

PARKLAND MIDDLE SCHOOLS
COURSE DESCRIPTIONS
GRADE 6

Core Subjects (1 class period daily for an entire year)

LANGUAGE ARTS & READING (Double period)

The sixth-grade language arts curriculum aligns with the PA Common Core standards. It focuses on the importance of being able to read different genres of text, think analytically, and write with clarity. Students read both literary and non-fiction texts, in print and/or digital formats, with the goal of being able to identify key ideas, recognize and appreciate the author's craft, explore connections with other texts, clarify the meaning of unknown vocabulary, and discern the author's point of view or purpose. Students hone their analytical reading and writing skills by crafting text-dependent written analyses. In addition, students may write informational, narrative and argumentative pieces, using the steps of the writing process. To build their ability to express themselves with clarity and style, the conventions of grammar and usage are reinforced with a systematic grammar program. At this grade level, particular emphasis is placed on transitions, pronouns, verb tense and avoiding fragments and run-on sentences.

MATHEMATICS

The sixth-grade curriculum is geared toward computation and estimation in all operations with whole numbers, fractions, and decimals using the correct order of operations. Emphasis is placed on ordering, adding, and subtracting integers, solving algebraic equations, and reading and writing numbers with exponents. The use of formulas to find perimeter, area, volume, and circumference is stressed. Writing ratios, solving proportions, and relating percents, decimals and fractions are incorporated into the curriculum.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Ancient cultures are the topic stressed in the sixth-grade curriculum. Emphasis is placed on identifying how early people interacted with the environment and how social and economic life of ancient cultures in Africa, Asia, and the Americas developed. Students define culture contact and identify the exchange of goods, knowledge, and technology while learning about the effects the trade routes had on early civilizations. In addition, students learn about our economic system of free enterprise. Throughout the course of study, map and globe skills are utilized.

SCIENCE

Major topics for exploration in the sixth-grade curriculum include: the earth's water, natural resources, atmosphere, weather and climate, rocks and the rock cycle, weathering and erosion, and the sun moon earth system and solar system. Throughout the course, the emphasis is placed on the scientific method, attention to safety, using the tools of science and measurements. The hands-on, process approach to science is stressed to enhance science content.

Specials Rotation (1 class period daily for 1 MP unless otherwise noted)

THE VISUAL ARTS

Students will be given a basic art curriculum foundation to gain exposure to the visual arts. In sixth-grade art students explore a variety of media as they build their artistic skills, develop fine motor skills, and unlock their creativity. Sixth-grade students will investigate the art elements and principles through the art production process. The course lays the groundwork for more in-depth work and development in the years to come.

GENERAL MUSIC

The sixth-grade General Music class is an extension of the curriculum taught in elementary school music classes. Students will explore music notation, terminology, and performance through the use of classroom instruments. A unit on the instrument families of the orchestra is included in the course and culminates in a project where students design their own instrument. General Music meets daily for one marking period.

FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES

The sixth-grade course introduces kitchen fundamentals and safety through guided instruction and practical hands-on experience through laboratory experiences. The consumer resources unit introduces basic sewing equipment, safety, and a project. Childcare and development examine the responsibilities of a caregiver and the importance of play.

TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION

Sixth-grade-Students participate in technology education in grades six, seven and eight. They are scheduled for one marking period as part of their exploratory cycle and circulate through three laboratories. The three laboratories that they are introduced to our – Manufacturing/Material, Fabrication/Electronics, and Engineering/Design.

READING PREP - 1 rating period

The Reading Prep is designed to help students strengthen their skills in all reading areas that have been identified by the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) and Study Island Benchmark Assessment data. Students are selected and scheduled for this course based on their data. The instruction will be tailored to meet the individual needs of the students. Online reading programs directly linked to the Pennsylvania State Standards in reading direct teacher instruction, and additional hard-copy resources will be used to address each student's particular areas of concern.

MATH PREP - 1 rating period

The Mathematics Prep is designed to help students strengthen their math skills in specific areas that have been identified by the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) and Study Island Benchmark Assessment data. Students are selected and scheduled for this course based on their data. The instruction will be tailored to meet the individual needs of the students. This class will reinforce specific grade-level math topics, test-taking strategies, problem-solving skills and more to help students become more successful in math. Calculators, computers, cooperative learning, instructional games, and manipulatives will be used to assist instruction and student learning.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY 1 (1 class period every other day for a full year)

Information Technology is a full year course, which meets three class periods per 6-day cycle; receiving trimester grades. Today's students need to learn to live and work in a world where information is growing at a phenomenal rate. The Information Technology course involves students in activities that develop effective communication and the dynamic exploration of information. This course fosters problem-solving, self-confidence, and teamwork to create self-directed learners who can understand and assess the impact of information technology. Students use, manage, and work with a variety of technologies and media that will empower them to become productive, technologically literate members of society. Keyboarding instruction, computer applications, simulations, content-related and coding activities are utilized to implement this curriculum.

HEALTH/SAFETY/PHYSICAL EDUCATION (1 class period every other day for a full year)

The sixth-grade program deals with major topics of human growth and development, endocrine and nervous system, and the wellness/health triangle. Students analyze the connections and relationships of physical health, mental health, and social health to overall wellness. HIV/AIDS and other life-threatening and communicable diseases are studied, along with drug and alcohol prevention. Students take part in fitness testing and in a variety of athletic and physical activities to increase coordination, strength, and flexibility.

PERFORMING MUSIC SELECTION (1 class period daily for MP2 and MP5)

Students in sixth-grade may take a Performing Music class in lieu of General Music. The Performing Music options are Chorus, Band, or Orchestra, or a combination of these classes. Chorus, Band, and Orchestra meet daily for two marking periods (MP2 and MP5) and students are required to remain in the class for both marking periods. In addition, after-school rehearsals will be held in preparation for concerts and communicated to students at the beginning of the Marking Period.

BAND

6th Grade Band is an Early-Intermediate level ensemble, providing students with learning and performance opportunities on woodwind, brass, and percussion instruments. The primary focus is on the development, continuation, and expansion of the basic skills learned at the elementary level. In addition to the continued refinement of individual performance skills, an emphasis is placed on developing the ensemble. Students will continue to develop their knowledge of music theory, begin to analyze and evaluate music, and use critical thinking skills to make refinements in their performance. In addition to playing in the 6th Grade Band, individual growth and achievement are encouraged through participation in Jazz Band, PMEA festivals and private lessons.

CHORUS

Sixth-grade Chorus is a performance-oriented course designed to develop proper vocal technique, teach concepts of two-part choral singing, and improve music-reading ability. This class is open to all students regardless of singing ability or prior musical knowledge. The sixth-grade Chorus performs at two concerts per year. Chorus meets daily for two marking periods (MP2 and MP5). Students who elect Chorus with Band or Orchestra will have three days of vocal music and three days of instrumental music per 6-day cycle.

ORCHESTRA

Sixth-grade Orchestra provides students with learning and performance opportunities on violin, viola, cello, and bass. The primary focus is on the development and expansion of basic skills learned while participating in the elementary string program. Students will be required to participate in the lesson program during marking periods 1, 3, 4 and 6, and take orchestra as a class during marking periods 2 and 5. In addition to playing in the Sixth-grade Orchestra, individual growth and achievement are encouraged through participation in Honors Orchestra, PMEA Festivals, Allentown Symphony String Festival, Junior String Philharmonic, and private lessons. Students in the 6th Grade Orchestra will perform in at least two concerts per year.

PARKLAND MIDDLE SCHOOLS
COURSE DESCRIPTIONS
GRADE 7

Core Subjects (1 class period daily for an entire year)

LANGUAGE ARTS

The seventh-grade curriculum is centered around an extensive study of grammar, grammatical constructions, and their carry-over into units of literature and composition. In order to develop an appreciation and an understanding of the various types of literature, the course continues to build upon the elements of a short story, the novel and the similarities between the two. The art of composition, especially the development of the paragraph and the Text Dependent Analysis (TDA) essay is a major area of focus. The study of vocabulary, with a focus on roots and prefixes, is presented through online resources.

LANGUAGE ARTS GHP

The seventh-grade Language Arts GHP program is designed to be more challenging than the regular program. The 7th-grade GHP program uses the regular program as a foundation; however, the GHP program is different in some of the content, resources, processes, and products of the course. Increases in the rate and mastery of learning, as well as additional amounts of work, will be expected. Students will also be expected to assume more responsibility for independent learning and decision making.

Some examples of differentiation include an increased amount of writing, reading novels and short stories that require higher level analysis, outside readings with a group or individual reports to the class. Emphasis on oral expression and metacognition, independent learning of vocabulary concepts, and submission of a long-term project.

MATH SEMINAR 7

This course introduces students to fundamental math concepts needed for success in Principles of Algebra. Through ongoing data collection, students will receive individualized instruction designed to challenge them within their current skill sets and to provide remediation and/or enrichment when appropriate. The topics include the number system, ratios, proportions, expressions, equations, basic geometry, and statistics/probability. The focus is on learning the computational procedures and then applying the skills to problem-solving in applications. Throughout this course, students will learn problem-solving skills and analytical thinking.

PRE-ALGEBRA

The emphasis of this Pre-Algebra course will be the exploration of algebraic concepts and processes so that students can master concepts of variable, expression, and equation. Other topics covered in this course include positive and negative rational numbers, exponents, graphing coordinates and linear equations, data analysis probability, geometry, ratios, proportions, and percents. This course creates a bridge between the concrete curriculum of mathematics and the more formal curriculum of algebra. Mastery of many of these skills will be necessary for success in Algebra I.

ALGEBRA I

In this course, students will study operations with expressions, equations, inequalities, absolute value, percent, proportion, graphing, linear functions, systems of equations and inequalities, exponents, radicals, polynomials, and factoring. Various strategies will be used to deliver instruction and provide opportunities for enrichment and remediation. This course will concentrate on preparation for both the PSSA and Algebra 1 Keystone exams.

SOCIAL STUDIES

This course connects with the social studies course taught in sixth-grade. Students will continue their study of ancient civilizations. The study will be expanded to provide a greater awareness of cultures throughout the world and how these civilizations have become the foundation of many of the modern cultures. There will be an emphasis on the development of Europe up to the age of exploration. This social studies course will integrate the study of world history and geography, where appropriate the integration of economics and government.

SOCIAL STUDIES GHP

This course connects with the social studies course taught in sixth-grade as students continue their study of ancient civilizations. Each student will be required to do a History Day research project and/or present an oral report. The study of world history and geography will be integrated and include, where appropriate, the integration of economics and government.

SCIENCE

The seventh-grade Science Program blends content and process while aligning with the Pennsylvania Academic Standards, Technology, Environment, and Ecology. Core components include biological and environmental sciences along with scientific inquiry and technology. Emphasis is on students doing the work of scientists by using laboratory experiences and by discussing the current impacts of science and society. Activities may be differentiated to accommodate the various needs of students.

SCIENCE GHP

The seventh-grade Gifted/High Potential (GHP) Program includes all of the major components of the seventh-grade Science curriculum. Laboratory experiences are expanded to include more experimental design, develop accurate conclusions, and apply research techniques. Varied assessment, which emphasizes topic application and problem-solving techniques, may be utilized to assess each student's mastery of the concepts studied. A science fair project that includes independent research and a display board or oral presentation will be required.

Specials Rotation (1 class period daily for 1 MP unless otherwise noted)

THE VISUAL ARTS

The seventh-grade art curriculum focuses on further developing art skills, techniques, vocabulary, and creativity. Students will advance their knowledge of the art elements and principles as they engage in art production activities that hone fine motor skills. In seventh-grade art students generate ideas, plan, and problem solve as part of the design process. The course provides opportunities for creative expression and art analysis.

GENERAL MUSIC

The seventh-grade General Music class is designed to provide students with an overview of popular music in America. Students will continue to explore music notation, composition, and performance through the use of classroom instruments and technology. General Music meets daily for one marking period.

FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES

The focus of each of the three areas of FCS is to teach technical and social skills using practical hands-on classroom organization. The food technology and nutrition unit to address managing food supply resources, choosing to explore two main topics, USDA Dietary Guidelines, and Breakfast, with classroom and laboratory experiences. The consumer resources unit discusses textiles and fabrics and provides an opportunity to construct a fabric project. Family science explores the interrelationships of the family life cycle.

TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION

Seventh-grade - Students are scheduled for technology education during one marking period as part of their exploratory cycle and circulate through three laboratories – Manufacturing/Material, Fabrication/Electronics, and Engineering/Design. The approach of technology is to have students involved in activities that develop skills of teamwork, problem-solving, research and design, and career exploration.

GUIDANCE/STUDY SKILLS/MEDIA CENTER (1 class period every other day for a full year)

Each of these classes meets one day per cycle for the entire school year. Guidance class addresses issues important to the development and growth of our students. Topics covered include career exploration; diversity and respect; drug and alcohol awareness and prevention; communication skills and teamwork, and cyberbullying and internet safety. Study Skills is a class designed to introduce students to a variety of strategies that should help them meet success when studying. Topics like organizational skills; time management; learning styles; attitudes towards learning; note-taking and the like are discussed. Media class focuses on teaching students research skills and literature appreciation. Topics covered include internet searching, website evaluation, using reference materials, creating bibliographies, and use of the Accelerated Reading Program. In addition, fiction and nonfiction books are introduced and discussed.

INTRODUCTION TO WORLD LANGUAGES (meets 1 class period every other day for a full year)

This course introduces students to the language and culture of French, German and Spanish speaking countries. The IWL course is divided into three twelve-week periods where students will explore the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing as well as the culture of each target language.

READING PREP – I RATING PERIOD

The Reading Prep is designed to help students strengthen their skills in all reading areas that have been identified by the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) and Study Island Benchmark Assessment data. Students are selected and scheduled for this course based on their data. The instruction will be tailored to meet the individual needs of the students. Online reading programs directly linked to the Pennsylvania State Standards in reading direct teacher instruction, and additional hard-copy resources will be used to address each student's particular areas of concern.

MATH PREP – I RATING PERIOD

The Mathematics Prep is designed to help students strengthen their math skills in specific areas that have been identified by the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) and Study Island Benchmark Assessment data. Students are selected and scheduled for this course based on their data. The instruction will be tailored to meet the individual needs of the students. This class will reinforce specific grade-level math topics, test-taking strategies, problem-solving skills and more to help students become more successful in math. Calculators, computers, cooperative learning, instructional games, and manipulatives will be used to assist instruction and student learning.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (1 class period every other day for a full year)

Information Technology is a full year course, which meets three class periods per 6-day cycle; receiving trimester grades. Essential topics learned in this class includes advanced concepts in Microsoft Word, basic Excel commands, desktop publishing, Microsoft PowerPoint, and Internet research and safety. Classroom projects foster critical thinking, reading, organization, teamwork, presentation, and other typical workplace skills. Seventh-grade projects are more challenging than sixth-grade projects, often requiring students to utilize a variety of software. In addition to the topics listed above students participate in digital literacy and coding activities.

HEALTH/SAFETY/PHYSICAL EDUCATION (1 class period every other day for a full year)

The course encompasses the study of the skeletal, muscular, circulatory, and respiratory systems of the body. In addition to learning the basics of anatomy and physiology, students explore the care and prevention of common problems and diseases related to each system. Drug and alcohol prevention topics are addressed. Students take part in fitness testing and in a variety of athletic and physical activities to increase coordination, strength, and flexibility.

PERFORMING MUSIC SELECTION (1 class period daily for MP2 and MP5)

Students in seventh-grade may take a Performing Music class in lieu of General Music. The Performing Music options are Chorus, Band, or Orchestra, or a combination of these classes. Chorus, Band, and Orchestra meet daily for two marking periods (MP2 and MP5) and students are required to remain in the class for both marking periods. In addition, after-school rehearsals will be held in preparation for concerts and communicated to students at the beginning of the Marking Period.

BAND

Seventh and eighth-grade Band is an Intermediate level ensemble, providing students with learning and performance opportunities on woodwind, brass, and percussion instruments. The primary focus is on the development, continuation, and expansion of the basic skills learned through 6th grade. In addition to the continued refinement of individual performance skills, a greater emphasis is placed on refining ensemble skills. Students will continue to develop their knowledge of music theory, begin to analyze and evaluate music, and use critical thinking skills to make refinements in their performance. In addition to playing in the seventh and eighth-grade Band, individual growth and achievement are encouraged through participation in Jazz Band, PMEA festivals and private lessons.

CHORUS

Seventh-grade Chorus is a performance-oriented course designed to develop proper vocal technique, teach concepts of three-part choral singing, and improve music-reading ability. This class is open to all students regardless of singing ability or prior musical knowledge. The seventh-grade Chorus performs at two concerts per year. Chorus meets daily for two marking periods (MP2 and MP5). Students who elect Chorus with Band or Orchestra will have three days of vocal music and three days of instrumental music per 6-day cycle.

ORCHESTRA

Seventh and eighth-grade Orchestra provides students with learning and performance opportunities on violin, viola, cello, and bass. The primary focus is on the development and expansion of basic skills learned in sixth-grade Orchestra, which is necessary for effective instrumental music performance. In addition to playing in the seventh and 8th-grade Orchestra, individual growth and achievement are encouraged through participation in Honors Orchestra, PMEA Festivals, Allentown Symphony String Festival, Junior String Philharmonic, and private lessons. Students in the Seventh and eighth-grade Orchestra will perform in at least two concerts per year.

PARKLAND MIDDLE SCHOOLS
COURSE DESCRIPTION
GRADE 8

Core Subjects (1 class period daily for an entire year)

LANGUAGE ARTS

The eighth grade Language Arts program provides students with opportunities and resources to develop the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing to enable students to participate as informed, literate members of society. Instruction provides the students with the necessary skills to analyze various types of genres and develop an appreciation for the writer's techniques which applies within sound pieces of literature. Strategies involve patterns and procedures for students to meet success utilizing a process to produce varied types of writing, with a focus on text-dependent analysis. Instruction advocates techniques for analyzing literature, and multiple opportunities for practice are encouraged.

LANGUAGE ARTS GHP

The GHP eighth grade Language Arts program provides opportunities for students to interpret and to analyze literature including short stories, poetry, novels, and drama. This course encourages students to think independently, solve problems, master oral and written communication skills, and utilize correct grammar and punctuation on all written products. Students will utilize the writing process to produce multi-paragraph products and master the skills required for text-dependent analysis. A firm understanding of the 7th-grade communication skills is necessary before considering the selection of this course. Demonstrating proficiency of concepts at a self-motivated and accelerated pace provides the framework for a classroom activity. Mastery and cumulative learning within a variety of activities ranging from concrete/specific to random/abstract offer a challenge for students within this course.

LANGUAGE ARTS SEMINAR

Prerequisite: Recommendation from administration, counseling staff, and seventh-grade Language Arts teacher.

This course is designed for eighth-grade students to improve their reading and writing skills in an intensive small group setting. It focuses on reading apprenticeship via individual student comprehension. Students will learn to support their understanding of a range of literature by developing reading strategies to construct oral and written meaning. They will read developmentally appropriate texts of all types and write sentences that focus on text-dependent analysis which will be developed into text-dependent, multi-paragraph responses. This course meets for two class periods and is taken in place of a World Language.

LANGUAGE EXTENSIONS

The eighth grade Language Extensions course is designed to improve students' appreciation for, and proficiency in reading, writing, listening, speaking, and thinking. These important components will be developed through the students' classroom participation using a variety of literature, vocabulary, and classroom discussions. This course will complement the eighth-grade curriculum by providing the students with reading strategies to utilize in other subject areas. Finally, students will develop higher-level thinking skills in reading, writing, listening, and speaking while developing a greater appreciation of themselves as active learners. This course is taken in place of a World Language.

MATH SEMINAR 8

This course introduces students to the fundamental concepts needed for success in Principles of Algebra. Through ongoing data collection, students will receive individualized instruction designed to challenge them within their current skills set and to provide remediation and/or enrichment when appropriate. The topics include number system, expressions, equations, functions, basic geometry, and statistics/probability. The focus is on learning the computational procedures and then applying the skills to problem-solving in applications. Throughout this course, students will learn problem-solving skills and analytical thinking.

PRINCIPLES OF ALGEBRA

This course will prepare students with the skills needed for success in Algebra 1 and beyond. For this course, students should possess a strong foundation of Pre-Algebra concepts such as operations with real numbers, order of operations, and solving linear equations. Students will develop an understanding of various math skills such as solving linear and absolute value equations and inequalities, radicals, exponents rules, graphing, absolute value equations and inequalities, systems of equations and inequalities, analyzing graphs and statistics. The topics covered include theory as well as practical and real-world applications.

ALGEBRA I

In this course, students will study operations with expressions, equations, inequalities, absolute value, percent, proportion, graphing, linear functions, systems of equations and inequalities, exponents, radicals, polynomials, and factoring. Various strategies will be used to deliver instruction and provide opportunities for enrichment and remediation. This course will concentrate on preparation for both the PSSA and Algebra 1 Keystone exams.

ALGEBRA II

Algebra II continues developing the algebra of real numbers and expands to complex number arithmetic. Students review Algebra I concepts, but in more depth and detail. A major focus of this course is quadratic equations and functions. Another topic covered is rational expressions. Emphasis is placed on alternative strategies for problem-solving.

GEOMETRY HONOR

Geometry enables a student to study relationships between geometric figures using deductive reasoning. The course develops a logical mathematical system using definitions, assumptions, properties, and theorems. Included are topics such as congruent and similar triangles, parallel lines, ratio and proportion, areas, circles, coordinate geometry, transformational geometry, solid geometry, an introduction to trigonometry.

COLLEGE ALGEBRA

College Algebra continues developing the algebra of real numbers and complex numbers. Students review Algebra I and II concepts, but in more depth and detail. Emphasis is placed on alternative strategies for problem-solving.

SOCIAL STUDIES

The purpose of the Civics course is to present the students with a better understanding of the United States Government and citizens' rights, as well as the possible causes and effects of major social problems in the U.S. These social problems consist of crime and the courts, the juvenile justice system and economics.

SOCIAL STUDIES GHP

The major units of the regular Civics course are studied. Each student will be required to do a History Day research project and/or present an oral report, as well as prepare and participate in a mock trial. Students may also be required to select and research a controversial topic and participate in a classroom debate. Student research will include the use of secondary, and when available, primary sources. Testing will emphasize higher level thinking skills and include more essay questions.

SCIENCE

The Eighth Grade Science Program blends content and process while aligning with the Pennsylvania Academic Standards for Science, Technology, Environment, and Ecology. Core components include chemistry, physics, and environmental sciences. Emphasis is on students doing the work of scientists by using laboratory experiences and by discussing the current impacts of science on society. Activities may be differentiated to accommodate the various needs of students.

SCIENCE GHP

The Eighth-grade Gifted/High Potential (GHP) Program includes all of the major components of the Eighth Grade Science curriculum. Laboratory experiences are expanded to include more experimental design, development of accurate conclusions, and application of research techniques. Varied assessments, which emphasize content application and problem-solving techniques, may be utilized to ensure each student's mastery of the concepts studied. A science fair project that includes independent research and a display board/oral presentation will be required.

FRENCH I / GERMAN I / SPANISH I (Students select one language which meets daily for an entire year):

The emphasis in this course is directed toward the four basic language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The target language is spoken in the classroom to develop comprehension and conversation. These two skills are reinforced through the use of audio, video, and technology. Reading and writing skills are developed through written exercises and cultural readings. Basic grammar, vocabulary, and conversation are taught in the course. Supplementary materials are used to strengthen communicative competence and cultural awareness. A variety of assessments are used to evaluate student performance.

CHINESE 1

This is a beginning level course that will introduce students to Mandarin Chinese. In this course, students will learn listening, speaking, reading and writing skills through activities that are designed for students who are just starting their studies of this language. Students will learn to express themselves using an ever-increasing vocabulary. Grammar is introduced and practiced in innovative and interesting ways with a variety of learning styles in mind. Culture is also sprinkled throughout the course in an attempt to help the learner focus on the Chinese speaking world and its culture, people, geographical locations and histories.

****Note that this course may not run if we have limited enrollment and/or absence of a certified Parkland teacher.*

Specials Rotation (1 class period daily for 1 MP unless otherwise noted)

THE VISUAL ARTS

Students will continue their exploratory experience in the visual arts curriculum as they synthesize prior art knowledge with a more advanced understanding of the art elements and principles. Students will experience additional art media as they give voice to their creativity through their artistic compositions. Art history, art appreciation, and critical thinking are integrated into the course. Eighth-grade students gain knowledge of art career pathways.

GENERAL MUSIC

The eighth-grade General Music class is designed to provide students with an understanding and appreciation of the social and historical context of music making. This course will encompass the study of musical eras and composers. Students will continue to explore music notation, composition, and performance through the use of classroom instruments and technology. General Music meets daily for one marking period.

FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES

The mission of each of the three areas of FCS is to strengthen individuals for lifelong participation in home, community, and society by teaching technical and social skills in a practical application classroom. The food technology and nutrition unit promote nutrition and wellness by continuing to explore the USDA Guidelines and by introducing bacterial control in food preparation as part of the classroom and laboratory experiences. Consumer resource lessons explore housing and design by completing a house plan and a craft project. Family science introduces principles of decision-making in money management.

TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION

Eighth-Grade - Students are scheduled for technology education during one marking period as part of their exploratory style and circulate through three laboratories – Manufacturing/Material, Fabrication/Electronics, and Engineering/Design. The approach of technology education is to have students involved in activities that develop skills of teamwork, problem-solving, research and design, and career exploration.

READING PREP – I RATING PERIOD

The Reading Prep is designed to help students strengthen their skills in all reading areas that have been identified by the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) and Study Island Benchmark Assessment data. Students are selected and scheduled for this course based on their data. The instruction will be tailored to meet the individual needs of the students. Online reading programs directly linked to the Pennsylvania State Standards in reading direct teacher instruction, and additional hard-copy resources will be used to address each student's particular areas of concern.

MATH PREP – I RATING PERIOD

The Mathematics Prep is designed to help students strengthen their math skills in specific areas that have been identified by the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) and Study Island Benchmark Assessment data. Students are selected and scheduled for this course based on their data. The instruction will be tailored to meet the individual needs of the students. This class will reinforce specific grade-level math topics, test-taking strategies, problem-solving skills and more to help students become more successful in math. Calculators, computers, cooperative learning, instructional games, and manipulatives will be used to assist instruction and student learning.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (1 class period every other day for a full year)

Information Technology is a full year course, which meets three class periods per 6-day cycle; receiving trimester grades. Eighth-grade projects require students to analyze problems, devise appropriate actions plans, judge best solutions, and develop projects that reflect their creativity, individuality, use of appropriate software and quality work. Essential topics learned in this class includes advanced concepts in Microsoft Word and Excel, desktop publishing, Microsoft PowerPoint, and Internet research and safety. During the year, students will be challenged to use their knowledge of these skills while completing a marketing simulation. In addition to the topics listed above, the students will participate in coding activities.

HEALTH/SAFETY/PHYSICAL EDUCATION (1 class period every other day for a full year)

The eighth-grade program includes units on the digestive, endocrine, and reproductive systems. Contemporary health issues such as substance use and abuse and eating disorders are discussed in the context of each body system. Students take part in fitness testing and in a variety of athletic and physical activities to increase coordination, strength, and flexibility.

PERFORMING MUSIC (1 class period daily for MP2 and MP5)

Students in eighth-grade may take a Performing Music class in lieu of General Music. The Performing Music options are Chorus, Band, or Orchestra, or a combination of these classes. Chorus, Band, and Orchestra meet daily for two marking periods (MP2 and MP5) and students are required to remain in the class for both marking periods. In addition, after-school rehearsals will be held in preparation for concerts and communicated to students at the beginning of the Marking Period.

BAND

Seventh and eighth-grade Band is an Intermediate level ensemble, providing students with learning and performance opportunities on woodwind, brass, and percussion instruments. The primary focus is on the development, continuation, and expansion of the basic skills learned through 6th grade. In addition to the continued refinement of individual performance skills, a greater emphasis is placed on refining ensemble skills. Students will continue to develop their knowledge of music theory, begin to analyze and evaluate music, and use critical thinking skills to make refinements in their performance. In addition to playing in the seventh and eighth-grade Band, individual growth and achievement are encouraged through participation in Jazz Band, PMEA festivals and private lessons.

CHORUS

Eighth-grade Chorus is a performance-oriented course designed to develop proper vocal technique, teach concepts of three-part choral singing, and improve music-reading ability. This class is open to all students regardless of singing ability or prior musical knowledge. The seventh-grade Chorus performs at two concerts per year. Chorus meets daily for two marking periods (MP2 and MP5). Students who elect Chorus with Band or Orchestra will have three days of vocal music and three days of instrumental music per 6-day cycle.

ORCHESTRA

Seventh and eighth-grade Orchestra provides students with learning and performance opportunities on violin, viola, cello, and bass. The primary focus is on the development and expansion of basic skills learned in 6th Grade Orchestra, which is necessary for effective instrumental music performance. In addition to playing in the 7th and 8th Grade Orchestra, individual growth and achievement are encouraged through participation in Honors Orchestra, PMEA Festivals, Allentown Symphony String Festival, Junior String Philharmonic, and private lessons. Students in the Seventh and eighth-grade Orchestra will perform in at least two concerts per year.