

BARBARA BUSH MIDDLE SCHOOL

8TH GRADE

2010- 2011

Course Descriptions

ENGLISH 8 PRE-AP

This is a rigorous college preparatory course that prepares students for success when they take Advanced Placement and other challenging courses in high school. Added to this specialized curriculum are advanced grammar and logic, such as inference and generalization, literature of various genres, periods, and cultures; multi-paragraph essays for a variety of purposes and audiences, oral presentation and listening skills; study skills; and research involving documentation.

MATH PRE-AP (Algebra I)

This course is designed for the student who intends to take calculus in high school. It is the bridge to the abstract study of mathematics. Topics: the real number system and its properties, linear equations and inequalities (one and two variables), algebraic polynomials, rational expressions, roots and radicals, functions, and quadratic equations. Relevant problem-solving is interwoven. The use of graphing calculators and computers is integrated throughout the curriculum. To be successful in this course a student must have a strong foundation in all the pre-algebra skills.

SCIENCE PRE-AP

This course will include the regular eighth grade Science TEKS with an emphasis on extending the Physics and Chemistry strands to align with the Integrated Physics and Chemistry TEKS. The course will challenge the students to use critical thinking skills and problem solving techniques that will require the use of higher-level math skills. There will be extensive use of technology for analysis, extrapolation and communication of data. Students will be required to do a competition-quality Science Project (i.e. Science Fair).

AMERICAN HISTORY PRE-AP

This advanced level course is an enriched and more comprehensive coverage of the regular U.S. History course, based on a set of content-specific strategies designed to introduce skills, concepts and assessment methods that prepare students for success when they take Advance Placement and other challenging courses in high school. The course will include the regular 8th grade U.S. History TEKS, with an emphasis on learning and writing skills.

READING

Reading - In Reading 8, students refine and master previously learned language arts and reading skills in increasingly complex reading selections. They continue to receive instruction in higher level reading skills while reading widely in classic and contemporary selections and informational texts. Emphasis is on comprehension, vocabulary and thinking skills in an interactive environment so that students; listen actively; speak/talk to construct, read, write, and view critically. Significant blocks of time are provided for reading independent, instructional and recreational materials.

Advanced Contemporary Literacy (ACL) – this reading course is designed for students possessing advanced reading skills, is a research- based course in which students apply those reading skills in problem-solving, project-based assignments requiring research. At 8th grade this rigorous class focuses on nonfiction reading, oral presentation, and written expression. Strategies, such as Socratic seminar and student portfolios, encourage higher level thinking and discussion concerning contemporary cross-curricular issues.

AIM

This class is designed as an enrichment opportunity for students to review academic concepts, seek assistance in solving academic problems, promote independent skills in time management, and learn strategies for success such as vocabulary development, agenda use, binder organization, goal setting and character education.

LANGUAGES

Spanish I* - Spanish IF – 8th grade is a one year course designed for those students who have the interest, motivation, and study skills to take Spanish I, but who cannot schedule the Spanish IA and IB sequence over the 7th and 8th grades. The development of oral language skills will be emphasized along with pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar. The culture of the Spanish-speaking world will be integrated into the learning of the language.

Spanish 1B* – Spanish 1B is the second year of the middle school two year program. This is a continuation of the formal study of the Spanish language. The program is designed to allow students more time to acquire the fundamental language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing Spanish. The middle school Spanish I program emphasizes the development of oral language, the study of introductory vocabulary, pronunciation and grammar. The culture of the Spanish-speaking world is integrated into all aspects of the course.

*Students who successfully complete Level 1A and 1B or Spanish 1 will receive one unit of credit on their high school transcripts. This credit will count toward the minimum number of 26 units required for graduation. It may also be used with credits earned in high school to meet college entrance requirements.

FINE ARTS

Band I – This course is designed for those students who exhibit an interest in learning a band instrument. In most cases, students will need to furnish their instruments and be committed to an advanced band after one year of study. Students will be placed appropriately according to instrument selection and/or proficiency level.

Band II – This course is designed for students who have completed one or two years of study on their band instrument but who have not yet achieved a level of excellence commensurate with being named to an advanced band. The students will continue to strive to achieve this level in hopes of being placed in an advanced band after the second year of study.

Band III – This is the advanced band that is made up of students who have attained a high degree of proficiency on their instrument. Members of this organization will perform at UIL competitions and at concerts, and should be prepared to spend time outside of the school day preparing for these performances.

Choir III – The advanced level of choir is offered to those students who have attained a performance proficiency commensurate with the ability grouping for a specific choral group (i.e. mixed choir, boy's choir, treble choir, etc.) Students enrolling in an advanced class should have a serious interest in singing. They will participate in concerts, programs, and UIL competitions, which require rehearsal and practice outside the school day.

String Orchestra II – This course is designed for those string performers who have completed one or more years of study. Students will be placed appropriately according to instrument selection and/or playing proficiency.

String Orchestra III – This course is offered to those students who wish to study orchestral literature and who have attained a certain level of performance capability. Members of this organization will perform at UIL competitions and at concerts, and should be prepared to spend time outside of the school day preparing for these performances.

FINE ARTS

Art – 8th grade art defines a variety of concepts directly related to the art elements and principles through experiences with media and tools in design, drawing, painting, printmaking, sculpture, ceramics, fiber art, photographic imagery, and electronic media-generated art; analyzes technological, historical and cultural influences on artwork; and evaluates artworks through discussion and critique.

Theatre Arts III - This is an advanced level course that allows the student to study in depth the various aspects of theatre performance. Emphasis is placed on the development of the individual actor and the honing of performance skills focusing toward the presentation of the final dramatic production.

OTHER ELECTIVES

Debate I, II, III – First semester topics: logic, persuasion, and speaking and debate formats. Competitive events covered in the class include impromptu speaking, modern oratory, and Lincoln Douglas debate. Second semester topics; philosophy, current events, and debate formats. Students in both semesters will research, write and present original works as well as critically evaluate works from others. Competitive events covered in the class will include student Congress, and Public Forum debate.

Teacher/Office Aide – This course provides the opportunity for students to develop and practice office skills and responsible behavior patterns under the supervision of teachers or office personnel. Emphasis is placed on interpersonal relationships as well as clerical and communication skills, telephone techniques, record keeping, office protocol, and decision making.

Athletics 8 - This course will include instruction for boys in the sport of football, basketball, and track. Instruction for girls will be in volleyball, basketball, and track. Basic motor skills will be taught, as well as higher forms of physical skills that is required of athletes. A high degree of physical and cardiovascular fitness will be emphasized. emphasis will also be placed on teaching good sportsmanship and developing a respect for other athletes and coaches in order to insure a quality educational experience.

CAREER & TECHNOLOGY

Exploring Energy, Power & Transportation Technology - This exploratory course investigates the types of activities performed in the energy, power and transportation industry. Through laboratory experiences students explore the skills and technologies. Content includes the application of technology, the design of products and services, emerging and innovative technologies, safety and maintenance of technology, codes, laws, standards, marketing, and technology-related career explorations.

Exploring Manufacturing Technology- This is an exploratory course designed to investigate the types of activities performed in the manufacturing industry and through laboratory experiences students explore the skills and technologies of this industry. Content includes the application of technology, the design of products and services, emerging and innovative technologies, safety and maintenance of technology, codes, laws, standards, marketing, and technology-related career explorations. Activities may include designing and drafting, manufacturing parts, using tools and machines, and planning a manufacturing project.

TECHNOLOGY APPLICATIONS

Exploration of Multi-Media - This is an advanced technology course that focuses on digital multimedia production. Students will develop multimedia through the production process using industry standard software. This class will be project based utilizing stop-animated, photographic and digital video technologies.

Internet Exploration – This is an advanced technology course that focuses on the creative use of multimedia in the webpage design process. Students will create, edit and develop web pages using industry standard software. This class will be project based utilizing pod casting, photographic and computer animated technologies.