

6th - 8th Grade Elective Course Descriptions

Students are encouraged to choose their elective courses wisely. To change a course after school begins will require a signed note from the parent stating the educational reason for the requested change and approval from the principal. Teachers are assigned and the master schedule is set based on the original course choices. Any change request may result in an entire change of schedule. **All 6th grade students must take a Musical Fine Arts course. Fine Arts courses are marked with an asterisk (*).**

Band* (6th-8th grade):

Band courses comprise a full year of enrollment and provide sequential, progressive learning opportunities through instrumental music education. 6th grade students develop music literacy through specialized instrumental training featuring woodwind, brass and percussion instruments. 7th and 8th grade courses incorporate all beginning band instruments into full ensemble settings, enabling students to further their musical development through critical evaluation and response skills in larger group settings. Band members are required to attend scheduled rehearsals and participate in curricular performance opportunities. Instruments may be rented, purchased, or utilized on loan from LISD for an annual fee (details provided by program directors).

Choir* (6th-8th grade):

Choir courses comprise a full year of enrollment and provide sequential, progressive learning opportunities through vocal music education. 6th grade students develop music literacy through specialized voice training during which students' natural vocal range is identified and developed. 7th and 8th grade course offerings include expanded vocal ensembles, enabling students to further their musical development through critical evaluation and response skills in larger group settings. Choir members are required to attend scheduled rehearsals and participate in curricular performances.

Orchestra* (6th-8th grade):

Orchestra courses comprise a full year of enrollment and provide sequential, progressive learning opportunities through instrumental music education. 6th grade students develop music literacy through specialized instrumental training featuring string instruments. 7th and 8th grade courses incorporate all beginning orchestra instruments into full ensemble settings, enabling students to further their musical development through critical evaluation and response skills in larger group settings. Orchestra members are required to attend scheduled rehearsals and participate in curricular performance opportunities. Instruments may be rented, purchased, or utilized on loan from LISD for an annual fee (details provided by program directors).

Theatre Arts* (6th-8th grade):

This full-year course provides an avenue for artistic expression through the elements of drama and conventions of theatre. Rehearsals and performances are an expectation for all theatre arts classes.

Art* (7th and 8th grade):

This full-year course is the foundation for all other art courses. No prior drawing skills are necessary. The elements and the principles of design are emphasized through a variety of projects and problems in both two-dimensional and three-dimensional design, drawing, painting, and ceramics. **There is a fee for this course.**

Outdoor Trails (7th and 8th grade):

Students are offered education in the areas of hunting, fishing, hiking, nature recognition, archery, and cooking. The students will feel safe and positive about their learning environment and demonstrate appropriate life skills that exemplify proper mentoring in these fields of study. **Students may only take this course once during middle school.**

College & Career Exploration (6th grade):

This course is designed to guide students through the process of investigating and developing a college and career readiness plan. Students use aptitude and interest inventory assessments, software, or other tools available to explore college and career areas of personal interest. Students use this information to explore a variety of career paths, especially those in demand, and begin mapping their anticipated secondary coursework and potential postsecondary experiences that are in alignment with their goals.

Introduction to Robotic Engineering (H.S. Credit) (7th and 8th grade):

This course provides an overview of the various fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics and their interrelationships. Students will develop engineering communication skills, which include computer graphics, modeling, and presentations, by using a variety of computer hardware and software applications to complete assignments and projects. Upon completing this course, students will have an understanding of the various fields of engineering and will be able to make informed career decisions. Further, students will have worked on a design team to develop a product or system. Students will use multiple software applications to prepare and present course assignments. Students interested in the following careers should take this course: any engineering field, robotics, and STEM.

Principles of Human Services (H.S. Credit) (7th and 8th grade):

Students will participate collaboratively in learning activities to acquire knowledge and skills in effective communication, goal setting, healthy living, child development, family, community, and personal care services. Students will use various forms of technology to produce individual and group projects and presentations. Students interested in the following careers should take this course: health care, counseling, social workers, community service managers, therapists, and those interested in any field involving helping others.

Digital Media & Design (H.S. Credit) (8th grade):

This introductory course will cover different elements in the field of Arts, Audio/Video Technology, and Communication. Careers in the Arts, Audio/Video Technology, and Communications Career Cluster require a creative aptitude, a strong background in computer and technology applications, a strong academic foundation, and a proficiency in oral and written communication. Students interested in the following careers should take this course: graphic design, animators, video game design, media production, fashion design, sound technician, video production, and film and video editors.

Introduction to Culinary Arts (H.S. Credit) (8th grade):

This course will emphasize the principles of planning, organizing, staffing, directing, and controlling the management of a variety of food service operations. The course will provide insight into the operation of a well-run restaurant. Introduction to Culinary Arts will provide insight into food production skills, various levels of industry management, and hospitality skills. This is an entry level course for students interested in pursuing a career in the food service industry. This course is offered as a classroom and laboratory-based course. Students interested in the following careers should take this course: food science technicians, chefs and head cooks, and restaurant management.

Spanish 1 (7th & 8th grade):

Spanish 1 is the introductory course in the Spanish language and culture. During this course, the students will develop speaking, writing, reading, and listening skills in Spanish around topics related to the student's everyday life. Students will use Spanish in the interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational communication modes as the basis for meeting the TEKS. The students will gain an understanding of culturally appropriate responses and practices. **No experience is required. Not meant for students who already speak Spanish.**

SPANISH LANGUAGE & CULTURE 2 HONORS (6th grade):

Recommendation: Passage of Proficiency Exam

Spanish 2 PAP Language & Culture is the first course in the Advanced Spanish Language Program in middle school. This course develops students' proficiency and culminates in the AP Spanish Language & Culture exam in the 8th grade. Successful completion of this course fulfills one credit of the high school graduation requirement for World Languages. A special emphasis is placed on refining Spanish reading, writing and language arts skills through the analysis of advanced Spanish nonfiction and fiction texts. The genres of study are cross-curricular in nature. Students enrolled in this course should have a significant background in the Spanish language, as well as an intermediate to advanced level of proficiency in all language skills. Students are expected to continue to Spanish 3 PAP for Spanish Speakers in the 7th grade and to Spanish 4 Advanced Placement in the 8th grade. This course may not be offered on all campuses. This course is conducted exclusively in Spanish.

SPANISH LANGUAGE & CULTURE 3 HONORS (7th grade):

Spanish 3 PAP Language & Culture is the second course in the Advanced Spanish Language Program in middle school. Students in PAP for Spanish Speakers is the second course in the Advanced Spanish Program for Middle School. This course further develops students' proficiency and culminates in the AP Spanish Language & Culture exam in the 8th grade. Successful completion of this course fulfills the high school graduation requirement for high school and may earn a student an Arts & Humanities endorsement if students meet other foundation graduation requirements for an endorsement. This course emphasizes high level/critical thinking, reading, and writing utilizing cross-curricular contexts as well as Hispanic literature and texts. Speaking and listening proficiencies are refined and further developed. Students enrolled in this course should have a significant background in the Spanish language, as well as an advanced level of proficiency in all language skills. Students are expected to continue to Spanish 4 AP for Spanish Speakers in the 8th grade. This course may not be offered on all campuses. This course is conducted exclusively in Spanish.

SPANISH LANGUAGE & CULTURE 4 AP (8th grade):

This course is a continuation of Spanish 3 PAP for Spanish Speakers. Specific Advanced Placement test-taking strategies, such as oral narration, advanced reading and listening comprehension and expository writing, are emphasized. Students study and analyze current events, literary texts, and social issues. Students will be prepared for and take the Advanced Placement Spanish Language and Culture Exam. This course may not be offered on all campuses. This course counts for high school credit. This course is conducted in Spanish.

Leadworthy (7th and 8th grade):

Leadworthy is a program in which students learn to develop a healthy self-concept, healthy relationships, and to understand the concept of personal responsibility. Students will develop skills in public speaking

and communication, and an awareness about personal image. They will develop the concept and principles for decision making. They will develop an understanding of the effects of peer pressure, will develop skills to counter those effects, and will develop problem-solving skills. They will also develop an understanding of the need for vision in goal setting and setting personal goals.

Math Lab (7th- 8th grade):

This course will focus on providing additional practice and reinforcement of mathematical concepts through hands-on activities, technology-based learning, and individualized support. It will aim to solidify understanding and improve skills in core areas like algebra, geometry, and basic arithmetic.

Reading Lab (7th-8th grade):

This course offering will focus on enhancing students' reading comprehension skills through targeted practice and instruction. The course will focus on specific strategies like vocabulary development, text analysis, critical thinking, and fluency, with an emphasis on applying these skills to various academic texts; it may also include individual assessments to identify areas of improvement and tailored interventions to address specific reading challenges.

Harvester 101 (All 6th graders):

Harvester 101 is a required course for all 6th grade students, unless they are in a double-blocked ELA class or Special Education class. This class is designed to help students smoothly transition from elementary school to middle school by focusing on developing essential academic, social/emotional, and organizational skills needed to be successful in middle school.

Gardening (6th-8th grade):

Students will explore and learn about gardening through hands-on activities to understand the basic plant life cycles including planting seeds, caring for plants, and harvesting produce. Students will cultivate a school garden that connects to nature, exploring ecology and sustainability, and will promote healthy eating habits to share with the community.

Journey (8th grade):

In this exciting 8th-grade class, you'll get the chance to unlock your full potential by building important life skills that will help you thrive now and in the future! We'll explore what it takes to be a great leader, set goals, and develop the habits that make you successful both in school and in life. Whether you're learning to manage your time like a pro, discovering your strengths, or planning for your future career, this class is designed to help you take charge of your journey.

You'll also dive into fun activities that build confidence and teamwork, and you'll explore different college and career pathways to help you figure out what's next after middle school. By the end of the course, you'll have practical skills that will set you up for high school and beyond, plus a personalized plan to help you achieve your goals. Expect challenges, inspiration, and plenty of opportunities to learn more about yourself as you get ready to lead, succeed, and navigate the exciting world ahead! Get ready to build the skills you need to be awesome now—and in the future!