



Middle School Course Description Guide

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ACADEMIC & GENERAL INFORMATION

MISD Grading System for Grades 7-8

The district middle schools use a weighted numerical grading system.

A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
F	Below 70

Enrollment

A student enrolling in the district for the first time must be accompanied by his/her parent(s) or legal guardian and must provide satisfactory evidence of required immunization, **proof of residence (utility bill or lease agreement)**, copy of birth certificate and social security card, and a withdrawal form from the previous school. To complete admission, the following demographic information is necessary: home address, home phone, mother's name, place of business and work phone, father's name, place of business and work phone, and a friend or relative's name and number in case of emergency.

A note to students entering MISD for the first time in grades 7-8:

The following is a conversion chart for students entering MISD for the first time in grades 7-8. This chart will be used if the previous school does not have a conversion chart of its own. MISD will use the conversion chart of the student's previous school if one is provided.

A+	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	F
98	95	92	88	85	82	78	75	72	68	65	62	55

Middle School Schedule

MISD middle schools are organized on a traditional 8-period day.

Pre-Advanced Placement

A student may enter the Pre-Advanced Placement course sequence at the beginning of any semester/school year based upon his/her interest and identified potential.

MIDDLE SCHOOL COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

ENGLISH / LANGUAGE ARTS

Grade 7 Language Arts

This course covers grammar, literature, composition, vocabulary development and spelling. Development of reading skills, writing and language concepts are stressed. Students read a variety of literary and informational texts.

Grade 7 Pre-Advanced Placement Language Arts

Pre-AP students will expand their knowledge of Pre-Advanced Placement strategies in reading and writing using materials specifically selected for the Pre-Advanced Placement student. These skills are developed through Close reading, critical thinking, composition, vocabulary and grammar. Students will be responsible for reading outside of class.

Grade 8 Language Arts

This course covers grammar, literature, composition, vocabulary development and spelling. Students are introduced to a variety of literary forms in their wide reading of classic, contemporary and informational texts.

Grade 8 Pre-Advanced Placement Language Arts

Pre-AP Language Arts students will participate in an in-depth study of Pre-Advanced Placement strategies in reading and writing using materials specifically selected for the Pre-Advanced Placement students. These skills are developed through Close reading, critical thinking, composition, vocabulary and grammar. This course is designed to expose students the background knowledge and skills needed to be successful in the high school Advanced Placement program. Students will be responsible for reading outside of class.

MATHEMATICS

Grade 7 Mathematics

Seventh grade mathematics includes a study of the concepts and skills associated with the understanding of the place-value system, numbers and the basic operations (addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division) with fractions and decimals. Students will study problem solving techniques, measurement concepts using both metric and customary units, exponents, properties and relationships of geometric shapes, the representation of numbers including integers on a line and pairs of numbers on a coordinate plane, probability, and the use of computing devices. Emphasis is placed on acquiring problem solving skills, fractions, understanding the properties and relationships of geometric shapes, algebraic reasoning and proportionality. This course will include the appropriate use of graphing technology.

Grade 7 Pre-Advanced Placement Mathematics

Pre-AP seventh grade mathematics includes an in-depth, rigorous study of topics in both regular seventh and eighth grade courses. Emphasis is placed on operations with rational numbers, algebraic reasoning and proportional relationships. Students will be expected to finish both 7th and 8th grade objectives by the end of this course. This course will include the appropriate use of graphing technology.

Grade 8 Mathematics

Eighth grade mathematics includes a review and a more in-depth, rigorous study of the concepts and skills presented in the seventh grade. Emphasis is placed on problem solving techniques, meaning of negative numbers, fractions in expressions and equations, proportional reasoning, graphing, constructing numerical equations, variables, measurement concepts, tables, and probability and statistics to make predictions. The focus of the eighth grade curriculum is to prepare students for high school mathematics, especially Algebra I, by analyzing proportional and non-proportional relationships. This course will include the appropriate use of graphing technology.

Grade 8 Pre-Advanced Placement Algebra I

This course will emphasize the study of linear functions. Student will use functions to represent, model, analyze, and interpret relationships in problem situations. Topics include graphing, solving equations and inequalities, and systems of linear equations. Quadratic and nonlinear functions will be introduced. This course grants high school credit, which may be applied toward one of the four required high school math courses. Grade 8 Algebra I will be factored into the student's overall high school grade average/GPA, and the course will become a permanent part of the student's high school transcript.

SCIENCE

Grade 7 Science

Seventh grade science will focus on the objectives prescribed by the State of Texas by using the district core curriculum. Students will participate in activities such as:

- *Inquiry lessons and lab activities, and
- *Guided research projects.

Grade 7 Pre-Advanced Placement Science

Pre-AP seventh grade science will focus on the objectives prescribed by the State of Texas, and extends the district core curriculum by providing:

- *Complex Inquiry lessons and lab activities,
- *Independent projects with product differentiation, and
- *Scientific article analysis.

Grade 8 Science

Eighth grade science will focus on the objectives prescribed by the State of Texas by using the district core curriculum. Students will participate in activities such as:

- *Inquiry lessons and lab activities, and
- *Guided research projects.

Grade 8 Pre-Advanced Placement Science

Pre-AP eighth grade science will focus on the objectives prescribed by the State of Texas, and extends the district core curriculum by providing:

- *Complex Inquiry lessons and lab activities,
- *Independent projects with product differentiation, and
- *Scientific article analysis.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Grade 7 Texas History

Texas History students study the history of Texas from early times to the present. Students examine the full scope of Texas history, including the cultures of Native Americans living in Texas prior to European exploration and the eras of mission-building, colonization, revolution, republic, and statehood. Students will be able to explain the influence of the U.S. Constitution on the Texas Constitution, and examine the rights and responsibilities of Texas citizens. Students will use primary and secondary sources to examine the rich and diverse cultural background of Texas

Grade 7 Pre-Advanced Placement Texas History

Pre-AP Texas History students study all of Texas history with an emphasis on using skills that will prepare them for success in future Pre-AP and AP classes. Students assess issues of change over time as a process. Analysis of primary and secondary sources will aid students in understanding the diversity of interpretations of history. Students will be responsible for reading outside of class.

Grade 8 Early American History

Early American History students study the history of the United States from the early colonial period through Reconstruction. The content builds upon that from Grade 5 American History but provides more depth and breadth. Historical content focuses on the political, economic, and social events and issues related to the colonial and revolutionary eras, the creation and ratification of the U.S. Constitution, challenges of the early Republic, westward expansion, sectionalism, Civil War, and Reconstruction.

Grade 8 Pre-Advanced Placement Early American History

Pre-AP Early American History students study the history of the United States from the early colonial period through Reconstruction in depth. This rigorous course will cultivate necessary habits of mind for success in high school AP courses, such as analysis and formulation of document-based essays. Students will be responsible for reading outside of class.

ELECTIVES

A Note About Grade 7 & 8 Electives: It is important to know that this course description guide includes all courses that are offered in the Mansfield ISD. However, due to enrollment and teacher availability, **not every class will be offered every year at all campuses.**

REQUIRED ELECTIVES:

Career Pathways: (Grade 8)

Students will explore the array of high school courses available and their individual career interests as they prepare for their future in this semester course. The capstone event of this course is to create an initial four year plan for high school.

Extended Math: (Grade 7-8)

Students who make below the required score on math and reading portions of state/local assessments are required to take Extended Math and/or Reading Study Skills.

Reading Study Skills: (Grade 7-8)

Students who make below the required score on math and reading portions of state/local assessments are required to take Extended Math and/or Reading Study Skills.

OPTIONAL ELECTIVES:

Academic Competitions: (Grade 7-8)

Students will learn to think “outside the box” while being exposed to a variety of general knowledge facts covering literature, history, philosophy, science, and sociology. Students will be given the opportunity to compete and gain from shared experiences and team-building.

Art – Intro to: (Grade 7-8)

This is a 7th/8th grade elective course. Students will have the opportunity to explore various elements of art: drawing, painting, perspective, shading, etc. Previous art or special skills are not necessary.

Art – Advanced: (Grade 8)

This is an elective class available for those students who have previously completed the introductory art class. This class offers a continuation of the exploration of essentials through projects. Teacher recommendation is required.

Art I – High School Credit: (Grade 8)

In this course students study design, drawing, painting, graphic arts, and art history. Other topics include work in clay, weaving and sculpture. Awareness and sensitivity to one’s environment will be developed, along with inventive and imaginative expression through art materials and tools. **This course meets the one credit fine arts high school graduation requirement.** *Please be aware that this course will become a permanent part of the student’s high school transcript and will be factored into the student’s overall high school grade average/GPA.* **Prerequisite: 7th grade Art and an Art teacher’s recommendation.**

AVID: (Grade 7-8)

The AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) elective class prepares students in the academic middle for college eligibility and success. Students receive instruction in writing, inquiry, collaboration and reading strategies in addition to note-taking and organizational skills that are necessary for academic success. AVID students must enroll in at least one Pre-AP course in addition to the AVID elective class. Tutors are provided during AVID class to support student success in all courses. Pre-approval is required.

Band – Concert: (Grade 7-8)

Seventh and eighth grade band students are scheduled by musical ability, scholastic grades, and their conduct throughout the year. This band serves as the training ground for the Symphonic and Honors Band. These students will have the privilege of performing at pep rallies, concerts, Solo and Ensemble Festival, and one competition that will take them out of the area during the course of the year.

Band – Honors: (Grade 7-8)

Seventh and eighth grade band students are scheduled by musical ability, scholastic grades, and their conduct throughout the year. Seventh and eighth grade students will enroll in this class by the strict recommendation of the Middle School directors. These students will have the privilege of performing at pep rallies, concerts, Solo and Ensemble Festival, and several competitions that will take them out of the area during the course of the year.

Band – Symphonic: (Grade 7-8)

Seventh and eighth grade band students are scheduled by musical ability, scholastic grades, and their conduct throughout the year. This band serves as the training ground for Honors Band. Seventh and eighth grade students will enroll in this class by the strict recommendation of the Middle School and Intermediate directors. These students will have the privilege of performing at pep rallies, concerts, Solo and Ensemble Festival, and several competitions that will take them out of the area during the course of the year.

Career Investigation: (Grade 7-8)

An activity-oriented guidance course designed to develop greater knowledge and understanding of career and educational opportunities and options necessary to making meaningful and informed career and educational choices. The 15 occupational clusters and a variety of careers within each cluster are studied in relation to an individual self-appraisal, including, but not limited to, interests, abilities, and aptitude. The course culminates in the development of a graduation plan based on career objectives and educational training requirements for career concentration objective.

Choir – Concert: (Grade 7-8)

This is an All-Girls choir. This choir is for the girl who enjoys singing and performing. Girls will sing a variety of types of music along with sight-reading. Members of this choir will compete and participate in three performances throughout the year.

Choir – Honors: (Grade 7-8)

This is an All-Girls choir. It is a course for the student who really likes to sing. Previous training is a must for this class. This choir is required to compete in all competitions. Each student must be disciplined and ready to learn many types of songs. Sight-reading helps the student to sing a song they have never heard before. Girls will participate in at least four concerts and four competitions. All contests are UIL sanctioned events and a student must be passing all

of her classes in order to participate. Audition and teacher approval are required.

Choir – Male: (Grade 7-8)

This is an All-Boys choir. This choir is for the male who enjoys singing and performing. Students will sing a variety of types of music along with sight-reading. Members of this choir will compete and participate in three performances.

Professional Communications: (Grade 8)

This course is required for graduation for all high school students and is offered as an elective to 8th grade students. In this course, the student will learn the process of communication for both public speaking and interpersonal communication. The opportunity will be given to become more aware of the self as a communicator and of the interaction in communication. The student will be able to deliver different types of speeches and will become more self-confident.

This course meets the one-half credit communication applications high school graduation requirement. *Please be aware that this course will become a permanent part of the student's high school transcript and will be factored into the student's overall high school grade average/GPA.*

Creative Writing – Intro to (Grade 7-8)

This course will focus on teaching students writing principles such as plot, structure, character, voice, dialogue, description, and point of view. These principles will be taught through several forms of creative expression through writing.

Foundation of Personal Finance: (Grade 7-8)

This course is designed to inform students about financial decisions and the impact they have regarding a financially secure future lifestyle. Students will apply critical thinking skills and problem-solving skills to analyze decisions involving earning and spending.

Gateway to Technology: (Grade 8)

One semester of GTT explores Design, Modeling and Automation and the second semester explores Applied Science and Technology. Students see connections between hands-on projects and academic subjects such as math and science. The program focuses on showing students how to use engineering skills to solve everyday problems. The primary focus of the course is on stronger math, science, and technology inquiry skills. An elective high school credit is given upon successful completion of this course. If a student only completes one semester of GTT, they will be awarded ½ credit toward elective credit graduation requirement. If a student completes both semesters they will be awarded one credit toward elective graduation requirement. *Please be aware that this course will become a permanent part of the student's high school transcript and will be factored into the student's overall high school grade average/GPA*

Health: (Grade 8)

This course is required for graduation for all high school students and is offered as an elective to 8th grade students. In this class, the students participate in simple experiments, self-inventories, and projects that help them learn how to make healthy choices in all areas of their daily lives – physically, mentally, and socially. **This course meets the one-half credit health high school graduation requirement.** *Please be aware that this course will become a*

permanent part of the student's high school transcript and will be factored into the student's overall high school grade average/GPA.

Keyboarding: (Grade 8)

Students will focus on proper keyboarding technique and mastering the alphabetic and number keys. Instruction will also include language and grammar skills units to support composition of business letters and memos. Students will also work on outlines, tables and the report format, including title page and reference pages. Keyboarding speed and accuracy will be addressed throughout the course. High school credit is given upon successful completion of this course. *Please be aware that this course will become a permanent part of the student's high school transcript and will be factored into the student's overall high school grade average/GPA.*

Language Exploration: (Grade 7-8)

This course is designed to give students a taste of cultures beyond mainstream America. Various cultures will be studied and students will be introduced to basic vocabulary within a foreign language.

Leadership: (Grade 7-8)

This elective class is available to 7th & 8th grade students. This course is designed to develop communication skills, character traits, goal setting and decision making skills which are incorporated by individual and group leadership and organizational activities. This course is based on materials from various sources such as Sean Covey's The Seven Habits of Highly Effective Teens.

Music Appreciation: (Grade 7-8)

This class will include, but not be limited to, learning how to listen, recognize and appreciate a variety of styles of music from many cultures and eras, and studying history of musical styles and forms. An introduction to note reading, keyboard, and music technology may be included.

Newspaper: (Grade 8)

This course is designed to assist students with the elements of developing a middle school newspaper. Students will gain such journalism skills as interviewing, writing, editing, photography, and visual design.

Orchestra: (Grade 7)

Students will learn proper instrument position and posture, note and rhythm reading skills, proper right and left hand technique and proper rehearsal and concert etiquette.

Skills for Living: (Grade 7-8)

This elective class is available to 7th and 8th grade students. The course provides opportunities to explore family relationships and personal development, personal management, and planning for the future. Course content addresses positive self-image, nutrition and basic cooking skills, wellness, personal appearance and basic sewing skills, how to get along with others, decision making and child care practices.

Skills for Success: (Grade 7-8)

This elective class is available to 7th and 8th grade students. The purpose of this course is designed to assist students in developing skills that are essential for academic success. Topics will include effective study habits, time management skills, goal setting, etc. Students will also receive instruction in writing, inquiry, collaboration and reading strategies in addition to note-taking and organizational skills that are necessary for academic success.

Spanish – Pre-AP: (Grade 7)

This course is for students who are native Spanish speakers or fluent in the Spanish language. In order to be eligible for placement in this course, students must perform satisfactorily on assessments of Spanish language proficiency in reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Students who successfully complete this course will receive high school credit for Adv. Spanish I, Pre-AP Spanish II, and Pre-AP Spanish III. *Please be aware that these courses will become a permanent part of the student's high school transcript and will be factored into the student's overall high school grade average/GPA.*

Spanish I: (Grade 8)

This course is designed to introduce students to the Spanish language and culture. The students will develop skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing Spanish. Students will explore various aspects of Hispanic culture, heritage, and peoples. Major emphasis is on conversational usage of Spanish in real-life situations. This is the same course that is offered at the high school level and high school credit is given. *Please be aware that this course will become a permanent part of the student's high school transcript and will be factored into the student's overall high school grade average/GPA.*

Spanish – AP: (Grade 8)

This course is for 8th grade students who are native Spanish speakers or fluent in the Spanish language. Students must have completed Pre-AP Spanish to enroll in this course. Students who successfully complete this course will receive high school credit for AP-Spanish IV and also have the opportunity to take the AP exam to gain college credit. *Please be aware that this course will become a permanent part of the student's high school transcript and will be factored into the student's overall high school grade average/GPA.*

Student Assistant: (Grade 7-8)

Students will help with routine non-confidential office duties, library duties, and/or clinic duties. Pre-approval is required.

Student Council: (Grade 8)

This course is designed for those who are currently student leaders/student council members. This course will develop students' leadership skills to function effectively as team members, responsible citizens, entrepreneurs, and productive workers in a global society. Pre-approval is required.

Technology Applications: (Grade 7-8)

Students will utilize computers to learn a variety of technological units. This class is designed to provide students with a broad, exploratory experience with a variety of tools, materials, and processes associated with industry and technology.

Technology Education: (Grade 7-8)

Students will utilize computers to learn a variety of technological units. This class is designed to provide students with a broad, exploratory experience with a variety of tools, materials, and processes associated with industry and technology.

Theater Arts I: (Grade 7-8)

This course stresses the expressive use of body and voice, along with aesthetic growth through appreciation of theatrical events. The course of study includes basic actor training, stage movement, and voice and diction including oral interpretation and characterization.

Theater Arts II: (Grade 8)

This is an elective class available for those students who have previously completed Theater Arts I. This course is a more intensive study of the skills and concepts included in Theater Arts I. Advanced acting, make-up, improvisation, film and TV, puppetry, masks, and readers' theater may be topics of study.

Yearbook: (Grade 8)

Students will explore the elements and processes necessary for producing his/her middle school's yearbook. Experience with typing, copy writing, and photography is helpful. Pre-approval is required.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION / ATHLETICS

A Note About Grade 7 & 8 PE/Athletics: A minimum of **two semesters of some form of physical education are required** for all middle school students. Students may fulfill this requirement in either 7th or 8th grade. However, students are strongly encouraged to fulfill this requirement in 7th grade.

Athletics: *(Grade 7-8)*

This class is for students who want to be on school sports teams. It substitutes for P. E. The following are requirements to be eligible for the athletics class: (1) parental permission; (2) coaches recommendation (8th grade only); (3) completed and notarized physical and emergency form and a rule packet.

Physical Education: *(Grade 7-8)*

The purpose of Physical Education is to teach each student a variety of sports that can be played at any age level. It is also our goal that each student learns the proper way to run, exercise, stretch, etc. Some of the activities that will be taught are softball, volleyball, flag football, basketball, soccer, team handball, polo, and more.

*Uniforms will be required as a portion of the student's grade for Physical Education class. The uniform can be purchased through the school P.E. department or students may wear black shorts and a solid grey t-shirt.