

Kennedy Middle School

EIGHTH GRADE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS 2021 -2022

Each eighth grade student is required to take Language Arts, Math, Science, United States History, and Personal Management.

DELIVERY OF COURSES

All courses listed and described in this course book have the capability of running as virtual, hybrid, or in-person courses. The method of delivery will depend on the number of requests from students and there is a highly qualified teacher available to provide instruction.

BASIC ALGEBRA

full year required

Eighth grade students will take Basic Algebra. They will be able to solve for unknown variables when given equations. They will study functions such as linear and exponential, and express them in tables, graphs and equations. Another topic covered will be the use of polynomials as well as the Pythagorean Theorem.

ALGEBRA – IA

full year required

Criteria for Algebra IA:

- Students enrolled in Honors Math 7 (as a 7th grader) with a Final Grade of an A or B average
- Students who earn a Final Grade of an A or A- in Math 7 (as a 7th grader)
- Students who receive the following: NWEA Assessment Math Usage >64% tile in their two most recent NWEA tests
- Teacher Recommendation

PRACTICAL MATH – 8

full year required

Practical Math 8 is a math class assigned to students who continually perform below the 21st percentile on the NWEA mathematics assessment the previous year. The purpose of the class is to support and encourage a deeper understanding of basic math skills, to front load instruction for the daily math lessons and to re-teach math concepts as needed for struggling students. Additional conceptual lessons will be taught to supplement daily math class. This is not a Special Education class.

HISTORY US – 8

full year required

This course introduces students to the history of the United States from the Revolutionary Era to the time of reconstruction in 1898. It is divided chronologically into eras. Students learn to place major events on a timeline and to analyze their causes and effects. Using primary and secondary sources, they explore time and place in 18th and 19th century America. They compare conflicting accounts of the past; and both orally and in writing, express informed judgments about significant events that shaped the nation. Using a variety of media, they compile, analyze and present historical data. Within their study of America, students deepen their understanding of major geographical themes and basic economic concepts. They also build their understanding of American government from in-depth study of the United States Constitution and the evolution of the government created by our founding fathers.

LANGUAGE ARTS – 8**full year required**

Eighth grade Language Arts focuses on continuing development of students writing ability as well as fostering an interest in reading various genres. Students study several genres including historical fiction, science fiction and realistic fictions, among others. Short stories, novels and nonfiction selections are studied through the year. Writing activities include persuasive essays, research projects and informative compositions. Grammar skills will be stressed and expanded to include vocabulary.

LANGUAGE ARTS – 8 WRITING IN TODAY’S WORLD**full year required**

Writing in Today World is a Language Arts class assigned to students performing below the 21st percentile in Language and Reading on the NWEA test. The purpose of the class is to support and encourage a deeper understanding of reading and writing skills, to reinforce instruction for the current Language Arts units and to practice language skills that support reading and writing. This is not a Special Education class.

PERSONAL MANAGEMENT – 8**1 quarter required**

Personal Management will focus on preparing the student for future success through both technological and traditional concepts. Career exploration and basic personal finance will be key components to the class. New technology available in the classroom will also be introduced. With full-time access to a computer lab, students will develop the knowledge and skills necessary to take on the challenges of the future.

SCIENCE – 8**full year required**

Major curriculum emphasis will be on exploring hydrosphere, climates and geology to complement the benchmarks students will address at the high school. Students will also be studying physical science including astronomy, motion, magnetism, electricity and changes in matter.

EXPLORATORY CLASSES

IMPORTANT: *While every effort will be made to accommodate choices, seats in exploratory classes are limited and classes are subject to change.*

GREEN ARCHITECTURE**1 quarter**

In this unit, students learn how to apply green concepts to the fields of architecture and construction. They explore dimensioning, measuring, and architectural sustainability and apply what they have learned to design affordable housing units using Autodesk’s® 3D architectural design software.

JOURNALISM**2 quarters**

Journalism is a semester-long course designed for students interested in newspaper journalism and in developing their skills as a writer. The journalism class will be dedicated to the craft of writing, editing, photographing, and documenting news for Kennedy Middle School. This course will also explore the ethical responsibility issues inherent in the press today. Students will learn the fundamentals of news, feature, editorial and sports writing. The course will also help students develop vocabulary, higher-order thinking skills and critical reasoning. Students will create numerous original stories and features using various writing structures and techniques. Students will also learn to create computer generated layouts and graphics. At the end of the semester a full newspaper will be developed for circulation to the student body.

MEDICAL DETECTIVES

1 quarter

Students play the role of real-life medical detectives as they collect and analyze medical data to diagnose disease. They solve medical mysteries through hands-on projects and labs, measure and interpret vital signs, examine nervous system structure and function, investigate disease outbreaks, and explore how a breakdown within the human body can lead to dysfunction.

READING FOR ENJOYMENT

1 quarter

Numerous studies show that independent reading is critical for improving reading comprehension. The more students read – on a consistent, regular basis – the more their cognitive comprehension skills develop. A quarter long exploratory class at Kennedy Middle School will foster independent reading, while also creating an environment designed to increase a life-long love of reading. The classroom will have a diverse classroom library of books to explore. Students will focus on different genres and be challenged to step outside their comfort zone, exploring new genres they might not have realized holds their interest. Students will make targeted goals for their reading for the quarter and use social media apps such as “Goodreads” to share their progress and goals with others. Finally, students will have a voice in an end-of-quarter project based assessment that will showcase what they have read, achieved in terms of the goals they set for themselves and illustrate a particular book or story that was meaningful.

SEED TO TABLE

1 quarter

In this class students will design, build and plant an indoor gardening system. Students will learn what it takes to plan, design and build a tower garden, as well as, and learn what it takes to grow food indoors. **This class will require students to bring in materials to build their indoor tower garden.**

FINE AND PERFORMING ARTS

ART – 8

1 quarter

This class will allow students to learn to solve design problems that are unique to three-dimensional art. Students may work with materials such as wire, paper-mache, metals and fibers. This class also will allow students to create two-dimensional art. Emphasis will be on drawing and painting techniques. The students will use various drawing materials and they will paint with watercolor, tempera and possibly acrylics.

BELLA VOICE – CLIPPER CHOIR 8

full year

This class is for students who are very serious about reading music, singing and performing. Students will improve their music reading skills by singing in a variety of styles and languages. A positive attitude and desire to work with others is a must. This class will also offer chances to perform in the community and take field trips when available. Class participation, written and vocal tests, as well as attendance at all concerts is required as part of the grade.

CONCERT BAND – 8

full year

This is an advanced instrumental wind and percussion ensemble. Students continue to refine skills in all aspects of music performance. Out of school performance, rehearsals, and practice is required.

HONORS CHOIR – 7th and 8th GRADES

2 quarters

This advanced choir studies and performs choral literature selected from a variety of musical genres and styles. This course is designed to introduce and develop advanced singing techniques and sight-reading skills. This group will have additional performance opportunities, including MSVMA Solo and Ensemble Festival and performances within the community. Students will be selected through an application and audition process.

JAZZ BAND

full year

Entrance to this class is by audition and/or permission of instructor. Students must also be enrolled in 8th grade band. The class will focus on music performance in the jazz idiom. Attendance at all performances is required.

FOREIGN LANGUAGE

At Kennedy Middle School, students may earn up to one credit toward this requirement upon completion of coursework and passing one or more assessments to demonstrate proficiency in a language other than English. Class of 2014 and beyond must complete 2.0 credits of foreign language before graduation.

CRITERIA FOR SPANISH I AND MANDARIN I

- Students enrolled in Spanish 7 or Mandarin 7 with a Trimester grade of an A or B
- Students must carry a B average or better in their 7th Grade Language Arts class
- Teacher Recommendation

MANDARIN CHINESE I

full year

8th Grade Mandarin Chinese is the continuation of 7th Grade Chinese with a broader emphasis on listening, speaking, reading and writing. Students have the opportunity to earn one high school credit by receiving a proficient score on an exam at the end of the year. (Class of 2014 and beyond must complete two credits of foreign language before graduation). Students also have the opportunity to participate in the China Exchange Program which includes a trip to China and hosting Chinese students. **This course will be taken at Lake Shore High School first thing in the morning. Students will be required to get transportation to Lake Shore High School. Students will be transported back to Kennedy Middle School for second hour.**

SPANISH I

full year

This class is designed for serious students who truly enjoy a foreign language and wish to participate in a more advanced middle school study of Spanish. This class is equivalent to the Spanish I offered at Lake Shore High School, therefore the expectations of this class are that of a high school course. Because of this, students have the opportunity to earn one high school credit by receiving a proficient score on an exam at the end of the school year. Two additional years of foreign language are still highly recommended at the high school level for college preparation. Emphasis in this course will be placed on Spanish speaking, writing, reading and listening, along with Spanish culture. Students will complete various projects throughout the year demonstrating their proficiency in the language. Students in this course will be able to write and speak at length on various topics such as: friends, school, clothing and free time activities.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

PHYSICAL EDUCATION – 8 SEMESTER 1

2 quarters

Throughout each semester, students will work on personal development and activities that will improve strength, flexibility, endurance and sportsmanship. The ultimate goal of our curriculum is to give students the knowledge, skills and motivation necessary for a lifelong dedication to physical activity and health.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION – 8 SEMESTER 2

2 quarters

Throughout each semester, students will work on personal development and activities that will improve strength, flexibility, endurance and sportsmanship. The ultimate goal of our curriculum is to give students the knowledge, skills and motivation necessary for a lifelong dedication to physical activity and health.

TECHNOLOGY

BROADCASTING

1 quarter

The Broadcasting class is responsible for the creation and delivery of the daily announcements at Kennedy Middle School. Students will learn to utilize an iPad and the TouchCast app to create television-quality announcements and video shows with a green screen. Students will develop on-screen skills, technological knowledge, scriptwriting skills and positive group dynamics. Throughout the course of the semester, students will be asked to self-evaluate their performance in class and identify areas of excellence and for growth. Other assignments in the Broadcasting class will include evaluating outside new sources, researching possible career paths in the broadcasting field and learning and utilizing appropriate computer skills and vocabulary. **In order to be placed in this class, students must make it one of their top three choices on their selection sheet.**

INTRO TO MEDIA

2 quarters

Course content will include an introduction to the terms and practices of media productions including the equipment, preproduction, production and post production. Activities include learning about shot types, scripts, storyboarding and shot lists, and sound file creation. This course also includes an introduction to video editing. This is a team-oriented class, where students work together to complete video productions such as a commercial and a music video. **This class will meet 0.5 credit of Fine and Performing Arts requirement at Lake Shore High School.**

PHOTOGRAPHY

1 quarter

Photographs play an important role in our world today. We photograph to preserve memories, document events and create artistic works. This class introduces students to the basics of photography, including camera functions, photo composition and digital photo editing. Through a variety of assigned projects, students will engage their creativity by photographing a range of subjects and learning to see the world through the lens of their cameras. Students will also be exposed to the seriousness of just how important it is to be appropriate online, especially when dealing with photographs. Some kind of digital camera is strongly encouraged (phone cameras are ok; digital cameras are preferred).

ROBOTICS

2 quarters

This semester long class is designed to introduce 7th and 8th grade students to the possibilities of STEM and build 21st Century skills. Students will be able design, build and program robots, apply real world math and science concepts, along with developing problem solving, organizational and team building skills. Michigan Middle school students will explore the possibilities of STEM through this semester long, project based robotics course. This course, designed to meet the rigorous requirements of Next Generation Science Engineering Standards and aligned to both the Common Core State Standard and Michigan Computer Science Standards provides middle school students with the skills they need to be career *and* competition ready. Throughout this semester long course, students will explore the engineering design process as they work in class based teams to build, program and operate robots to complete a themed challenge. With courses like this, and innovative thinking, it greatly increases student's motivation to seek education and careers in STEM fields. **Note that this course requires the completion of a capstone project. At the start of the semester, students will choose to either participate in the team's competition and presentation capstone project, that requires attending a Saturday robotics competition with their team, or they may elect to participate in a robotics research presentation capstone project.**

UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS – DRONES

1 quarter

In this class, we will discuss both large and small type UAS (Unmanned Aircraft Systems) and what industries they are revolutionizing. Students will learn what UAS systems are best suited to different applications and what performance characteristics influence the utilization of these systems. Also, students will participate in simulated UAS flights at the end of each class, working on their flight skills from the very beginning and obtain beginner experience as sensor operators.

FULL TIME STUDENT

The designation of a full-time student at Kennedy Middle School is one who is registered for 7 periods.

2020/21 COVID Disclaimer

Due to the regulations and requirements stipulated by both the State of Michigan and the LSPS Return to Learn Plan, aspects of the student handbook may be changed, eliminated, or suspended until Michigan enters Phase 6 of the state's reopening plan. Pertinent changes will be sent to families and posted publically.

LSPS Virtual Course Catalog 2021/22

In the event that LSPS is unable to staff virtual course offerings, we will contract with the third party vendors below. Virtual offerings are expanded to address the concerns parents have with the return to school buildings while COVID-19 is a public health concern.

The third party provider for virtual courses at Kennedy Middle School is Michigan Virtual. All courses that are offered in alignment to the LSPS school calendar are available to students. The KMS counselors will work with students and parents to create a schedule.

<https://michiganvirtual.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/2021-2022-Course-Catalog.pdf>