<p>This intensive course is designed for the 8th grade students who demonstrate strong language skills and are motivated to begin the course of language study in French at an advanced level. It is the first in a series designed to prepare students for the French AP exam. Students enrolling in this course will be expected to take three years of French during their high school career. Students in the French I Pre-AP course will explore the same course content listed for French I as well as elements of language communication and culture in greater depth at a faster pace while striving for accuracy in French.</p>
PACE	<p>Students have frequent opportunities to practice and reinforce concepts in class in the target language. Reinforcement may include oral and written practice emphasizing vocabulary, language structure and basic communication expressions.</p>	<p>Intensive study of both authentic readings including short poems, more extensive use of listening materials including songs and rhymes, and broader coverage of cultural information result in a faster paced class. Productive skills (speaking and writing) are also practiced at a more advanced level. Basic TEKS concepts spiral and are addressed throughout the year.</p>

	LATIN I	PRE-AP LATIN I
COURSE DESCRIPTION	8 th grade students will be introduced to the development skills leading to the comprehension of the written Latin language. Language concepts are taught through the study of Latin vocabulary and grammar, thus enabling the students to use English more effectively and to learn other languages. The students read Latin stories aloud to learn correct pronunciation. The subjects of these readings include Greek and Roman mythology, Roman life, and history.	This intensive course is designed for the 8th grade students who demonstrate strong language skills and are motivated to begin the course of language study in Latin at an advanced level. It is the first in a series designed to prepare students for the National Latin exam. Students enrolling in this course will be expected to take three years of Latin during their high school career. Students in the Latin I Pre-AP course will explore the same course content listed for Latin I as well as elements of language communication and culture in greater depth while striving for accuracy in Latin.
PACE	Students have frequent opportunities to practice and reinforce concepts in class in the target language. Reinforcement may include oral and written practice emphasizing vocabulary and basic communication expressions.	Intensive study of both authentic readings including short poems, more extensive use of listening materials including songs and rhymes, and broader coverage of cultural information result in a faster paced class. Productive skills (speaking and writing) are also practiced at a more advanced level. Basic TEKS concepts spiral and are addressed throughout the year.

	SPANISH I	PRE-AP SPANISH I
COURSE DESCRIPTION	<p>8th grade students will be introduced to the necessary, exciting and challenging skill of communication in Spanish. Students engage in interactive activities promoting their acquisition of speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. Students are expected to communicate about their immediate world, which include their personal interests, school life, family, friends, community and self. Grammar and vocabulary are embedded within a wide variety of academic and cultural topics and are practiced through the imitation and repetition of specified concepts and sentences resulting in the students' ability to create and express their own thoughts about specific topics. Additional classroom activities provide an understanding of the civilizations, customs and cultures of the Spanish-speaking people.</p>	<p>This intensive course is designed for the 8th grade students who demonstrate strong language skills and are motivated to begin the course of language study in Spanish at an advanced level. It is the first in a series designed to prepare students for the Spanish AP exam. Students enrolling in this course will be expected to take four years of Spanish during their high school career. Students in the Spanish I Pre-AP course will explore the same course content listed for Spanish I as well as elements of language communication and culture in greater depth at a faster pace while striving for accuracy in Spanish.</p>
PACE	<p>Students have frequent opportunities to practice and reinforce concepts in class in the target language. Reinforcement may include oral and written practice emphasizing vocabulary and basic communication expressions.</p>	<p>Intensive study of both authentic readings including short poems, more extensive use of listening materials including songs and rhymes, and broader coverage of cultural information result in a faster paced class. Productive skills (speaking and writing) are also practiced at a more advanced level. Basic TEKS concepts spiral and are addressed throughout the year.</p>

7TH AND 8TH GRADE LANGUAGES OTHER THAN ENGLISH: FOR STUDENTS IN DUAL LANGUAGE/ IMMERSION PROGRAM

	7th SPANISH I Pre-AP/ SI	8TH SPANISH II Pre-AP/ SI
COURSE DESCRIPTION	Spanish I Pre-AP/SI is for immersion students who have successfully completed 6th grade Science Immersion and/or Social Studies Immersion. This class takes the place of Reading in 7th grade so students will be covering reading strategies and objectives as well. This course is conducted in Spanish and exposes students to the Hispanic culture through its literature and language. Students engage in interactive activities promoting their acquisition of speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. Grammar and vocabulary are embedded within a wide variety and cultural topics. This class provides opportunities to enable students to improve their oral fluency and writing skills in addition to reading comprehension and fluency. They will be involved in lively reading and discussing short stories and novels from a variety of Spanish speaking authors, oral presentations, compositions and discussions of contemporary issues.	This intensive course is designed for the 8 th grade students who demonstrate strong language skills and are motivated to begin the course of language study in Spanish at an advanced level. It is the first in a series designed to prepare students for the Spanish AP exam. Students enrolling in this course will be expected to take four years of Spanish during their high school career. Students in the Spanish I Pre-AP course will explore the same course content listed for Spanish I as well as elements of language communication and culture in greater depth at a faster pace while striving for accuracy in Spanish.
PACE	Readings are addressed with more direct teach and re-teach. Students have many opportunities to practice and reinforce concepts. Students are expected to read two Spanish books and two English books at their independent reading level from different genres every six weeks for the reading contract that consists of literature and vocabulary logs and a project over one of the Spanish books read.	Readings are higher level with more of a review of reading skills as applied to literature. Students have many opportunities to practice and reinforce concepts. Students are expected to read two Spanish books at their independent reading level from different genres every six weeks for the reading contract that consists of literature and vocabulary logs and a project over one of the Spanish books read.

Texas Virtual School Network – TxVSN

Senate Bill 1788 established a state virtual school network to provide online courses for Texas students. The TxVSN offers courses for grades 9-12 that are aligned with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) as well as the National Standards of Quality for Online Courses (iNACOL) and taught by Texas-certified instructors. In addition, instructors have completed a TxVSN-approved professional development on effective online instruction. TxVSN options include courses not currently offered in the traditional setting. Students interested in learning more about online course offerings through TxVSN should visit with their professional school counselor.