

DECATUR CITY SCHOOLS

6th - 8th GRADE CURRICULUM GUIDE



*Providing an innovative learning community
committed to academic excellence and
meeting the unique needs of every individual.*

The Decatur City Board of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, or age in its programs and activities, and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Dr. Stefanie Underwood, 302 4th Avenue, NE, Decatur AL 35601, 256-552-3000, stefanie.underwood@dcs.edu.



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GRADE 6 CORE CLASSES

***Students are placed in accelerated academic classes based on Scantron Performance scores. Additional consideration will be given to classroom grades. Students who are not placed in advanced classes may discuss waiving into the classes with the middle school principal. [Please contact the school for more information.](#)**

Grade 6 English Language Arts

English Language Arts 6 provides students with a curriculum that aligns with the Alabama Course of Study organized into the following domains: reading literature, reading informational text, writing, speaking and listening, and language. Students will concentrate on language skills including standard usage, function of the parts of speech, sentence structure, punctuation, capitalization, vocabulary, spelling, and dictionary skills. Students will participate in a variety of speaking activities and presentations. Writing assignments emphasize introducing and supporting claims on a topic or issue using a formal style. Students will read a variety of literature including novels, short stories, poetry. **Outside and summer reading/writing assignments are required.**

Grade 6 Advanced English Language Arts

English Language Arts 6 provides students with a challenging curriculum that aligns with the Alabama Course of Study organized into the following domains: reading literature, reading informational text, writing, speaking and listening, and language. Students will concentrate on language skills including standard usage, function of the parts of speech, sentence structure, punctuation, capitalization, vocabulary, spelling, and dictionary skills. Students participate in a variety of speaking activities and presentations. Students are expected to write narrative, informative/explanatory and argumentative texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information. Students will read a variety of literature including novels, short stories, poetry. This course has a concentrated focus on independent reading, writing, analysis, and problem solving. The primary goals of the course are to foster independent learning and encourage in-depth exploration of the content. **Outside and summer reading/writing assignments are required.**

Grade 6 Reading

In this class, students will be reading a variety of fictional and nonfictional materials. This class will focus on the following areas of literacy: Alabama Reading Initiative Strategies (ARI); Reading (Independent reading, Literature Circles; Whole group); Writing (Various modes of writing, Collaborative classroom blog); Speaking and Listening (Discussion, Presentations). 6th Graders are required to have at least one semester of reading.

Grade 6 Gifted Reading

Students will self-select titles from an appropriate genre list established by the teacher. This course will develop critical and creative thinking along with problem-solving skills. This approach will help students develop higher-level reading skills. This course will also incorporate digital platforms. This is a required course and satisfies the 6th-grade reading requirement.

Grade 6 U.S. History

This is a two-semester survey of U.S. History from Reconstruction to the early 21st century, and is aligned with the Alabama Course of Study. Students will be expected to remain up to date and informed on the regional, national and international news forums for in class discussions. In addition, emphasis will be placed on understanding, analyzing and synthesizing historical events, current events, and primary source documents to develop a global perspective of American History.

Grade 6 Advanced U.S. History

This is a two-semester survey of U.S. History from Reconstruction to the early 21st century, and is aligned with the Alabama Course of Study. Curricula will prepare students for the rigorous demands of the High School AP curriculum. Students will be

expected to remain up to date and informed on the regional, national and international news forums for in class discussions and include opportunities for students to develop questioning strategies that assist them in organizing and presenting

information in oral, visual, and written formats. Portions of the course requisites include accelerated pacing of academic reading and research based writing both in and out of the classroom environment. In addition, emphasis will be placed on understanding, analyzing and synthesizing historical events, current events, and primary source documents to develop a global perspective of American History.

Grade 6 Math

Math Grade 6 provides students with a curriculum that aligns with the Alabama Course of Study and is clustered into five Alabama Content Areas: Proportional Reasoning; Number Systems and Operations; Algebra and Functions; Data Analysis, Statistics, and Probability; and Geometry and Measurement. The quality of work within this course will allow students to gain a deeper understanding of the concepts and become fluent in the application, as well as make connections between the theoretical processes and real-world applications. Topics covered will include ratios and unit rates; operations with fractions & decimals; equivalent expressions; one-step equations and inequalities; relationships between independent and dependent variables; and measures of center and variability. **Summer assignments are required.**

Grade 6 Accelerated Math

Advanced Math Grade 6 provides students with a curriculum that aligns with the Alabama Course of Study and is clustered into five Alabama Content Areas: Proportional Reasoning; Number Systems and Operations; Algebra and Functions; Data Analysis, Statistics, and Probability; and Geometry and Measurement. The quality of work within this course will allow students to gain a deeper understanding of the concepts and become fluent in the application, as well as make connections between the theoretical processes and real-world applications. Topics covered will include ratios and unit rates; operations with fractions & decimals; equivalent expressions; one-step equations and inequalities; relationships between independent and dependent variables; and measures of center and variability. To prepare students for upcoming 7th grade Accelerated Math, additional topics that will be covered include integers; operations with rational numbers; multi-step ratio and percent problems; using equations to find unknown angles; and probability. At the conclusion of this course, students will be prepared for 7th grade Accelerated Math. **Summer assignments are required.**

Grade 6 Earth Science

Earth Science curriculum aligns with the Alabama Course of Study which merges the three pillars of science: Science and Engineering Practices, Disciplinary Core Ideas, and Crosscutting Concept throughout the course. Earth Science topics include: Sun, Earth and Moon systems, Planetary systems, Plate Tectonics, Weather and Climate. Students who take this course of study will learn how to make and manipulate models; explain different evidences which include geological processes and extinction of living organisms; explanation of different biogeochemical cycles on Earth; chemical and physical formation of the rock cycle; use of various instruments to interpret weather; unequal heating of earth's surface; and humans impact on Earth processes. Students will make models, research, find evidence, explain scientific processes, interpret data and graphs, and carry out various investigations.

Grade 6 Advanced Earth Science

Advanced Earth Science curriculum is a rigorous curriculum that aligns with the Alabama Course of Study which merges the three pillars of science: Science and Engineering Practices, Disciplinary Core Ideas, and Crosscutting Concept throughout the course. Although a student may be eligible to participate in an honors course, it is important that both parents and students understand the rigorous design of the curriculum which also proceeds at an accelerated pace. Students who take honors courses are interested in challenging work that will encourage more independence, build critical thinking skills, improve math application, as well as improve research and writing skills. Topics covered in regular 6th grade science are the same. In an advanced class students will need to be self-motivated, work at a faster pace, apply content knowledge to experimental and

engineering design, while collaboratively working with their peers. Students will also learn how to present their findings in written and verbal form. Advanced science has a heavy emphasis and application on math, research, and writing.

GRADE 7 CORE CLASSES

***Students are placed in accelerated academic classes based on Scantron Performance scores. Additional consideration will be given to classroom grades. Students who are not placed in advanced classes may discuss waiving into the classes with the middle school principal. [Please contact the school for more information.](#)**

Grade 7 English Language Arts

English Language Arts 7 provides students with a curriculum that aligns with the Alabama Course of Study organized into the following domains: reading literature, reading informational text, writing, speaking and listening, and language. Students will concentrate on language skills including standard usage, function of the parts of speech, sentence structure, punctuation, capitalization, vocabulary, spelling, and dictionary skills. Students will participate in a variety of speaking activities and presentations. Writing assignments emphasize introducing and supporting claims on a topic or issue using a formal style. Students will read a variety of literature including novels, short stories, poetry. **Outside and summer reading/writing assignments are required.**

Grade 7 Advanced English Language Arts

English Language Arts 7 provides students with a challenging curriculum that aligns with the Alabama Course of Study organized into the following domains: reading literature, reading informational text, writing, speaking and listening, and language. Students will concentrate on language skills including standard usage, function of the parts of speech, sentence structure, punctuation, capitalization, vocabulary, spelling, and dictionary skills. Students participate in a variety of speaking activities and presentations. Students are expected to write narrative, informative/explanatory and argumentative texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information. Students will read a variety of literature including novels, short stories, poetry. This course has a concentrated focus on independent reading, writing, analysis, and problem solving. The primary goals of the course are to foster independent learning and encourage in-depth exploration of the content. **Outside and summer reading/writing assignments are required.**

Grade 7 Civics/Geography

In seventh grade, geography and civics are each taught as a one-semester course. In the one-semester seventh-grade geography course, students study world geography using a thematic approach. The one-semester seventh-grade civics course addresses content regarding democracy; liberty; law; personal economics; and local, state, and national civic responsibility. Students will be expected to remain up to date and informed on the regional, national and international news forums for in class discussions. In addition, emphasis will be placed on understanding, analyzing and synthesizing current events and primary source documents to develop a global perspective of geographic and political patterns.

Grade 7 Advanced Civics/Geography

In seventh grade, geography and civics are each taught as a one-semester course. In the one-semester seventh-grade geography course, students study world geography using a thematic approach. The one-semester seventh-grade civics course addresses content regarding democracy; liberty; law; personal economics; and local, state, and national civic responsibility. At the advanced level, students will use a wide variety of text to increase their use of critical thinking skills. This course is designed to prepare students for the rigorous demands of the High School AP curriculum. Students will be expected to remain up to date and informed on the regional, national and international news forums for in class discussions and include opportunities for students to develop questioning strategies that assist them in organizing and presenting information in oral, visual, and written formats. Portions of the course requisites include accelerated pacing of academic reading and research based writing both in and out of the classroom environment. This course focuses on independent reading, writing, analysis,

and problem solving. The primary goals of the course are to foster independent learning and encourage in-depth exploration of the content. In addition, emphasis will be placed on understanding, analyzing and synthesizing current events and primary source documents to develop a global perspective of geographic and political patterns.

Grade 7 Math

Math Grade 7 provides students with a curriculum that aligns with the Alabama Course of Study and is clustered into five Alabama Content Areas: Proportional Reasoning; Number Systems and Operations; Algebra and Functions; Geometry and Measurement; and Data Analysis, Statistics, and Probability. The quality of work within this course will allow students to gain a deeper understanding of the concepts and become fluent in the application, as well as make connections between the theoretical processes and real-world applications. Topics covered will include integers and rational numbers; expressions, equations and inequalities; ratios and proportional relationships; percent and proportional relationships; two-dimensional and three-dimensional geometry; and simple and compound probability. **Summer assignments are required.**

Grade 7 Accelerated Math

Accelerated Math Grade 7 is the first year of a two-year progression that covers all content and skills found within 7th grade, 8th grade, and Algebra I with Probability mathematics. Instructional time in this course will cover standards organized and clustered into five Alabama Content Areas: Proportional Reasoning; Number Systems and Operations; Algebra and Functions; Geometry and Measurement; and Data Analysis, Statistics, and Probability. The instruction will be rigorous and concentrate on developing various skills including application and conceptual understanding. This course is a combination of 7th grade standards and additional 8th grade and Algebra I with Probability standards including but not limited to: the number system (including rational, irrational, and radicals); ratios and proportions; expressions and equations (including laws of exponents and multi-step equations); functions (linear); graphing linear equations and slope; geometric concepts (scale drawings, transformations of shapes, and properties of parallel lines cut by a transversal); and probability and statistics. **Summer assignments are required.**

Grade 7 Life Science

The 7th grade Life Science curriculum is aligned with the Alabama Course of Study which merges the three pillars of science: Science and Engineering Practices, Disciplinary Core Ideas, and Crosscutting Concept throughout the course. This course will utilize a variety of hands-on, minds-on activities that will require students to continually build on and revise their knowledge of Molecules to Organisms: structures and processes; Ecosystems: Interactions; Energy, Genetics, and Human body systems. Students will apply Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) and the engineering design process in different contexts throughout the year. Students will utilize science and engineering practices and make connections with cross-cutting concepts to work and think like a scientist. In this course students will learn to work together collaboratively while solving real world problems.

Grade 7 Advanced Life Science

The purpose of 7th grade Advanced Life Science course is to prepare students for Advanced Placement courses as well as prepare students for College and Career courses which merges the three pillars of science: Science and Engineering Practices, Disciplinary Core Ideas, and Crosscutting Concept throughout the course. Although a student may be eligible to participate in an honors course, it is important that both parents and students understand the rigorous design of the curriculum which also proceeds at an accelerated pace. Students who take honors courses are interested in challenging work that will encourage more independence, build critical thinking skills, improve math application, as well as improve research and writing skills. While the content is the same as the 7th Grade Regular Science course, the class emphasizes independence, higher level thinking skills and responsibility on the student's part to develop the skills needed for 8th Grade Accelerated Physical Science and later high school Advanced Placement (AP). Labs and activities will stretch students abilities as they create individual science projects, apply math concepts along with research and writing to convey students application of what they have learned. Advanced coursework will embody global application of STEM through the process of engineering and experimental design.

GRADE 8 CORE CLASSES

***Students are placed in accelerated academic classes based on Scantron Performance scores. Additional consideration will be given to classroom grades. Students who are not placed in advanced classes may discuss waiving into the classes with the middle school principal. [Please contact the school for more information.](#)**

Grade 8 English Language Arts

English Language Arts 8 provides students with a curriculum that aligns with the Alabama Course of Study organized into the following domains: reading literature, reading informational text, writing, speaking and listening, and language. Students will concentrate on language skills including standard usage, function of the parts of speech, sentence structure, punctuation, capitalization, vocabulary, spelling, and dictionary skills. Students will participate in a variety of speaking activities and presentations. Writing assignments emphasize introducing and supporting claims on a topic or issue using a formal style. Students will read a variety of literature including novels, short stories, poetry. **Outside and summer reading/writing assignments are required.**

Grade 8 Advanced English Language Arts

English Language Arts 8 provides students with a challenging curriculum that aligns with the Alabama Course of Study organized into the following domains: reading literature, reading informational text, writing, speaking and listening, and language. Students will concentrate on language skills including standard usage, function of the parts of speech, sentence structure, punctuation, capitalization, vocabulary, spelling, and dictionary skills. Students participate in a variety of speaking activities and presentations. Students are expected to write narrative, informative/explanatory and argumentative texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information. Students will read a variety of literature including novels, short stories, poetry. This course has a concentrated focus on independent reading, writing, analysis, and problem solving. The primary goals of the course are to foster independent learning and encourage in-depth exploration of the content, and build the skills necessary for the transition to high school, preparation for ACT. **Outside and summer reading/writing assignments are required.**

Grade 8 World History - Prehistory - 1500

8th grade addresses the study of World History from prehistoric man to the 1500s. Content standards for this grade incorporate the strands of economy, geography, history, and political science, with an emphasis on the history and geography strands. Course content focuses on the migrations of early peoples, the rise of civilizations, establishment of governments and religions, the growth of economic systems, and the ways in which these events shaped Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Americas. Unique to this course are experiences that provide for the student of how human beings view themselves over time. Curriculum is designed to involve students in critical thinking and exchange of ideas, critical evaluation, interpretation, reasoning, and deduction. Students will be expected to read independently, take notes, analyze primary and secondary sources, and structure essays. Classwork includes reading, note taking, projects, research, lecture, and all forms of technology.

Grade 8 Advanced World History - Prehistory - 1500

8th grade addresses the study of World History from prehistoric man to the 1500s. Content standards for this grade incorporate the strands of economy, geography, history, and political science, with an emphasis on the history and geography strands. Course content focuses on the migrations of early peoples, the rise of civilizations, establishment of governments and religions, the growth of economic systems, and the ways in which these events shaped Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Americas. Unique to this course are experiences that provide for the student of how human beings view themselves over time. The curriculum is designed to involve students in critical thinking and exchange of ideas, critical evaluation, interpretation, reasoning, and deduction. Advanced students will be expected to read independently, take notes, analyze primary and secondary sources, and structure essays. Students taking the Advanced 8th grade course should

understand that the course is designed to challenge the self-motivated student to understand rigorous content. Coursework requires a student to engage in individual and group analysis assignments, and is designed to prepare students for high school Advanced and AP level courses. This course will include a faster class pace, more depth in classroom discussion, an increased amount of reading, and overall greater academic expectations of assignments and time management. Students will be required to research and organize ideas into visual, oral, and written formats. Research and annotation of sources are a daily part of Advanced World History class design. Students going into Advanced World History should have strong study skills, be self-motivated, be independent in thinking and homework, and self-driven to plan, organize, and carry out tasks in the classroom and outside of school.

Grade 8 Math

Math Grade 8 provides students with a curriculum that aligns with the Alabama Course of Study and is clustered into four Alabama Content Areas: Number Systems and Operations; Algebra and Functions; Geometry and Measurement; and Data Analysis, Statistics, and Probability. The quality of work within this course will allow students to gain a deeper understanding of the concepts and become fluent in the application, as well as make connections between the theoretical processes and real-world applications. Topics covered will include rational and irrational numbers; multi-step equations including exponents; systems of equations; graphing and comparing functions; transformations of shapes; Pythagorean Theorem; volume of three-dimensional figures in a real-world setting; and investigating patterns in data. At the conclusion of this course, students will be prepared for 9th grade Geometry with Data Analysis. **Summer assignments are required.**

Grade 8 Algebra I (*prerequisite 7th grade Advanced Math*)

Grade 8 Algebra I is the advanced 8th grade math course for 2020 - 2021. Instructional time in this course will cover standards organized into four domains: Number and Quantity; Algebra; Functions; and Statistics, and Probability. The instruction will be rigorous and concentrate on developing various skills including application and conceptual understanding. This course contains Algebra I standards including but not limited to: rational and irrational numbers; radical and rational exponents; multi-step equations and inequalities; systems of equations; graphing and comparing functions with an emphasis on quadratic functions; Pythagorean Theorem; investigating patterns in data; and compound/conditional probability. At the conclusion of this course, students will be prepared for 9th grade Advanced Geometry with Data Analysis and then proceed directly to Algebra II with Statistics in Grade 10. Upon completion of this course, students who have not maintained a cumulative average of 80 or above will be expected to take Advanced Geometry with Data Analysis **AND** Algebra I with Probability in Grade 9. **Summer assignments are required.**

Grade 8 Physical Science

8th Grade Physical Science curriculum is aligned with the Alabama Course of Study which merges the three pillars of science which include: Science and Engineering Practices, Disciplinary Core Ideas, and Crosscutting Concept throughout the course. This course will assist students conceptual understanding of science in the world around them. This course will utilize a variety of hands-on, minds-on activities that will require students to continually build on and revise their knowledge of Motion and Stability: Forces and Interactions; Energy; Waves and their applications in Technologies for information transfer; as well as Elements, the Periodic Table; Compounds and Chemical reactions. Students will apply the engineering design process in different contexts throughout the year. Students will utilize science and engineering practices and make connections with cross-cutting concepts to work and think like a scientist through the application of STEM. Students will be able to apply math, research and writing skills.

Grade 8 Advanced Physical Science

8th Grade Advanced Physical Science curriculum is aligned with the Alabama Course of Study is an intense course designed to prepare students to take Advanced Placement (AP) science courses in high school and will include algebraic reasoning to help students conceptually understand science in the world around them. The course includes the same content as found in a regular science class. However, students will be engaged through various labs and activities while they explore matter and its interactions in relation to the periodic table and chemical reactions. Students will apply their understanding of invisible forces

and predict their work within a system. Students will demonstrate understanding of energy and transfer and application within and out of a system by designing and building various models that demonstrate application of science concepts to everyday life. Students will understand waves, their properties and uses in information technology. Finally, students will demonstrate their understanding of science concepts by designing, evaluating, and refining a solution that will reduce the impacts of human activities. Students will utilize science and engineering practices and make connections with cross-cutting concepts to work and think like a scientist while exploring STEM. This course has a heavier emphasis on math, research and writing.

ELECTIVE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Sixth Grade

Art Explorations (1 semester) - Students will apply the elements of art and principles of design to the production of 2-D art using the Common Core Creative Practices (Imagine, Investigate, Construct, Reflect). A variety of media such as crayons, oil pastels and paint will be used to create original works of art.

Beginning Band (2 semesters) - This entry-level course is students' only opportunity to learn a band instrument. This course will teach students the beginning fundamentals of reading music and playing an instrument, leadership skills, and goal setting. Students will be evaluated on their instrument aptitude, placed on an instrument, and will perform two concerts during the school year.

Beginning Chorus (2 semesters) - This entry-level course is designed to introduce and develop basic singing techniques, sight-reading skills, and basic music theory concepts. The group performs in unison and two-part music in concert twice a year. Attendance is required at all performances.

Drama (1 semester) - The purpose of this course is to educate students on the various forms of media that rely heavily on drama, such as theater, television, and film. Students will have opportunities to learn and practice acting techniques to be used in the performance of one-act plays.

Introduction to Robotics (1 semester) - In this course, students will use Lego NXT kits to learn how to plan, build, and program robots. The students will apply measurement and geometry skills to calculate navigation, use experimentation to change and improve design, and document & explain results. This course is designed to prepare students for the competition setting.

Technology Explorations (1 semester) - This course is designed to give students an opportunity to use computers on a daily basis to develop good computer keyboarding, applications, and internet skills. In addition, students should learn ethical & world issues involved with technology and how to safely use technology.

Gifted Explorations (1 semester) - (For identified gifted students) Students will explore interest-based units such as mysteries, law, and order, debate, mythology. They will develop affective skills beyond those available in the regular classroom in order to meet their needs as gifted learners. This course will also develop critical and creative thinking along with problem-solving skills. Interest-based units will help students develop higher level reading skills and incorporate digital platforms.

Seventh Grade

Art Basics (1 semester) students will apply the elements of art and principles of design to the production of 2D art using the common core creative practices (Imagine, Investigate, Construct, & Reflect). A variety of media such as crayons, oil pastels, and paint will be used to create original works of art.

Competitive Robotics (2 semesters) **PREREQUISITE: INTRO TO ROBOTICS and/or TEACHER RECOMMENDATION.** In this course, students will use Lego NXT kits to learn how to plan, build, and program. Students will apply measurement and geometry to calculate navigation, use experimentation to change and improve, and document/explain results. This course is designed to prepare students for the competitive setting.

Computer Science Discoveries 7 (1 semester) **NO PREREQUISITE NEEDED.** The curriculum emphasizes problem-solving, creation, and collaboration while introducing students to the many ways computer science impacts their lives. CS Discoveries 7 includes the development of prototype apps, binary representation of data for decision making, and the building of interactive hardware/software projects.

Intermediate Band (2 semesters) This second year band ensemble will develop musicianship skills, advance the fundamental skills in reading music and playing an instrument and provide opportunities to perform. We will refine skills in perseverance, leadership, and goal setting. Students will have two formal concerts during the year and additional opportunities at the local and state level. Students must have successfully completed Beginning Band to register for this course.

Intermediate Chorus (2 semesters) This course is designed to develop singing techniques, sight-reading skills and music theory concepts at the intermediate level. This group performs two and three-part music. Attendance is required at all performances.

Introduction to Green Power - 590305 (2 semesters) This curriculum encompasses Science, Math, English Language Arts and Technology standards. The build process is rich in hands-on experiences and this guide includes supporting activities that broaden the scope of these concepts. The engineering design aspects of this project can be explored to many levels. Students can understand the engineering design life cycle of projects created in the real world from requirements to prototype and test. Students can learn about design and modeling through the use of CAD software such as Siemens' Solid Edge. Greenpower is a dynamic STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) initiative that encompasses a wide variety of skills. The goal of this program is to expose students to the world of engineering and innovation. That goal is accomplished in an exciting and engaging way with Greenpower.

Introduction to Robotics (1 semester) Students will use Lego NXT kits to learn how to plan, build, and program robots. The students will apply measurement and geometry skills to calculate navigation, use experimentation to change and improve design, and document & explain results. This course is designed to prepare students for the competition setting

Introduction to Spanish (1 semester) Students will be introduced to the Spanish language and culture basics in the areas of speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

Introduction to STEM - 400012 (1 semester) This course introduces students to the four areas of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics through an interdisciplinary approach that will increase awareness, build knowledge, develop problem solving skills, and potentially awaken an interest in pursuing a career in STEM.

Mass Media (1 semester) In the course, students will produce authentic products as content for the school's Website and Social Media accounts. Various projects will allow students to use their unique talents and explore areas including creating infographics, interviewing, video, and graphic design, among others.

Teen Discoveries - 802209dj (1 semester) This class provides fun and hand-on opportunities for students to explore personal development; the impact of values, goals, decision making, and time management; conflict resolution; identifying family structures; member's roles and responsibilities; changes and challenges faced throughout the family life cycle; health, wellness, and a healthy appearance; money management and teen consumer decisions; teen clothing decisions; stages of child development; first aid techniques; organizing and maintaining teen living space; home safety; technology; and skills needed for workplace success.

Theater Basics (1 semester) Theatre basics course provides an outlet for student creativity. This is a class for those interested in learning about acting and theatre. Students interested in performance, direction, design, technical support, backstage crafts and publicity are encouraged to join. Whether you like to be in the limelight or you like to be creative behind the scenes, you will have an opportunity to show your talent in the theatre class. The course will enhance students' speech and communication skills, as well as build listening and collaboration skills. Students will be able to explore the basic components of theatre with the focus of completing a final play. This will be featured at the end of the semester as a finished performance.

Gifted Elective: Future City (Fall semester only, for identified gifted students) Students who enjoy playing SimCity, like to build things, and/or like to imagine what things will be like in the future will enjoy this class. Students will work in teams to design a city of the future and then build a table-top model of the city. We will present the cities in the Future City Competition in January.

Gifted Elective: If You Build It (Spring semester only, for identified gifted students) Students who like to solve problems and build things will enjoy this class. Students will learn about different fields of engineering through hands-on projects which will include the use of 3D printing. This semester will culminate with students working in teams to design rafts and compete in a district-wide Raft Race.

Eighth Grade

****Note:**

-8th grade electives at **Austin Jr. High School** will be offered for 1 full block on a block schedule.

-8th grade electives at **Decatur Middle School** will be offered for the number of semesters indicated below on a 7-period day. If you have questions, [please consult your school](#).

Advanced Art (1 semester) This class is for students hoping to continue studying art in the high school years. Students will be expected to work independently on individualized projects using a variety of media and approaches, applying Common Core Creative Practices (Imagine, Investigate, Construct, Reflect) and developing a personal style.

Advanced Band (2 semesters) is open to all students who have successfully completed two years of band. This course is a continuation of progress through the third level of band instruction and will continue to develop basic skills learned in Beginning and Intermediate Band. The students will focus on performances for the community, state and national level.

Advanced Chorus (2 semesters) is the advanced-level choir for students interested in vocal music performance. This course is designed to develop singing techniques, sight-reading skills, and music theory concepts at the advanced level. This group performs three part music, accompanied and a cappella. This choir performs popular music and standard choral literature throughout the year. Attendance is required at all performance.

Advanced Theater (2 semesters) Advanced theater course provides students an opportunity to expand on theater basics, study and participate in theatre activities (warm-up activities, theatre games, pantomime, improvisation, acting techniques, monologue presentations, ensemble-acting presentations, etc.). This course is designed to encourage and prepare students who are considering theater at the high school level. Students will complete two productions during the semester.

Business Elective - 450005 (1 semester) A foundational course where students develop an understanding of how academic skills in mathematics, economics, and written and oral communications are integral components of success in commerce and information technology careers.

STEM Connections - 400014 (1 semester) A 70 instructional-hour course for students in Grade 8 that provides an in-depth study of the knowledge and processes needed to further increase students' level of technological literacy. Instruction is provided in technologies related to the related pathways.

Teen Connections - 802209dj (1 semester) An exploratory course offered at Grade 8 for adolescent students. Emphasis is placed on teen connections in the home, school, and community.

Competitive Robotics (2 semesters) **PREREQUISITE: INTRO TO ROBOTICS and/or TEACHER RECOMMENDATION.** In this course, students will use Lego NXT kits to learn how to plan, build, and program. Students will apply measurement and geometry to calculate navigation, use experimentation to change and improve, and document/explain results. This course is designed to prepare students for the competitive setting.

Computer Science Discoveries 8 (1 semester) **NO PREREQUISITE NEEDED.** The curriculum emphasizes problem-solving, creation, and collaboration while introducing students to the many ways computer science impacts their lives. CS Discoveries 8 includes processes for computer-based problem solving, beginning website development in HTML and CSS, and beginning computer animation and game design using JavaScript.

Green Power Intermediate - 590305 (2 semesters) This course is for second year Greenpower students. This course provides an introduction to design software and provides students with real-world industry relevant, and multi-disciplinary engineering and manufacturing skills. Students design, build, and race an electric car while learning leadership and collaboration skills within a competitive environment.

Introduction to Cyber Security - 520041 (2 semesters) Introduction to Cyber Security provides students in Grade 8 with a basic understanding of computer structure and functionality, as well as ethics and security concepts which can be used to further their study/career path in high school and beyond. Students will experience hands-on activities to explore hardware and software components and implement basic computer security principles. Foundational concepts in computer storage, network connectivity, operating systems, and data structures are introduced. Additional topics include: coding concepts and practices; code processing within the computer; examining historical and emerging technologies; and discovering college and career pathways that are related to information technology and computing technology.

Introduction to Health Sciences - 490018 (2 semesters) A 140 instructional-hour course that introduces students to the health professions. Students explore a variety of career opportunities in Healthcare and related fields.

Mass Media Grade 8 (1 semester) In the course, students will produce authentic products as content for the school's Website and Social Media accounts. Various projects will allow students to use their unique talents and explore areas including creating infographics, interviewing, video, and graphic design, among others.

Spanish I (2 semesters) Students will be introduced to the Spanish language and culture of Spanish-speaking countries. Basic skills are stressed in the area of speaking, listening, reading and writing in Spanish. Upon completion of the course with an A or B average, students are then recommended for Spanish 2 at the high school.

Gifted Elective: Students will be challenged to explore, design, implement and assess creative projects for various competitions such as: *Future City*, *Stock Market Game*, *Biomimicry Youth Design Challenge*, *90-Second Newbery Film Festival*, *VANS Custom Culture*, and more! They will develop effective skills and critical and creative thinking skills beyond those available in the regular classroom in order to meet their needs as gifted learners.