Driscoll Middle School Course Catalog
2014-2015
8th Grade

English:

ENGLISH 8
English 8 continues to provide training for students in these language arts skills: writing, reading, viewing, speaking, listening, and producing. The scope and sequence covers (1) language and grammar; (2) literature; (3) cumulative sentences, multi-paragraph papers & editing skills; (4) oral presentations & listening skills; (5) study skills, library reports, and research with documentation.

ENGLISH 8 PreAP
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 presentations and listening skills; study skills; and research involving documentation.

ENGLISH 8 GT/PreAP
The theme for grade 8 in the differentiated curriculum is “Discovery of Self.” Classical literature is stressed, along with structured essay writing as well as creative types of writing. The materials chosen offer an appropriate challenge in all areas of language arts.

Reading:

READING 8 (Taken with English 8)
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 (Taken with English 8 PreAP or GT)
Designed for 8th grade advanced reading students, this class is a research-based course where application of reading skills provides opportunities to problem solve, research project-based assignments, and read selections of contemporary media. Focusing on reading to support argumentation, persuasion, and debate, students will research, formulate arguments, and formally debate. Socratic seminar and student portfolios strategies encourage higher level thinking skills.

Math:

MATH 8
Designed to be transition into the abstract mathematics of algebra at the high school level, the curriculum is focused on preparing all students to enter Algebra I in the ninth grade. Sixth and seventh grade topics are extended with emphasis placed upon the pre-algebra skills of Cartesian graphing, operations involving integers, and the concepts of variables and equations as mathematical models.

ALGEBRA I PreAP (High School Credit)
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.
ALGEBRA I GT/PreAP (High School Credit)
This course 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:

SCIENCE 8
This course uses lab and field investigations, scientific investigation and reasoning and the tools of science to develop problem solving and critical thinking skills while learning concepts such as atoms and the periodic table; chemical reactions, formulas and balanced equations; Newton's Laws of motion; Sun, Earth and Moon systems; plate tectonics; weather patterns and climate and interactions between organisms in the environment.

SCIENCE 8 PreAP
This course will include the standard eighth grade science TEKS with an emphasis on extending the Matter and Energy, Force, Motion and Energy and Organisms and Environment strands so that students have the necessary background to be successful in PreAP high school science courses.

Social Studies:

U.S. HISTORY
Students study the history of the United States from the early colonial period through Reconstruction. Historical content focuses on the political, economic, and 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 use critical-thinking skills, including the identification of bias in written, oral, and visual material.

U.S. HISTORY 8 PreAP
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 Advanced 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.

Physical Education:

PHYSICAL EDUCATION
This course will include instructions and opportunities in physical fitness development to improve the quality of life, motor skills that develop positive body image, and skills related to games and sports.

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 are 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.

Fine Arts:

ART
Eighth 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.
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 II
The intermediate of choir is offered to those students who have not yet attained a performance proficiency commensurate with being in an advanced choir. Students will continue to focus on proper vocal techniques and sight-reading.

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.

DANCE
This intermediate course is designed to focus on various mediums of dance, including ballet, modern jazz and folk/ethnic. Emphasis is on training the student to coordinate elements of dance and to enhance student confidence, poise and collaborative skills. Aerobic activities and fitness activities will be incorporated.

JAZZ BAND
This course is offered as an added opportunity for those students in band who desire a course in studying music of the popular idiom. Students will be encouraged to learn beginning skills in improvisation and to increase their performance skills on their instrument.

ORCHESTRA I
This course is designed for students who exhibit an interest in learning how to play the violin, viola, cello, or string bass. In most cases the student will need to provide his/her own instrument and be committed to achieving an established level of performance commensurate with being placed in an advanced orchestra during his/her second year of performing.

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.

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.

THEATRE
This is an introductory level course that allows the student to study the various aspects of theatre performance. Emphasis is placed on the development of individual techniques utilized in theatre performance.

THEATRE (Advanced)
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.
ACADEMIC & INDIVIDUAL MOTIVATION (AIM)
The focus of AIM is to enhance the curriculum by providing enrichment and/or support to the core academic subjects. AIM may also provide students with critical skills such as study habits, note-taking, test taking strategies, organizational skills, time management, goal setting, and character education. If time allows, students may also receive study hall support.

DEBATE III
First semester topics: logic, persuasion, and speaking and debate formats. Competitive events covered in the class will 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.

DIGITAL COMMUNICATION IN THE 21ST CENTURY
Digital Communication is a laboratory-based course designed to provide an overview of and experience in multimedia technology. Sounds, images, graphics, and video are the informational projects from which students will construct media rich knowledge structures. Students will develop necessary skills and obtain hands-on experiences working with a variety of multimedia tools to build linear and non-linear interactive products.

HEALTH (High School Credit)
Health is a course required for high school graduation. It includes the study of the human body and the functions of the systems, drug abuse, first aid, CPR, diseases, pollution and its effects, nutrition, exercise, health agencies and sex education.

JUNIOR PEER ASSISTANCE AND LEADERSHIP (JR PAL)
The Peer Assistance and Leadership (PAL) course is a program in which selected middle school students are trained to work as peer helpers and peer mediators and community service learners with students either on their own campus or from feeder elementary schools.

PRINCIPLES OF HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM (High School Credit)
Students will learn about the programs of study available in culinary arts and about the hospitality and tourism industry that encompasses lodging, travel and tourism, recreation, amusements, attractions, resorts, restaurants, and food beverage service. The hospitality and tourism industry maintains the largest national employment base in the private sector. Students use knowledge and skills that meet industry standards to function effectively in various positions within this multifaceted industry. Students must pass a safety test with 100% mastery to participate in labs.

PRINCIPLES OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (High School Credit)
Students develop computer literacy skills to adapt to emerging technologies used in the global marketplace. Students implement personal and interpersonal skills to prepare for a rapidly evolving workplace environment. Students enhance reading, writing, computing, communication and reasoning skills and apply them to the information technology environment.

SPANISH I (High School Credit)
Spanish 1 - 8th Grade is a one year course designed for those students who have the interest, motivation, and study skills to take Spanish I. 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. Please see your counselor for more information.

SPANISH IB (*High School Credit) when combined with Spanish 1A in 7th grade
Spanish IB 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.
VIDEO BROADCAST PRODUCTION
Web publishing is the study and development of online publications that include blogs, audio and video broadcasting and graphic creation for dynamic website use. This course focuses on the fundamentals of developing and managing digital content using modern software. Students will learn and follow current and emerging trends related to World Wide Web publication in comparison to traditional print methods.

YEARBOOK
Students gain laboratory experience in magazine production as they produce the yearbooks. Experience includes writing copy, computer copy preparation using Adobe in Design CS3, page layout and design skills, photography, photo cropping and editing. Students in this class will also produce the literary magazine.