Roy W. Brown Middle School

2026-2027 Program of Studies Grade 8

2026-2027
ROY W. BROWN MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAM OF STUDIES
GRADE 8

This booklet is designed to help students and their parents/guardians understand the Roy W. Brown Middle School eighth grade curriculum by identifying the courses offered and course content.

The grade eight program is a comprehensive curriculum aligned to the New Jersey Student Learning Standards. Courses in Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies and Health/Physical Education are designed to reinforce mastery of basic skills, stimulate problem solving and critical thinking skills, and enhance self-concept. Listed in the course descriptions are general education classes, however, also available are courses dictated by students' IEPs and advanced levels of Language Arts, Mathematics and Science. In addition to the regular course of study, students are offered enrichment courses, such as world language, visual and performing arts, computer science and supplemental instruction on an interest/need basis.

Students are instructed in a supportive environment during the adolescence years. This philosophy provides close monitoring of students' progress, enhanced parent/teacher communication, and the opportunity for an interdisciplinary curricular approach. Careful consideration is given to the development of each student's schedule. School counselors will work with the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) to create the best possible schedule. Once the schedule is set, changes are difficult to make.

In grade eight, students are recommended for Language Arts Workshop and Math Workshop based upon standardized test scores and student achievement during the previous year's coursework. Skills courses are assigned in lieu of a world language or other elective coursework. Placement in advanced Language Arts and Mathematics courses are also recommended based on academic class performance, district-wide short-cycle assessments, and standardized test results. Parents/guardians who have questions about student placement should talk with their child's school counselor.

Roy W. Brown Middle School is proud to offer this curriculum for the 2026-2027 school year. The emphasis in programming consists of interdisciplinary study, concentration in study skills development, and integrated technology education. It is felt that these curricular offerings provide a broad-based educational experience which will better prepare students for high school work.

This Program of Studies is intended to assist you in selecting the best possible educational program for your child. If you have questions after reading it, please contact the School Counselor's Office at 385-8847 for assistance.

Dominick Rotante
Principal

EIGHTH GRADE PROGRAM OF STUDIES
2026-2027

Eighth graders will have the following in an eight period day:

Language Arts (LA 8 or LA 8 Advanced) – 1 period

Mathematics (Math 8, Algebra 8 or Geometry 8) – 1 period

Science (Science 8 or Physics 8) – 1 period

Social Studies 8 – 1 period

Physical Education/Health 8 – 1 period

Lunch/Independent Study – 1 period

World Language (Spanish 1, Advanced Spanish 1 or French 1) – 1 period

Band, Strings, Choir, Visual Art 8, Drama 8, Computer Science 8, or STEM 8/ELA Quest– 1 period

NOTE: WORKSHOP COURSES IN LANGUAGE ARTS AND/OR MATH ARE SCHEDULED IN LIEU OF AN ELECTIVE COURSE. SUPPORT IS ALSO AVAILABLE FOR STUDENTS IN NEED OF ACADEMIC ASSISTANCE.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS
GRADE 8

LANGUAGE ARTS 8 ADVANCED

Placement in this class is recommended based on student performance on the New Jersey Student Learning Assessments, STAR Reading, and grades/averages in Language Arts 7. The class is designed to further challenge students to appreciate literature through an in-depth study of various literary genres and to prepare students for the challenge of the BHS Honors English program. Students will be involved in various long-term, research-based projects and writing assignments. The College Board Springboard program will be used to support the development of students' reading and writing skills. Independent reading is a major component of this course. The New Jersey Student Learning Standards of speaking, listening, writing, reading, and viewing skills will also be addressed. Students will be involved in learning to communicate in various forms for a variety of audiences and purposes. There will be an emphasis on enhancing students' writing habits while providing opportunities for growth and expression.

LANGUAGE ARTS 8

This course teaches oral and written communication skills with special attention to composition and reading. Various literary forms examined include poetry, short story, novel, and drama. Preparation for the New Jersey Student Learning Assessments is an integral part of this curriculum. The state standards of speaking, listening, writing, reading, and viewing skills will also be addressed. Students will be involved in learning to communicate in various forms for a variety of audiences and purposes. The College Board Springboard program will be used to support the development of students' reading and writing skills. The New Jersey Student Learning Standards of speaking, listening, writing, reading, and viewing skills will be addressed. There will be an emphasis on enhancing students' writing habits while providing opportunities for growth and expression.

LANGUAGE ARTS 8 WORKSHOP

This course is designed to help students develop and refine their reading and writing skills to pass the New Jersey Student Learning Assessments and improve overall academic achievement. Instruction focuses on identified weaknesses revealed through diagnostic testing. This is not an elective course, but one which is assigned to students based on their performance on standardized tests, district exams, and teacher recommendations. Students in LA Workshop are part of the LA 8 course and have an additional period to reinforce topics learned in class and provide intensive instruction in reading and writing.

LANGUAGE ARTS ESL

The ESL Language Arts curriculum is offered solely to English Language Learners (ELLs). It is a course designed to promote language development in English by providing language practice and reinforcement of grammar, development of writing skills, and research. The ESL LA

curriculum prepares the ELL student to make a transition to English content area texts. Reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing/media literacy is addressed according to the New Jersey Student Learning Standards in Language Arts and English Language Proficiency Standards.

GEOMETRY 8

Placement in this class is recommended based on student performance on NJSLA Algebra, STAR Math and grades/averages in Math class. A development of geometry with emphasis on its logical structure and with consideration of both the inductive and deductive methods of reasoning as applied to formal proofs, construction problems, numerical problems and right triangles. Solid geometry is included as an extension of plane geometry wherever correlation can be made. Original thinking in developing proofs and knowledge of factual matter of geometry needed for subsequent courses are goals. Also, class discussions of appropriate material aim to transfer reasoning techniques used in geometry to everyday thinking.

ALGEBRA 8

Placement in this class is recommended based on student performance on NJSLA Math, STAR Math and grades/averages in Math class. This first year course in Algebra will include properties of real numbers, solving and graphing linear equations and inequalities, and solving quadratic equations. Each topic will focus on real-life word problems involving linear systems and quadratic equations.

MATHEMATICS 8

This course extends the understanding of proportional relationships by investigating the contrast between linear, inverse, exponential, and quadratic relationships. Students will use proportional reasoning in comparing data situations in choosing samples from populations. Additionally, students will study symmetry, transformations, the Pythagorean Theorem, linear systems and inequalities.

MATHEMATICS 8 WORKSHOP

This course is designed to help students develop and refine their computation skills and number sense to succeed on the NJSLA Math 8 and improve overall academic achievement. This is not an elective course, but one which is assigned to students based on their performance on standardized tests, district exams, and teacher recommendations. Students in Math Workshop are part of the Math 8 course and have an additional period to reinforce topics learned in class and provide intensive basic instruction.

PHYSICS 8

The Physics I course is designed to provide the foundation for the chemistry that is taught in ninth grade, while the combination of physics and chemistry supports tenth grade biology. This represents a very effective sequence of science instruction. As importantly, the Algebra I and Physics I courses are synchronized in order that they complement each other. Thus, students who are enrolled in the Physics course must simultaneously take (or have taken Algebra.)

Physics 1 uses an algebra-based approach to explore topics including Mechanics (One-Dimensional Kinematics, One-Dimensional Dynamics, Uniform Circular Motion, Universal Gravitation, Work and Energy, and One-Dimensional Linear Momentum); Electricity & Magnetism (Electrostatics, Electric Fields, Electric Current, DC Circuits, Magnetic Fields, Electromagnetic Induction); Simple Harmonic Motion; and Waves & Light (Spring Mass Systems, The Pendulum, Wave Properties, Electromagnetic Waves, Light as a Wave).

SCIENCE 8

The Roy W. Brown Middle School Science program is designed to provide students with engaging experiences in life, earth/space, and physical sciences and in technology. Both the content and the pedagogy of the science program address the unique characteristics of the middle school student and align to the Next Generation Science Standards. The science program provides age-appropriate activities that allow middle school children to:

- Expand their understanding of important science concepts
- Acquire problem-solving and critical-thinking skills
- Develop positive habits of mind toward science

Earth/Space Science and Physical Science are featured in the eighth grade science curriculum. The program includes a study of astronomy, forces, motion, energy and energy transformations. Students are encouraged to use the science and engineering practices: 1) asking questions (for science) and defining problems (for engineering), 2) developing and using models. 3) planning and carrying out investigations, 4) analyzing and interpreting data, 5) using mathematics and computational thinking, 6) constructing explanations (for science) and designing solutions (for engineering), 7) engaging in argument from evidence, and 8) obtaining, evaluating, and communicating information to understand the world around them.

SOCIAL STUDIES 8

The Roy W. Brown Middle School Social Studies program fosters students' abilities to understand their world and have an appreciation for the heritage of America with a high degree of literacy in civics, the history of the United States and New Jersey, world history, economics, and geography. American history is featured in the eighth grade Social Studies curriculum. This will include a study of the English colonization of America beginning with the founding of Jamestown and continuing through the period of Reconstruction after the Civil War. The program includes the integration of New Jersey history as well as African American historical contributions. Students will learn to write Document Based Question (DBQ) responses to support the development of their reading and writing skills. Students are encouraged to: 1) acquire a basic understanding of American traditions and values based on knowledge of history and of the development and functioning of the constitutional system of government; 2) use appropriate maps and charts to gather, analyze, and interpret data; 3) develop descriptions, explanations, predictions, and models using evidence; 4) think critically and logically to make the connection between evidence and explanations; 5) participate in activities that enhance the understanding of this period of American history and how it relates to the world.

SOCIAL STUDIES ESL

The ESL Social Studies class is offered solely to English Language Learners (ELLs). It is a course designed to make social studies comprehensive to the ELL student while promoting language acquisition in the content area. The ELL Social Studies curriculum prepares the ELL student to make a transition to the content area in the mainstream utilizing appropriate teaching strategies through the sheltered approach. The ELL students will develop and expand their English proficiency level in the content area of social studies through the four language domains according to the NJ Student Learning Standards in Social Studies and English Language Proficiency Standards. Students in Social Studies ESL will have instruction in Civics during the second semester including what it means to be an active citizen in the United States, how democracy works in government, and identifying basic human rights.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION/HEALTH 8

The Physical Education curriculum continues to challenge the students with individual and team sports as well as a variety of physical activities to develop self-esteem, fitness, and cooperative play. The Physical Best Fitnessgram health assessment program is administered to evaluate the fitness level and growth of students. The Health curriculum offers insight into personal development, dating, sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), child abuse, suicide prevention, and drugs, alcohol and tobacco. These courses are mandatory for all students and comply with the U.S. Title IX and N.J.A.C. 6:4 regulations.

SPANISH 1 ADVANCED

The course is for advanced speakers of the Spanish language who are proficient in listening and speaking skills and wish to develop reading and writing abilities. Students will expand their knowledge of grammar and vocabulary to prepare them for the Spanish for Native Speakers 1 course at Bergenfield High School.

SPANISH 1

This course is the first full year study of the Spanish language in our sequence of Spanish language courses. Repetition, comprehensible input, and oral language production are important components of this course. The focus is on all four language skills; reading, writing, speaking and listening, as well as the culture of the Spanish-speaking world. Each unit will cover the vocabulary of a specific theme, (family, school, hobbies, food, etc.) and grammar concepts appropriate to level one. As students progress through each unit, they will build upon previously learned material and be given opportunities to strengthen their use of the language through all of the modalities to develop foundational proficiency necessary for Spanish 2.

FRENCH 1

This course is the first full year study of the French language in our sequence of French language courses. Repetition, comprehensible input, and oral language production are important components of this course. The focus is on all four language skills; reading, writing, speaking and listening, as well as the culture of the French-speaking world. Each unit will cover the vocabulary of a specific theme, (family, school, hobbies, food, etc.) and grammar concepts appropriate to level one. As students progress through each unit, they will build upon previously learned material and be given opportunities to strengthen their use of the language through all of the modalities to develop foundational proficiency necessary for French 2.

VISUAL ART 8

This year-long course will focus on building basic art skills and learning the more technical aspects of drawing and painting, while also allowing students to explore a wide variety of hands-on projects. This course will focus on the development of visual and manipulative skills as they relate to all art forms. A variety of materials will be explored. These may include, but will not be limited to, graphite and colored pencils, markers, pastels, and transparent and opaque paints. Using various materials such as clay, wood, fabrics, yarn, plaster, cardboard, paper, copper foil, etc. students will create sculptural or utilitarian objects in the following areas: ceramics, sculpture, mask making, three dimensional construction, movie set special effect models, crafts, puppetry, enameling, textile designs, color theory, and painting. Observational figure work will be covered as well as lessons with still life and landscapes. Imaginary themes will also be explored. Outdoor work and field trips may be included when possible.

DRAMA 8

This program will develop and deepen theatrical skill, while strengthening scholars' unique talents and performance agility through a balance of process, production and performance. Dramatic aspects will include Acting, Movement, Voice, Design, Direction and Theatre History, highlighting the connection between culture and Performing Arts. Skills developed through this course support confident communication, the ability to connect and convey human experience with depth and honesty, and a proud sense of self. Students will hone habits of reflection from process through performance, and the reception and implementation of feedback to elevate their craft, enabling creativity, critical thinking, and the ability to understand, originate and evaluate live theatre.

COMPUTER SCIENCE 8

This course will meet the entire year every day as it is using Code.org- CS Discoveries Units on problem solving, web design, games and animation, and the design process. Python 1 and Khan Academy will be used supplementally as time permits along with 2D and 3D projects.

STEM 8

STEM 8 is a half-year 8th grade elective course taught by a science or math teacher. This course will utilize the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) framework, giving students the opportunity to learn STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) content by working in groups to solve open-ended, real-world problems such as climate change. STEM 8 would provide hands-on learning experiences aligned to NJSLS in the following areas: Science; Math; Computer Science & Design Thinking; Career Readiness, Life Literacies & Key Skills. There will be a focus on emergent 21st century technologies. Examples include renewable energy technologies (solar, wind, hydrogen), drone technology, and electronics.

ELA QUEST 8

Throughout the course, students will participate in quests during which they will do research, solve problems, identify issues and find solutions. They will work in groups to learn teamwork, communication, and problem-solving skills as well as organization and time management skills.

BAND 8

This course is a student elective for instrumentalists who play band instruments. Course requirements include ensemble rehearsals and performances outside of school hours, as well as individual home practice. The repertoire for this group is designed to increase the technical facility of individual members while fostering growth in ensemble concepts. This class includes basic marching and a parade performance. Departmental approval is required for new students.

STRINGS 8

This course is a student elective for instrumentalists who play string instruments. Course requirements include ensemble rehearsals and performances outside of school hours, as well as individual home practice. The repertoire for this group is designed to increase the technical facility of individual members while fostering growth in ensemble concepts. This class is frequently combined with wind and percussion players from the band to perform literature of the symphonic orchestra. Departmental approval is required for all new students.

Note: Both Band 8 and Strings 8 are continuation courses for those students presently enrolled in grade seven. Departmental approval is required for all new students and/or beginners; the instrumental music teacher and the schoolcounselor should be consulted before enrollment.

CHOIR 8

This course is a student elective for eighth grade students who wish to sing in chorus. Course requirements include ensemble rehearsals and performances outside of school hours, as well as individual home practice. The repertoire for this group is designed to increase technical facility of individual members while fostering growth in ensemble concepts.

Note to Band and Strings students: DO NOT sign up for Choir 8 as an elective. Your choral experience will take place during your instrumental ensemble period.