WILLIAMSVILLE
CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
Est. 1893

GRADE 8

OFFICE OF INSTRUCTION

GRADE LEVEL EXPECTATIONS

New York State learning standards outline what students should know and be able to do by the end of eighth grade while preparing them for the academic expectations of high school. During this pivotal year, students are expected to demonstrate independence, perseverance, and responsibility as they engage in rigorous coursework, analyze complex ideas, and communicate their thinking with confidence and precision. The skills identified below represent a consolidated list of the most important grade-level learning priorities. They are not intended to represent a comprehensive list of all standards or content taught during eighth grade. Instruction encompasses the full range of New York State grade-level standards across all subject areas.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS (ELA)

- Evaluate reasoning behind an argument and the relevance/sufficiency of evidence.
- Identify irrelevant evidence and analyze how an author uses rhetorical devices (persuasive language) and syntax to influence the reader.
- Analyze the impact of word choice on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.
- Develop a sophisticated use of irony, puns and figures of speech.
- Paraphrase complex language, such as Shakespearean English or archaic syntax.
- Conduct research that requires gathering data from multiple print and digital sources and follow a standard format for citation.
- Develop a nuanced understanding of complex topics through integration of varied perspectives and accounts.
- Write across varied genres with a focus on acknowledging and resolving counterclaims, cohesion and rhetorical effect and utilizing primary sources and archaic text analysis.

MATH

- Apply the properties of exponents to simplify numerical expressions.
- Understand irrational numbers and approximate their values on the number line.
- Analyze linear equations, functions, and systems using graphs, tables, and equations.
- Solve linear equations and systems to model real-world situations.
- Apply the Pythagorean Theorem to solve geometric and measurement problems.
- Investigate transformations, similarity, and volume to describe geometric relationships.

SCIENCE

- Model the Earth-Sun-Moon system and gravitational forces to explain lunar phases, eclipses, seasons, and planetary motions across the solar system.
- Analyze rock layers, fossils, and landform structures to construct an accurate timeline of Earth's multi-billion-year geologic history.
- Investigate plate tectonics, internal heat, and surface erosion to explain how Earth's crust is continuously reshaped and recycled.
- Trace the water cycle, atmospheric energy transfers, and ocean currents to explain weather forecasting models and regional climates.
- Forecast natural hazards (such as earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and severe storms) using data mapping to help communities prepare for emergencies.
- Evaluate how human population growth and resource consumption alter Earth's natural systems, drive environmental changes, and impact global climate trends.

SOCIAL STUDIES

- Examine the social and economic changes that shaped the United States following the Civil War, including industrialization, the growth of cities, the rise of big business, and labor movements.
- Explore the United States' emergence as a global power through events such as the Spanish-American War, overseas expansion, and the construction of the Panama Canal.
- Analyze the causes and effects of World War I and World War II, including the experiences of Americans on the home front, the Holocaust, and the impact of atomic weapons.
- Investigate the Great Depression and evaluate how New Deal programs transformed the role of government in American life.
- Study the Cold War and the global competition between democracy and communism, from containment policies to the fall of the Berlin Wall.
- Explore civil rights and equality movements, as well as the impact of globalization and technological change on the modern world.

SCREENING

- Grade-level assessments are designed to measure student progress, guide instruction, and ensure students receive the appropriate resources and support to meet grade-level expectations.
- Reading: The Aimsweb Universal Screener is utilized three times per year to assess each of the following: silent reading fluency, vocabulary, and reading comprehension.

STATE ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

- NYS ELA Assessment
- NYS Math Assessment (Math 8)
- Algebra 1 Regents Exam (Algebra 1 course)
- NYS Science Assessment (Science 8)
- Earth and Space Sciences Regents Exam (Earth and Space Sciences course)
- WIDA Access for students identified as English language learners
- Checkpoint A Examination (locally-developed Regents examination) for Spanish & French
- NYSAA for ELA
- NYSAA for Math
- NYSAA for Science



GRADE 8

ART

- Create original artwork by developing ideas, exploring materials, and applying artistic techniques and processes.
- Refine and present artwork by revising, completing, and sharing creative work with purpose and intention.
- Respond to artwork by analyzing, interpreting, and evaluating artistic choices using art vocabulary and criteria.
- Connect art to personal experiences, cultures, history, and other disciplines to deepen understanding.

MUSIC

- Create musical ideas through composing, improvising, and arranging using voice, instruments, and technology.
- Perform and present music with skill, expression, collaboration, and appropriate performance practices.
- Respond to music by analyzing, interpreting, and evaluating musical works using music vocabulary and criteria.
- Connect music to personal experiences, cultures, history, and other disciplines to deepen understanding.
- Curricular Band, Orchestra and Chorus also available to students in grades 4-12.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- Demonstrate competency in a variety of motor skills and movement patterns.
- Apply knowledge of concepts, principles, strategies, and tactics related to movement and performance.
- Demonstrate the knowledge and skills to achieve and maintain a health enhancing level of physical activity and fitness.
- Recognize the value of physical activity for overall wellness, enjoyment, challenge, and/or self expression.



WORLD LANGUAGES

- Understand the main topic and key details in short spoken, written, or visual messages about familiar topics such as famous people, travel destinations, traditions, and everyday life.
- Participate in conversations using simple sentences to ask and answer questions, share opinions, and respond to others about topics such as preferences, activities, celebrations, and plans.
- Speak and write in connected sentences to describe people, places, and experiences, including giving basic information about when someone was born, what they are known for, or why a place is special.
- Share ideas, opinions, and recommendations, such as explaining what they think about a topic, suggesting places to visit, or giving advice about healthy habits or daily routines.
- Discuss plans and activities, including where they want to go, what they plan to do, and how they prepare for trips or events.
- Develop deeper cultural understanding by describing traditions, important people, and places in French- or Spanish-speaking cultures and comparing them to traditions and experiences in their own community.

TIPS FOR PARENTS/ GUARDIANS

Diverse Reading: Encourage your child to choose informational books about subjects like science, history, art, music, and famous people to build background knowledge.

Civic and Global Engagement: Encourage your child to have respectful conversations about historical events, civic issues, and the rights and responsibilities of citizens.

Math: Discuss graphs, tables, and patterns you encounter in everyday life. Ask your child to describe what they notice and predict what might happen next before calculating.

Scientific Thinking: Encourage your child to explore the Earth and space by observing weather, and studying changes to the land, water, and climate over time. Encourage students to ask questions and seek answers about how Earth's systems interact with one another and affect our daily lives.

Home Language Use: Use your native language at home with your child. Strong native language skills help students to succeed in school.

ENGINEERING & TECHNOLOGY

- Engage in the engineering and design process using appropriate technology.
- Demonstrate an introductory understanding of various manufacturing and production methods, including custom versus mass production, automation, and the historical development of manufacturing processes.
- Demonstrate an introductory understanding of architectural and structural design, focusing on local and historical architecture.