



Los Angeles Unified School District
**GLENN HAMMOND CURTISS
MIDDLE SCHOOL**
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Conference Period: Period 1

Dear Pilot Families,

My name is Ms. Todd and I'm looking forward to working with you this school year.

I began my teaching career in 2003 and joined the Curtiss family in 2007. I became a teacher because my mother and a handful of caring teachers poured confidence into me. Also, while attending UCLA, I noticed a lack of people of color and vowed to help more students of color achieve their educational and career goals. The biggest reward for me as a teacher is to encourage students and see them **try their best** regardless of challenges. Additionally, I believe in treating students with respect and care and ask to be treated the same.

Descriptions of Courses

What is AVID?

The Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) Elective is a multi-year course for grades 6-12 that builds college and career readiness skills. It is scheduled during the regular school day as a year-long, academic elective. Students receive instruction in a rigorous college-preparatory curriculum aligned to the AVID College and Career Readiness Framework. Students engage in learning tasks that incorporate strategies focused on writing, inquiry, collaboration, organization, and reading (WICOR®) to support academic growth. They participate in facilitated tutorials twice a week to support academic preparedness in their content classes. Additionally, students engage in learning tasks centered around exploring college and career opportunities as well as motivational activities to develop relational capacity and student agency.

8th Grade AVID

The 8th grade AVID Elective Course offers a comprehensive curriculum to prepare for high school and future endeavors. This grade level builds on strategies from 6th and 7th grades, incorporating refined goal setting and strategic planning. The 8th grade college and career unit fortifies students' research skills and aligns their interests with potential academic and career paths. Eighth graders also focus on overcoming procrastination, improving time management and self-regulation skills. Students address a selected community issue while enhancing research and persuasive writing skills. Leadership is fostered through a STEM unit on spatial design, while entrepreneurship is developed in the financial literacy lessons on business, stocks, and future planning. The course concludes with a high school preparation unit, ensuring a successful transition to the next educational phase.

Required Course Instructional Material

School planner

Weeks at a Glance Terms

The curriculum for each AVID Elective course is divided into four terms, containing nine weeks of instruction. The units below are designed to implement the AVID elective standards for that grade level over the course of the year; additional units may also be used on CHOICE days.

Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4
8th Grade AVID CCR Framework Unit - Organization - Focused Note-Taking Unit (Developing) - Tutorology® Unit - Assessing Organization Unit (Developing) - Ready, Set, Goal! 8th Grade College and Career Unit 8th Grade Relational Capacity: Stage 1	- Tutorology® Unit - Introduction to Critical Reading (Developing) - Addressing Procrastination: 8th Grade Reading for Disciplinary Literacy Unit - Opportunity Knowledge: Campus Tours, Fundraising & Service Projects 8th Grade Building Relational Capacity: Stage 2	- Mid-Year Portfolio or ePortfolio Unit - Tutorology® Unit - Take a Stand — ASFI Skills and Persuasive Writing: 8th Grade Research Unit - Take My Stand: 8th Grade Writing for Disciplinary Literacy Unit 8th Grade Building Relational Capacity: Stage 3	- Tutorology® Unit - Welcoming New Students: 8th Grade STEM Unit - FutureSmart With EVERFI: 8th Grade Financial Literacy Unit - High School Transition Unit (8th Grade) - End-of-Year e/Portfolio Unit 8th Grade Building Relational Capacity: Stage 4

A Week in AVID

There are three types of curricular units: content units, Tutorology® (a collaborative, student-centered tutorial model), and instructional routines, which generally occur on CHOICE Days. AVID lessons utilize strategies to provide rigor and engagement as they develop student college and career readiness skills.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Content Days	Tutorology® Days	Content Days	Tutorology® Days	CHOICE Days
- Rigorous Academic Preparedness through WICOR® - Developing Future Readiness - Advancing College Preparedness - Advancing Career Preparedness - Building Relational Capacity	- Tutorial Lessons - Running Tutorials - Observing and Coaching - Tutorial Boot Camps - Peer Tutor Training or Coaching	- Rigorous Academic Preparedness through WICOR® - Developing Future Readiness - Advancing College Preparedness - Advancing Career Preparedness - Building Relational Capacity	- Tutorial Lessons - Running Tutorials - Observing and Coaching - Tutorial Boot Camps - Peer Tutor Training or Coaching	- College and career speakers, fairs, and field trips - Habits and instructional routines - Opportunities in our communities - Inspiring ourselves and others

				• Collaboration through the Stages of Building Relational Capacity • Exercising our agency

Suggested Materials

As an AVID school, we emphasize organization, preparedness, and student responsibility as essential skills for academic success and college and career readiness. To support these skills and ensure students are prepared to actively participate in learning each day, students are expected to bring the following materials to class daily:

- 2-inch 3-ring binder (1 Binder for all classes)
- 6 dividers (1 pack of 6 for all classes)
- Notebook Paper
- Pencils
- Pens
- Highlighters
- Hole Punch

Classroom Positive Behavioral Intervention and Support Plan

Student Expectation

1. Use professional language.
2. Raise your hand before speaking/leaving your seat.
3. Bring your materials.
4. Be in your seat before the bell rings.
5. Enjoy food, candy, drinks (except water) and gum outside of class.

Additionally, all school rules will be enforced in the classroom.

Behavior Interventions

1. Warning (verbal or non-verbal)
2. Seat change or Time Out
3. Time to Think Slip/Detention (lunch or afterschool), counselor/administrator referral, and parent notification. **Students who do not show for detention after 3 notifications will receive a U and move to step 4.**
4. Parent conference (may include other teachers and/or administrators) and/or referral to counselor/administrator.

Positive Behavior Support

1. Team Points: Students will create a group name and receive points for following the student expectations. Points will never be taken away. At the end of each unit, all groups receive prizes and the group with the most points receives something extra.
2. Individual and Public Acknowledgement: Students will be acknowledged for implementing the Curtiss, MASTER: Mindful, Accountable, Successful, Trustworthy, Engaged, Respectful, Pilot Pledge.

Grading in the AVID Elective

Equitable Grading and Instruction:

Equitable Grading and Instruction (Formerly Mastery Learning and Grading) is a growth-mindset approach to teaching and learning, based on the expectation that everyone can learn when provided with the right conditions and support. It is a shift away from traditional percentages. By refocusing classroom grading, assessment, instruction, and lesson planning on clear learning targets, and by implementing research-based systems honoring individual variation in learning styles, Equitable Grading and Instruction allows more students to succeed academically and ultimately to take charge of their own learning.

The Equitable Grading Rubric below will be used for Learning Target assignments. Assignments that prepare students for Learning Targets will be recorded as missing or collected and receive feedback based on the Rubric for Ungraded Assignments. Additionally, ungraded assignments will count towards students' work habits.

Equitable Grading Rubric

4 =	Excellent	All requirements met and demonstrates excellent understanding of skill
3 =	Proficient	Most requirements met and demonstrates good understanding
2 =	Approaching	Some requirements met and demonstrates partial understanding
1 =	Developing	Few requirements met and demonstrates little understanding
0 =	No score	No requirements met and demonstrates no understanding

Rubric for Ungraded Assignments

√+ = Excellent understanding, detailed, great effort

√ = Partial understanding, some detail, some effort

√- = Little understanding, little details, minimal effort

Course Grades: Equitable Grading (Based on Recommendations from LAUSD & School Site)

Students' Progress Report and Semester Report grades will be calculated by averaging their grades for each Learning Target.

Equitable Grading Scale	Letter Grade	Description
Standards Exceeded	A	I can demonstrate complete and detailed understanding of the Learning Target.
Standards Met	B	I can demonstrate reasonable understanding of the Learning Target.
Standards Nearly Met	C	I can demonstrate some understanding of the Learning Target.
Standards Not Met	D	I demonstrate an incomplete understanding of the Learning Target.
No Evidence of Standards Met	F	I can not demonstrate any understanding of the Learning Target.

Learning Targets

The Learning Targets for this course are based on the [AVID Elective Standards](#) which are aligned to the Common Core State Standards in addition to other national standards.

L.T. 1 - Student Agency

8th	8.SA.BR.1	Negotiate roles within a collaborative group through the adoption of effective elements of collaboration
	8.SA.BR.2	Integrate multiple perspectives into group products
	8.SA.BR.3	Deepen relational capacity through creation of novel ideas and solutions
	8.SA.BR.4	Interact with peers in complex situations (providing feedback, conflict management, academic discourse) while maintaining a focus on respect, trust, and empathy
	8.SA.BR.5	Support all group members' understanding of key concepts
	8.SA.BR.6	Evaluate the impact of decisions on the world
8th	8.SA.BR.7a 8.SA.BR.7b 8.SA.BR.7c	a) Maintain a strong support network for academic and career success b) Identify mentors who influence, support, and guide future transitions and success c) Monitor and maintain positive relationships in a digital space
8th	8.SA.PTO.1	Create short and mid-range goals that support achievement of long-term goals
	8.SA.PTO.2	Modify goals and actions appropriately based on progress
8th	8.SA.PTO.3a 8.SA.PTO.3b	a) Strengthen ability to self-advocate related to areas of need b) Leverage support network to assist within areas of need
	8.SA.PTO.4a 8.SA.PTO.4b	a) Reflect on current status and skills to strengthen mental flexibility now and in the future b) Recognize and overcome obstacles that could hinder future success
	8.SA.PTO.5	Apply strategies to support motivation, especially when lacking intrinsic motivation
	8.SA.PTO.6	Employ key learning points to real-world applications
8th	8.SA.AKS.1	Effectively manage stress and anxiety levels, including areas such as in preparation for and during tests
	8.SA.AKS.2	Apply self-awareness strategies and skills with a variety of academic challenges
8th	8.SA.AKS.3	Pursue leadership and/or mentorship opportunities across the school and community
	8.SA.AKS.4	Reflect on conflict situations to strengthen ability to deal with the emotions that accompany conflict in leadership roles
8th	8.SA.AKS.5	Assess personal traits connected to integrity and leadership
	8.SA.AKS.6	Explore and pursue leadership opportunities in extracurricular and community service activities within the school, local and/or global community
	8.SA.AKS.7	Identify ways to be an upstander for all students who are struggling

L.T. 2 - Rigorous Academic Preparedness

8th	8.RAP.W.1a 8.RAP.W.1b 8.RAP.W.1c	(8a) Develop writing skills related to timed, argumentative, and descriptive modes of writing b) Gather information related to the writing prompt to generate a bank of resources and information c) Compose first drafts with a focus on establishing a clear purpose for the writing
	8.RAP.W.2	Utilize inquiry strategies to develop additional questions as needed
	8.RAP.W.3	Independently create and execute a plan for the revision process
	8.RAP.W.4	Analyze the language of writing and edit for voice, flow, and clarity
	8.RAP.W.5	Publish writing to an audience outside of the classroom, such as an online forum
8th	8.RAP.W.6a 8.RAP.W.6b	a) Take notes, with an emphasis on selecting the appropriate format for note-taking based on the note-taking objective b) Take notes, with an emphasis on using strategies to organize notes (e.g., indentation, bullets, outlines, skipping lines, color-coding)
	8.RAP.W.7	Reflect on how notes help to meet the learning objective and contribute to academic and personal success
8th	8.RAP.I.1	Use questioning techniques to think critically about content and concepts
	8.RAP.I.2	Generate questions based on a misunderstood concept or problem
	8.RAP.I.3	Determine modifications to the process that would be needed to solve similar problems
	8.RAP.I.4	Reflect on learning to make connections between new learning and the broader world
	8.RAP.I.5	Reflect throughout learning on progress and continually adjust actions on major tasks or assignments
	8.RAP.I.6	Reflect throughout a process on progress and continually adjust actions
8th	8.RAP.I.7	Develop research questions/claim statements that effectively address the research prompt
	8.RAP.I.8	Determine the perspective, validity, and reliability of information found within sources by multiple sources (such as books, articles, and websites)
	8.RAP.I.9	Synthesize information, sources, and data that support the research prompt
	8.RAP.I.10	Construct written claims and support them with reasoning and evidence
	8.RAP.I.11	Publish research to an audience outside of the classroom
8th	8.RAP.C.1	Adjust ineffective verbal and non-verbal communication into effective communication
	8.RAP.C.2	Demonstrate active listening by asking clarifying questions
	8.RAP.C.3	Demonstrate command of grammar when communicating
	8.RAP.C.4	Speak effectively before whole class
8th	8.RAP.C.5	Utilize technology with the global community to explore topics from multiple perspectives
8th	8.RAP.O.1a 8.RAP.O.1b	a) Develop efficient, individualized routines related to using organizational tools and planning strategies to enhance academic performance b) Reflect on activity log or tracking system of community extracurricular activities and hours

8th	8.RAP.O.2a	a) Understand and demonstrate the concepts and practices of backwards mapping
	8.RAP.O.2b	b) Identify upcoming events to proactively avoid time management conflicts

8th	8.RAP.O.3	Manage varied visual frameworks to organize language, and show relationships between key concepts
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8th	8.RAP.R.1	Select texts and justify if they meet the reading purpose
	8.RAP.R.2	Build background knowledge related to the text preview
	8.RAP.R.3	Connect vocabulary within texts to broader concepts of the text
	8.RAP.R.4	Create text dependent questions while reading that align with the reading purpose
	8.RAP.R.5	Extend beyond the text analyzing how to best apply key learning

L.T. 3 - Opportunity Knowledge

8th	8.OK.ACP.1	Refine key personal attributes for academic, social, and financial fit related to college selection
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8th	8.OK.ACP.2a	a) Reflect on their current GPA and how it relates to college selection criteria
	8.OK.ACP.2b	b) Compare various college campus structures, services, and opportunities
	8.OK.ACP.3	Research and evaluate scholarship offerings (FAFSA)

8th	8.OK.ACP.4a	a) Produce long-term academic plans that align with goals
	8.OK.ACP.4b	b) Plan for a successful transition to the next step in the academic journey
	8.OK.ACP.4c	c) Gain exposure to pathways offering work opportunities (credentials, certifications, internships, etc.)
	8.OK.ACP.5a	a) Engage in a variety of information gathering to determine match, reach and safety schools to mitigate summer melt and undermatching during the selection process
	8.OK.ACP.5b	b) Determine whether additional test prep and testing is needed to reach scholarships goals

8th	8.OK.BCP.1a	a) Develop an authentic and personal definition of success
	8.OK.BCP.1b	b) Refine key personal attributes for academic, social, and financial fit related to career selection
	8.OK.BCP.2a	a) Gain awareness of how academic performance links to career performance and success
	8.OK.BCP.2b	b) Expand thinking of potential career fields by encouraging discovery of a variety of career fields and the opportunities therein
	8.OK.BCP.2c	c) Develop knowledge and gain exposure to credentials or post-secondary education needed for career goals
	8.OK.BCP.3	Identify best fit career fields based on academic, social, and financial fit to develop short- and long-term career pathways

8th	8.OK.BCP.4	Engage in real-world experiences within career fields of interest, such as service learning projects, job shadowing opportunities, or internship possibilities in career fields of interest
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8th	8.OK.DFR.1	Create a systematic decision-making model for personal financial decisions and circumstances
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8th	8.OK.DFR.2a 8.OK.DFR.2b	a) Gather information on interests, experiences, and goals to build a digital profile b) Identify and address gaps in profile
	8.OK.DFR.3	Define “digital reputation” and identify examples of social media posts that can have a positive or negative effect

Homework

Students are responsible for copying homework from the whiteboard into their Curtiss planners or viewing/submitting it on Schoology. Homework will be used to determine students’ Work Habits Mark. Homework will receive feedback based on the Rubric for Ungraded Assignments.

Work Habits Policy

E = Excellent S = Satisfactory U = Unsatisfactory

Work habits are a combination of students’ homework completion and classwork submission. Within a 5-week grading period, students will earn an E for missing 0 assignments, a S for missing 2 or fewer, and a U for missing 3 or more. Additionally, students’ demonstrated level of effort and participation in class discussions is used to determine their work habits.

Cooperation Mark Policy

Students who violate any class rule 3 or more times within a 5-week grading period will receive a U and their parents will be summoned for a parent conference.

General Classroom Policies

Late Work and Absence Policy

Late assignments will be accepted until the cut off date at the end of each semester. Within a 5-week grading period, students will receive a **Satisfactory** for 2 or less late assignments, and an **Unsatisfactory** for 3 or more. Late work will be graded within 3 days of submission. Students can send a Schoology message to notify me of a late submission. When a student is absent, it is their responsibility to submit work that was assigned while they were present within one week of their return. Students are not responsible for missed assignments based on new instruction during their absence. Additionally, please beware of the following **deadlines** based on Progress/Semester Report due dates:

Fall Semester

5-Week Progress Report Deadline: September 1, 2026
10-Week Progress Report Deadline: September 29, 2026
15-Week Progress Report Deadline: October 27, 2026
20-Week/First Semester Report Deadline: December 08, 2026

Spring Semester

5-Week Progress Report Deadline: February 02, 2027
10-Week Progress Report Deadline: March 09, 2027
15-Week Progress Report Deadline: April 20, 2027
20-Week/Second Semester Report Deadline: May 25, 2027 (8th Graders, May 15, 2027)

If assignments are submitted after a progress report deadline, the points will be credited, but will not be reflected on that progress report.

Academic Integrity

At Curtiss Middle School, academic integrity means completing your own work honestly and responsibly. Maintaining academic integrity helps students develop real skills, build trust with teachers and peers, and prepare them for future success. Violations of academic integrity, such as cheating or plagiarism, will result in receiving no credit or a zero on the assignment.

Additionally, parents/guardians will be contacted. All writing assignments (skits, stories, essays, paragraphs, outlines) must be completed in class in order to receive credit. All graded assignments will be compared to

assignments completed in class. If there is a discrepancy in grammar, spelling, punctuation/capitalization between student work completed in class versus work completed outside of class, the assignment will not receive credit. Students will be given the opportunity to re-do assignments that are not authentic for full credit.

Tardy Policy

Being on time helps you stay focused and shows respect. Punctuality affects your Work Habits mark; three or more unexcused tardies in a 5-week grading period will result in an unsatisfactory mark in Work Habits. Consistent on-time arrival supports a positive grade reflecting responsibility and readiness to learn.

Restroom/Water Fountain Policy: Students may visit the restroom/water fountain once every 5-weeks without having to make-up the time. After that, students are expected to make up the time missed during lunch. Students have 5 days to make up their restroom time. School policy prohibits restroom passes during the first and last 10-minutes of class. Each missed make-up time will count against students' Cooperation mark. Health conditions on file with the school nurse exempted.

Chromebook Policy

District-issued devices will be maintained at school in classroom sets and will not be sent home with students. Students will have access to Chromebooks during the instructional day when technology is appropriate and supports the learning objective. In alignment with LAUSD's Student Screen Time Policy, technology will be used purposefully to enhance—not replace—teacher-led instruction, collaboration, hands-on learning, and meaningful student engagement. Students are expected to use all school-issued devices responsibly and for instructional purposes only. Students that lose or damage a device will be charged the replacement fee.

Electronic Device Policy

Unauthorized Personal Devices not issued by LAUSD may not be used, visible, or audible, and must be turned off and stored at any time during the school day. Cell phones, smartwatches, earbuds, and smart glasses must be turned off and stored in the student's assigned YONDR bag. Large headphones, Laptops, tablets, Gaming devices, and Audio/Video devices MUST be turned off and stored in the student's backpack. Students who have personal devices not properly stored will be confiscated immediately. Students will receive a counseling referral and lunch reflection. Devices can only be picked up on Fridays from 3:30 PM to 4:15 PM. Students that lose or damage a device will be charged the replacement fee.

Use of Planner Policy

As an AVID school, we use student planners to develop organization, responsibility, and time-management skills that prepare students for success in school, college, and career. Students are expected to use their planner daily to record homework, assignments, assessments, and important due dates. Parents/guardians are expected to review and sign the planner weekly to support student accountability and home-school communication. Planner use will count as part of the student's grade in each content class. Planners will be checked weekly on a rotating basis across content classes.

Uniform Policy

Students are expected to arrive at school in the approved school uniform each day. Approved uniform colors are:

- Tops: Navy, gold, or white shirts
- Bottoms: Navy, khaki, or gray
- Not permitted: Hats, beanies, bonnets, or other non-approved head coverings

Students who are out of dress code will receive a counseling referral and lunch reflection. Families are expected to support students in meeting the uniform expectations each day.

Tutoring

Group tutoring is part of the AVID program and will occur in class every Tuesday and Thursday. It is the students responsibility to bring questions or a point of confusion for class tutoring sessions. Students who

require additional support can speak to me. My door is open during lunch. Every attempt is made to ensure students understand and have extra time. Also, students are encouraged to ask questions via Schoology. I will attempt to respond to all questions within 24 hours or less.

Grade Access

Students and parents/guardians can go to Schoology (lms.lausd.net) to view course grades. After choosing our course in Schoology, go to: 1. Materials page 2. Grades. Most assignments are paper based and may be submitted in person. I also accept uploaded assignments via Schoology.

Directions- Parents/Guardians, please complete the following information and inform me on how I can best support your child's learning.

Name of student: _____

1. Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian Printed Name: _____

Best contact phone number: _____

Email address: _____

2. Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian Printed Name: _____

Best contact phone number: _____

Email address: _____

Please answer the following questions in English or Spanish:

What are your expectations of me as a teacher?

What are your expectations of your child?

What do you view as your responsibilities as a parent/guardian? (Feel free to continue on the back.)

How do you prefer to be contacted (phone call, text, email)?
