

ALABASTER

# COURSE SELECTION GUIDE FOR THOMPSON MIDDLE SCHOOL 

2024-2025

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# TEACHING AND LEARNING DEPARTMENT 

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## Our Mission

Preparing students for their future.

## Our Vision

To partner with families and the community to inspire and prepare graduates to be responsible and productive champions of their future.

## Our Beliefs

These values and beliefs guide teaching, learning, and working in the Alabaster City Schools:

1. Our schools are safe, caring, learning communities engaged in continuous improvement, committed to the pursuit of excellence, and dedicated to the success of each student.
2. Our employees are qualified, dedicated, innovative, and student-centered, engaged in continued learning.
3. Our schools provide quality instructional programs, enriching extracurricular experiences, and a wide variety of opportunities for students to explore their interests, expand their dreams, and develop their talents.
4. Our schools partner with families, business, industry, post-secondary institutions, community agencies, and government to create and sustain outstanding facilities, technology, learning resources, and experiences to maximize student achievement.
5. Our schools embrace diversity, promote respectful relationships, and have high expectations and performance standards for all students and adults.
6. Our schools value integrity, open communication, shared responsibility, innovation, and accountability.

## Statement of Non-Discrimination

The Alabaster City Board of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability or age in any of its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated groups. The following persons have been designated to handle inquiries regarding nondiscrimination policies.
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## Purpose

The purpose of the Thompson Middle School (TMS) course selection guide is to provide students and parents with an overview of secondary courses in Grades 6-8. The important connection of middle school to high school offerings is one to carefully consider in developing future plans for each student in Alabaster City Schools (ACS). It is an expectation of ACS that every student graduates high school with a plan for post-secondary education and/or gainful employment.

## Course Selection

The course selection process begins in January/February of each year and includes grade level counselors meeting with students to discuss courses and the steps toward registering for classes. Students will be given a course selection form on which they select courses. Core classes and band classes will require a teacher's initials. Then students review the form with their parents/guardians and return the form to TMS with a parent/guardian signature. Final schedules are given to students in August prior to the beginning of the school year.

Prerequisites are listed for some courses and serve as an indicator of skills needed to be successful in the class. Teachers, counselors, and administrative staff are eager to assist students with choosing the appropriate classes that meet their interests, talents, and ability. Students and parents are urged to connect with counselors and/or teachers to discuss any questions they may have concerning course selection.

## CCRI Graduation Requirement

Per the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE), all students will have to demonstrate prior to graduation that they are ready for college or a career, effective with the Class of 2026. Students will be required to earn a College and Career Readiness Indicator (CCRI) in order to graduate. Students will have four years during high school to attain at least one of the following indicators:

- Earning a benchmark score in any subject area on the ACT college entrance exam.
- Earning a qualifying score of three or higher on an advanced placement exam.
- Earning a qualifying score of four or higher on an international baccalaureate exam.
- Earning college credit while in high school.
- Earning a silver or higher level on the ACT WorkKeys exam.
- Completing an in-school youth apprenticeship program.
- The student must earn a credential on the approved list for the CTE program declared at the school. The student must be declared in that program.
- Documented acceptance for enlistment into the military. The student must enlist in a branch of the military before graduating high school. An official letter from the recruiter stating the student has enlisted is required.
- Attaining career and technical education completer status. The student must complete three courses in one CTE program and have earned a 70 or higher in each of the three courses.
- Any additional college and career readiness indicator approved by the State Board of Education.

Additional information will be released by the ALSDE. Rising eighth grade students must pay special attention to the courses they choose to take in order to obtain a CCRI.

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## COURSE OFFERINGS

ACS and TMS strive to offer a wide variety of courses each year. These offerings may vary from year to year depending on student enrollment in courses, staffing, and updates from the Alabama Department of Education (ALSDE). Certain courses in the course selection guide will be offered only if there are enough students who register in the spring to fill the class. Thus, students and parents should select courses carefully. The choices made will determine student schedules, the master schedule, and resources for the next school year. Changes in student schedules will only be made for exceptional circumstances.

TMS Middle School Course Pathways*

| 6th Grade | 7th Grade | 8th Grade |
| :--- | :--- | :--- |
| English Language Arts | English Language Arts | English Language Arts |
| Reading | Math | Math |
| Math | Science | Science |
| Science | Social Studies | Social Studies |
| Social Studies | Physical Education | Physical Education |
| Physical Education | Elective | Elective |
| Elective |  |  |

*The ALSDE requires every middle school student to take three years of math, social studies, English
Language Arts, science, and physical education. Certain exceptions may apply.

## HONORS COURSES

Honors math, science, and English Language Arts (ELA) are offered at each grade level. Honors reading is only offered in $6^{\text {th }}$ grade. Honors social studies is offered in $7^{\text {th }}$ and $8^{\text {th }}$ grades. Honors courses are recommended for academically driven and prepared students. Typically, honors courses offer deeper commitment to critical thinking, independent learning, collaborative work, and individual initiative. Students interested in college preparatory courses at Thompson High School and those seeking a diploma with an advanced endorsement are urged to take honors courses.

## GIFTED RESOURCE CLASS (GRC)

Only students identified as gifted may enroll in GRC classes. TMS gifted education teachers teach GRC in English Language Arts/Reading courses for identified students in Grades 6-8. The courses are designed to meet and exceed the standards contained in the Alabama ELA Course of Study through appropriate differentiation for gifted learners and modification of the depth and complexity of the curriculum. Best practices in gifted education are used to incorporate abstract and complex thinking; high level processes and product development; and interdisciplinary concepts, issues, and themes. The learning needs of each GRC student are addressed by the Gifted Case Managers as part of the identified gifted student's Gifted Education Plan/Individualized Education Plan (GEP/IEP). Students must qualify to participate in
the GRC program. For further details, please contact a grade level GRC teacher, the grade level counselor, or school administrator.

## WARRIOR TIME

TMS students participate in Warrior Time each day as part of their regular schedule. An expectation during Warrior Time is that students will complete their individualized iReady math and reading lessons as prescribed by their iReady diagnostic tests. Teachers and administrators will set a specific number of lessons for students to complete each week. As students are given weekly grades in their math and ELA/reading classes for completing iReady lessons, it is especially important that students use Warrior Time purposefully. When students have completed their iReady lessons, they may do homework, finish tests, receive assistance from teachers, work on approved digital learning platforms, or read.

## INTERVENTION CLASSES

Reading and math intervention classes are offered at each grade level. Student participation in these classes is based on grades, standardized test scores, and formative test scores. If administrators and counselors deem this class appropriate for a student, he/she may be removed from his/her elective for one or two semesters until sufficient academic growth is demonstrated. Students will use a combination of iReady, Lexia Power Up, DreamBox, and/or teacher assigned work to assist in skill building. Students who have an individualized plan may take advantage of these programs during their academic enhancement period rather than an intervention class.

## MATH/READING INTERVENTION/ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS

TMS offers all students computer-based math and reading intervention/enrichment programs. Most students are required to complete individualized math and reading lessons in iReady every week. These lessons are due each Monday for grades in ELA/reading and math classes. Additional enrichment programs that students may use either while at school or at home include Lexia Power Up for reading and DreamBox for math. TMS administrators annually send out information to parents on accessing these programs. For more information, parents should contact their student's ELA/reading and/or math teacher.

## CAREER TECHNICAL EDUCATION (CTE) \& ELECTIVE COURSES

Middle school CTE courses are designed for students to build self-awareness, gain information about possible careers, and develop a plan for reaching future goals. All TMS CTE courses are aligned to programs at Thompson High School. The grade level counselors aid students in career and academic planning as well as choosing appropriate CTE exploratory and introductory courses that suit their goals and interests.
Elective courses are designed to allow students to expand beyond the required curriculum to pursue personal interests.

CREDIT FOR HIGH SCHOOL COURSES TAKEN IN MIDDLE SCHOOL
Eighth grade students may earn high school credit for the following board approved courses: Spanish I, Symphonic Band I, Concert Band I, Men's Chorus I, Women's Chorus I, Dance I, Orchestra I, and Visual Arts I. The general rules on courses taken and credits earned prior to ninth grade are as follows:

1. The course must be taken in eighth grade and will become part of the student's high school transcript.
2. The course must follow the Alabama Course of Study guidelines and include high school content and rigor. The course must be taught by a certified teacher.
3. The course cannot supersede required courses.
4. Middle school students earning high school credits from non-accredited settings will follow the same guidelines as high school students attempting to transfer courses. Validation is required.
5. Students may be allowed to repeat one of these courses in the $9^{\text {th }}$ grade if satisfactory progress is not made. Decisions will be made on a case by case basis. The grade earned in $8^{\text {th }}$ grade will stand for the student's transcript and grade point average (GPA).

POWERSCHOOL
Parents and students can monitor student's progress by accessing PowerSchool, the online student information system. If students or parents need assistance with logging onto PowerSchool, they should contact the school.

## MIDDLE SCHOOL GRADING

Report cards for the first, second, and third nine weeks will be available online in PowerSchool and may be given to students to take home. The fourth nine weeks report card will be available online in PowerSchool, given to students to take home, and may be mailed if needed. Progress reports will be given to students to take home at the midpoint of each nine weeks grading period.

All guidelines for grading middle school students may be found in the Middle School Curriculum and Instruction Policies, Procedures, and Guidelines Manual found on the ACS website.

## TMS COURSES

## English Language Arts (ELA)

## $6^{\text {th }}$ Grade Reading <br> $6^{\text {th }}$ Grade Reading, Honors

Note: $6^{\text {th }}$ grade students take a reading course concurrently with their English Language Arts course. Students read authentic literary and information texts. Instruction focuses on reading, writing, speaking, and listening in response to textual information. Honors reading is an accelerated academic course designed for dedicated students who plan to continue on the honors track through middle and high school.

## $6^{\text {th }}$ Grade English Language Arts <br> $7^{\text {th }}$ Grade English Language Arts <br> $8^{\text {th }}$ Grade English Language Arts

English Language Arts encompasses all skills related to written and spoken language, including reading and responding to literature. The course incorporates grammar, vocabulary, and writing with an emphasis upon authentic opportunities for communication.

## $6^{\text {th }}$ Grade English Language Arts, Honors <br> $7^{\text {th }}$ Grade English Language Arts, Honors <br> $8^{\text {th }}$ Grade English Language Arts, Honors

Honors English Language Arts is an accelerated academic course designed for dedicated students who plan to continue on the honors/AP track throughout high school in preparation for college. Students will move at a fast pace, requiring an increased expectation of responsibility and independence. Students are expected to display a high level of proficiency in writing, reading, and critical thinking. Additionally, students should be willing to respond to an increased workload, exhibit a strong work ethic, demonstrate a serious attitude toward their studies, and participate consistently in class discussions.

## $6^{\text {th }}$ Grade GRC Reading

$7^{\text {th }}$ Grade GRC English Language Arts
$8^{\text {th }}$ Grade GRC English Language Arts
Note: Students identified as gifted will be served in their reading $\left(6^{\text {th }}\right)$ and ELA ( $7^{\text {th }}$ \& $\left.8^{\text {th }}\right)$ classes. GRC courses are designed to meet and exceed the standards contained in the Alabama ELA Course of Study through appropriate differentiation for gifted learners and modification of the depth and complexity of the curriculum. Best practices in gifted education are used to incorporate abstract and complex thinking; high level processes and product development; and interdisciplinary concepts, issues, and themes.

## Math

## $6^{\text {th }}$ Grade Math

In Grade 6, instructional time should focus on five essential areas, all of which have equal importance: connecting ratio and rate to whole number multiplication and division and using concepts of ratio and rate to solve problems; completing understanding of division of fractions and extending the understanding of number sense to the system of rational numbers, including signed numbers; writing, interpreting, and using expressions and equations; developing understanding of statistical thinking; and developing understanding of geometrical reasoning and thinking.

## $6^{\text {th }}$ Grade Math, Honors

The $6^{\text {th }}$ Grade Math, Honors course has been carefully aligned and designed for middle school students who show particular motivation and interest in mathematics. At the honors level, students will engage in rigorous study of connecting ratio and rate to whole number multiplication and division and using concepts of ratio and rate to solve problems; completing understanding of division of fractions and extending the understanding of number sense to the system of rational numbers, including signed numbers; writing, interpreting, and using expressions and equations; developing understanding of statistical thinking; and developing understanding of geometrical reasoning and thinking.

## $7^{\text {th }}$ Grade Math

In Grade 7, instructional time should focus on four essential areas, all of which have equal importance: developing understanding of and applying proportional relationships; developing understanding of operations with rational numbers and working with expressions and linear equations; solving problems involving scale drawings and informal geometric construction, and working with two- and three-dimensional shapes to solve problems involving area, surface area, and volume; and drawing inferences about populations based on samples.

## $7^{\text {th }}$ Grade Accelerated Math

The Grade 7 Accelerated course has been carefully aligned and designed for middle school students who show particular motivation and interest in mathematics. At the accelerated level, students will engage in rigorous study of proportional relationships, operations using rational numbers, linear equations and systems of linear equations, linear functions, random sampling and data distributions, transformations, real-world applications of area and circumference of two-dimensional figures, and surface area of three-dimensional figures. Grade 7 Accelerated Math is a compacted course, which means that all of the content of Grade 7 Mathematics, half of Grade 8 Mathematics, and some standards from Algebra I with Probability are compressed into this single course. Therefore, the curriculum moves at an accelerated pace. Opportunities are provided for students to master mathematical content and skills; develop the ability to make sense of problem situations; and build conceptual understanding that serves as the foundation for Grade 8 Accelerated Math and high school mathematics. The primary goals of the course are to foster independent learning, encourage in-depth exploration of the content, and build the skills necessary for Algebra I with Probability.

## $8^{\text {th }}$ Grade Math

In Grade 8, instructional time should focus on three critical areas, all of which have equal importance: construct and reason about expressions and equations, including modeling an
association in bivariate data with a linear equation, and solving linear equations and systems of linear equations; describe the concept of a function and use functions to interpret quantitative relationships; and analyze two- and three-dimensional figures and understand and apply the Pythagorean Theorem.

## $8^{\text {th }}$ Grade Accelerated Math

Prerequisite: Accelerated Math 7
Note: Accelerated 7 and Accelerated 8 combined is the equivalent of Algebra I with Probability. Students who complete Accelerated 7 and Accelerated 8 will not take Algebra I with Probability in high school. However, taking Accelerated Math 7 and Accelerated Math 8 in middle school does not earn one of the four math credits required for a high school diploma. Students must take four math courses in high school.

The Grade 8 Accelerated course has been carefully aligned and designed for middle school students who have completed the Grade 7 Accelerated course and show particular motivation and interest in mathematics. In Grade 8 Accelerated, there are four content areas: Number Systems and Operations; Algebra and Functions; Data Analysis, Statistics, and Probability; and Geometry and Measurement. The algebra focus is on quadratic relationships. Grade 8 Accelerated Math is a compacted course, which means that approximately half the content of Grade 8 Mathematics and a majority of the content of high school Algebra I with Probability are compressed into this single course. Therefore, the curriculum moves at an accelerated pace. Opportunities are provided for students to master mathematical content and skills; apply reasoning and problem-solving skills to real world situations; and build conceptual understanding that serves as the foundation for all high school mathematics. The primary goals of the course are to foster independent learning, encourage in-depth exploration of the content, and build the skills necessary for high school mathematics courses. Students who successfully complete this course will be prepared to enter Geometry with Data Analysis in Grade 9 and then accelerate directly into Algebra II with Statistics in Grade 10, thus providing them with an opportunity to take additional, specialized mathematics coursework, such as AP Calculus or AP Statistics, in Grades 11 and 12.

## Science

## $6^{\text {th }}$ Grade Earth Science

$6^{\text {th }}$ Grade Earth Science, Honors
Grade 6 science encompasses the study of earth science. The course focuses on the universe and its grand scale in both time and space, processes that drive Earth's conditions and its continual change over time, society's interactions with the planet, and integration of science and engineering practices. Honors Earth Science is an accelerated academic course designed for dedicated students who plan to continue on the honors track through middle and high school.

## $7^{\text {th }}$ Grade Life Science

$7^{\text {th }}$ Grade Life Science, Honors
Grade 7 Life Science concentrates on the structure and function of cells and their connections to organs and organ systems; the interactions between living organisms and between biotic and abiotic factors; explanations of genetic variations, results of genetic mutations, and
impacts of genetic technologies; and the patterns of change in populations of organisms over a long period of time and the relationship between natural selection and the reproduction and survival of a population with integration of science and engineering practices.
Honors Life Science is an accelerated academic course designed for dedicated students who plan to continue on the honors track through middle and high school.

## $8^{\text {th }}$ Grade Physical Science <br> $8^{\text {th }}$ Grade Physical Science, Honors

Grade 8 Physical Science concentrates on the composition and properties of matter; examining forces and predicting and developing explanations for changes in motion; the conservation of energy, energy transformations, and applications of energy to everyday life; and types and properties of waves and the use of waves in communication devices with integration of science and engineering practices.
Honors Physical Science is an accelerated academic course designed for dedicated students who plan to continue on the honors track through high school.

## Social Studies

## $6^{\text {th }}$ Grade Social Studies

Students will focus on United States history from the Industrial Revolution to the present.

## $7^{\text {th }}$ Grade Civics (semester)

## $7^{\text {th }}$ Grade Civics, Honors (semester)

Grade 7 Civics is a semester-long course. Students will learn about the United States founding documents, representative democracy, law, personal finance, United States political system, and civic participation and responsibility. Honors Civics is an accelerated academic course designed for dedicated students who plan to continue on the honors track through middle and high school. Honors students will engage in a rigorous curriculum which emphasizes the development of critical thinking, reading, and writing skills.

## $7^{\text {th }}$ Grade Geography (semester) <br> $7^{\text {th }}$ Grade Geography, Honors (semester)

Grade 7 Geography is a semester-long course. Students will learn about cultural geography emphasizing the Eastern Hemisphere, places and regions, physical systems, human systems, and relationships between people and their environment. Honors Geography is an accelerated academic course designed for dedicated students who plan to continue on the honors track through middle and high school. Honors students will engage in a rigorous curriculum which emphasizes the development of critical thinking, reading, and writing skills.

## $8^{\text {th }}$ Grade World History to 1500

$8^{\text {th }}$ Grade World History to 1500, Honors
Grade 8 World History addresses the time period from prehistoric man to the 1500s. Course content focuses on the migrations of early peoples, the rise of civilizations, the establishment of governments and religions, the growth of economic systems, and ways in which these events shaped Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Americas. Honors World History is an accelerated academic course designed for dedicated students who plan to continue on the honors track
through high school. Honors students will engage in a rigorous curriculum which emphasizes the development of critical thinking, reading, and writing skills.

## Physical Education


#### Abstract

$6^{\text {th }}$ Grade Physical Education $7^{\text {th }}$ Grade Physical Education $8^{\text {th }}$ Grade Physical Education The goal of physical education in Grades 6-8 is to develop physically literate individuals. A physically literate individual is defined as a person who has the ability to move with competence and confidence in a wide variety of physical activities in multiple environments that benefit the healthy development of the whole person. Physical education follows a curriculum which is based on standards and grounded in an understanding of the characteristics of students including skill execution, physical skills, cognitive skills, and social skills.


# ELECTIVES \& CAREER TECHNICAL 

## $\underline{6}^{\text {th }}$ Grade Electives

## Year-Long Electives

## Beginner Band

Beginner Band classes are designed to teach basic performance techniques and develop fundamental playing skills that enable students to continue with more advanced bands in later years and, hopefully, will inspire a life-long appreciation of and participation in music. No previous musical knowledge or experience is required to join the band. Beginner band students are tested on each instrument to help them decide which one is best for them to play. The band performs at concerts at the school in the fall, winter, and spring as well as several pep rallies and football games.

## Choir

Choir is open to 6th grade males and females who wish to gain exposure to choral singing in a comprehensive, introductory setting. Students will have the opportunity to perform sacred, classical, folk, and popular music in unison, two-part, \& three-part harmony. Students will build a foundation of proper performance and rehearsal techniques. They will also become literate in musical language through reading music. Singers will gain exposure to other facets of the musical field of study, including, but not limited to: movement, music theory, music history, music technology, composition, \& improvisation. This is a performance-based course, and annual concerts are required. Students will develop skills such as critical thinking, communication, and teamwork through collaboration with others in a musical setting.

## Orchestra (Music 6)

This is a beginning level course designed for beginning music students to experience instrumental music in a setting of only orchestra instruments. Students will develop a characteristic tone and engage in the processes of creating, performing and responding as related to instrumental music, while employing the concepts of timbre, rhythm, melody, harmony, form and expression. Students will study works of orchestral music and learn to connect musical experiences to other cultures and disciplines within and outside of the arts.

## Dance 6

Dance class is a performance-based class dedicated to the study and performance of multiple dance genres such as ballet, jazz, hip hop, contemporary, lyrical, and more. This class is for any student whether they are beginning dancers, intermediate dancers, or advanced dancers. In class performances and projects are a requirement for this class.

## Theatre 6

Students will transition from dramatic play and exploration into more academic theatre work. Continued emphasis is placed on creating, producing, responding and connecting to drive age-appropriate critical thinking, meaning, reflection, production and assessment. Students begin to explore the vocal, kinesthetic, emotional, analytical, and intellectual elements of theatrical training through improvisation, dramatization, process-centered elements of dramatic performance, aesthetics, criticism, and history. Students begin to examine theatre genres and
styles, broaden theatre vocabulary, and respond to productions by communicating thoughts and feelings, explaining concepts of aesthetics, and evaluating artistic choices.

## Art 6

Art expands a student's knowledge, abilities, and critical judgment through the use of new media, skills, and the learned knowledge of art history. Art elements and principles will be reviewed and select student artworks will be displayed throughout the school.

## Semester-Long Exploratory Courses

Exploratory classes are one semester long with students rotating to courses.

## Spanish 6

This class is designed to introduce the study of the Spanish language and the basic elements of Spanish-speaking cultures. Students will focus on language by using familiar topics to develop listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. This course provides motivation to continue learning another language and instills appreciation of other people and cultures.

## STEM Technologies I

STEM Technologies is a Career Technical course that is aligned to the THS Engineering program. STEM Technologies I provides students with knowledge and processes needed to begin their attainment of technological literacy and awareness of careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Students gain knowledge and skills in the application, design, production, and assessment of products, services, and systems in a variety of areas. Students are challenged and empowered to use what they learn to design and produce products.

## Computer Science Endeavors

Computer Science is a Career Technical course that is aligned to the THS Computer Science program. Computer Science Endeavors is specifically designed for sixth grade students. Students will be introduced to computer science and will strengthen their coding skills. As a foundational computer science course, students will understand the basics of block coding, coding concepts, algorithms, the Internet of Things (loT), and ethical computing.

## 7 $\mathbf{7}^{\text {th }}$ Grade Electives

## Year-Long Electives

## Symphonic Band (Advanced) <br> Concert Band 1 (Intermediate Advanced) <br> Concert Band 2 (Beginning Intermediate)

Band course placement is based on audition results.
Students learn to read music and play an instrument. Students do not need any musical knowledge or experience to join the band as they are taught everything they need to know in band class. Beginner band students are tested on each instrument to help them decide which one is best for them to play. The band performs at concerts at the school in the fall, winter, and spring. The band also performs for several pep rallies and football games and attends various competitions throughout the year.

## Orchestra (Music 7)

This course allows students to experience instrumental music in a setting of only orchestra instruments. Students will develop a characteristic tone and engage in the processes of creating, performing and responding as related to instrumental music, while employing the concepts of timbre, rhythm, melody, harmony, form and expression. Students will study works of orchestral music and learn to connect musical experiences to other cultures and disciplines within and outside of the arts.

## Women's Choir and Men's Choir

Choir is open to all 7th grade males and females who are interested in studying music fundamentals and learning basic singing techniques. A variety of literature is studied, including sacred, secular, and popular music in unison, two, or three -part harmony. Music theory and sight-reading concepts are covered as well as the parts of a score. This is a performance-based class, and concerts are a requirement. Students also have the opportunity to audition for placement in choirs at vocal festivals and all students will participate in state-level vocal competitions.

## Theatre 7

This is a beginning course in which students engage in creative theatre exercises to develop imagination, observation, and concentration. Students also condition their bodies and voices to be flexible, coordinated, and expressive. Students are introduced to drama through activities such as improvisation, pantomime, storytelling, characterization, stage directions, and vocal projection. This course includes the basic elements of dramatic production.

## Dance 7

Dance class is a performance-based class dedicated to the student and performance of multiple dance genres such as: ballet, jazz, hip hop, contemporary, lyrical, and more. This class is for any student whether they are beginning dancers, intermediate dancers, or advanced dancers. In class performances and projects are a requirement for this class.

## Computer Science Discoveries

Computer Science is a Career Technical course that is aligned to the THS Computer Science program. Computer Science Discoveries is a full-year introductory computer science survey course for students. The course takes a wide lens on computer science by covering topics such as programming, physical computing, HTML/CSS, and data. Students are empowered to create authentic artifacts and engage with computer science as a medium for creatively, communication, problem solving, and fun.

## Semester-Long Electives

Students choose two semester electives.

## Art 7

Art expands a student's knowledge, abilities, and critical judgment through the use of new media, skills, and the learned knowledge of art history. Art Elements and Principles will be reviewed and select student artworks will be displayed throughout the school and at local venues. Seventh graders will learn about contour line drawing, gesture drawing, and drawing in perspective. Projects may include a Manga self-portrait, a Surrealist collage, an oil pastel abstract, and a watercolor seascape, among others. Students will have the opportunity to be involved in after-school art activities such as creating set designs for the spring musical, designing posters for various school functions, crafting locker decorations for TMS athletes, and engaging in games and discussions involving Anime, the art of Japanese animation.

## STEM Technologies II

STEM Technologies is a Career Technical course that is aligned to the THS Engineering program. STEM Technologies II provides students with knowledge needed to further their attainment of technological literacy and awareness of careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Students will gain knowledge in the design, production, and assessment of student made products. Students will participate in the design process of products. Safety of using hand tools and machinery will be a major component of this class.

## Teen Discoveries

Teen Discoveries is a Career Technical course that is aligned to the THS Family and Consumer Science program.
Teen Discoveries is designed for students in Grade 7. An emphasis is placed on understanding the physical, intellectual, emotional, and social development of teenagers. Course content provides opportunities for students to explore decision making, problem solving, and goal setting; development of manners, grooming habits, and character education; social and communication skills; interpersonal relationships with family members, friends, and peers; family roles and responsibilities; peer pressure; clothing selection and care; babysitting; arrangement of living space; food choice, food preparation and development of health and wellness habits; technology; and career awareness.

## Health Explorations

Health Explorations is a Career Technical course that is aligned to the THS Health Sciences program. Health Explorations introduces students to a variety of helping professions in the health care sciences. Students explore career opportunities in the healthcare field, ethical medical
conduct, verbal and nonverbal communication skills appropriate for the health care setting, medical terminology, safety, and technical skills including CPR and first aid.

## $\underline{8}^{\text {th }}$ Grade Electives

## Year-Long Electives

## Symphonic Band I (Advanced)

Concert Band 1 (Intermediate Advanced)
Concert Band 2 (Beginning Intermediate)
Band course placement is based on audition results.
High School credit will be earned for $8^{\text {th }}$ graders who successfully complete Symphonic Band I or Concert Band I.
Students learn to read music and play an instrument. Students do not need any musical knowledge or experience to join the band as they are taught everything they need to know in band class. Beginner band students are tested on each instrument to help them decide which one is best for them to play. The band performs at concerts at the school in the fall, winter, and spring. The band also performs for several pep rallies and football games and attends various competitions throughout the year.

## Orchestra I

High School credit will be earned for 8th graders who successfully complete Orchestra I.
This course allows students to experience instrumental music in a setting of only orchestra instruments. Students will develop a characteristic tone and engage in the processes of creating, performing and responding as related to instrumental music, while employing the concepts of timbre, rhythm, melody, harmony, form and expression. Students will study works of orchestral music and learn to connect musical experiences to other cultures and disciplines within and outside of the arts.

## Introduction to Men's Chorus I

## Introduction to Women's Chorus I

High School credit will be earned for $8^{\text {th }}$ graders who successfully complete Introduction to Men's Chorus I or Introduction to Women's Chorus I.
This is a one credit course, novice level, designed for beginning music students to explore treble choral music from a wide variety of cultures and time periods through academic study and performance. By creating, performing, and responding, students will develop basic vocal skills and sight-reading techniques. Allowing musical experiences to other cultures and disciplines within and outside of the arts, music history and theory are embedded so students may connect these experiences to historical relevance, contemporary issues, and self-reflection. This is a performance-based class, and concerts are a requirement. Students also have the opportunity to audition for placement in choirs at vocal festivals and all students will participate in state-level vocal competitions.

## STEM Technologies III with embedded We Build it Better curriculum

STEM Technologies is a Career Technical course that is aligned to the THS Engineering program. STEM Technologies III provides students with the knowledge needed to extend their attainment of technological literacy and awareness of careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Students will gain knowledge in the design, production, and assessment of student made products. Lessons include the importance of precision and accuracy, 3D printing, electricity and fiber optics, programming, coding, business concepts, marketing, and leadership principles. Students will have the knowledge to invent or innovate a project of their own.

## Introduction to Visual Arts I

High School credit will be earned for $8^{\text {th }}$ graders who successfully complete Introduction to Visual Arts. This course is for the novice art students who are interested in receiving high school credit and potentially taking additional visual arts courses at the high school. Through exploration and experimentation, this course provides students with a general foundation in studio processes, art criticism, aesthetics, and art history from the 16th to 21st century. Students respond to personal experiences and express ideas using a variety of media while effectively applying the elements of art and principles of design to create original works of art. Artworks will include drawings, paintings, collage, mixed media, crafts, and clay.

## Spanish I

High School credit will be earned for $8^{\text {th }}$ graders who successfully complete Spanish I. Listening and speaking skills including understanding and responding to simple directions, expressions of courtesy, and questions related to daily routines; reading and writing skills including words and phrases used in basic situational contexts; and beginning understanding of Spanish-speaking cultures.

## Theatre 8

Theatre 8 is a beginning course in which students engage in creative theatre exercises to develop imagination, observation, and concentration. Students also condition their bodies and voices to be flexible, coordinated, and expressive. Students are introduced to drama through activities such as improvisation, pantomime, storytelling, characterization, stage directions, and vocal projection. This course includes the basic elements of dramatic production.

## Introduction to Dance I

High School credit will be earned for $8^{\text {th }}$ graders who successfully complete Introduction to Dance I. This is a one credit course at the proficient dance level. Novice students progress to a proficient level through a rigorous understanding of the elements of dance. Students create and perform while exploring movement through improvisation and choreographic devices, and develop technical dance skills through correct alignment, nutrition and injury prevention. They obtain an introductory ability to analyze movement for artistic intent, using a knowledge of dance and production elements, genres and style, cultural context, and evaluative criteria.

## Outdoor Pursuits

This class will introduce an appreciation for outdoor activities and safety guidelines. Students will learn the benefits of nature and recreational activities. Topics to be included are hiking, orienteering, camping, fire building and safety, basic first aid, canoeing/kayaking,
boating/water safety, casting/fishing, and a variety of recreational games. The purpose of this class will be to teach students basic skills in order to enjoy outdoor activities that can benefit them in lifelong fitness and wellness.

## Introduction to Careers in Healthcare

Introduction to Careers in Healthcare is a Career Technical course that is aligned to the THS Health Sciences program.
This course is specifically designed for middle school students who are interested in healthcare. Students will be introduced to the terminology, careers, history, basic skills, and technologies associated with each pathway in the Health Science career cluster including therapeutics, diagnostics, informatics, support services, and biotechnology research and development. Instruction and learning activities are provided in a laboratory setting using hands-on experiences with the equipment, materials, and technology appropriate to the course content and in accordance with current practices.

## Computer Science and Society

Computer Science is aligned to the THS Computer Science program.
Computer Science and Society is designed for students in Grade 8. Students will be able to enhance their knowledge of computer science and how it affects society as they explore topics that include: facial recognition, artificial intelligence, cybersecurity and ethics, coding, app development, and other innovations in computing.

## Semester-Long Electives

## Art 8

Art expands awareness, enhances critical judgment, and provides practice in problem-solving through the use of new media, acquired skills, and the knowledge of art and social history. Students will execute assignments in drawing, painting, collage and other mixed media techniques, paper and clay sculpture, and printmaking. Eighth grade students will create advanced drawings, a tessellation, an abstract radial design, a three-dimensional paper mask, and a combination drawing/sculpture emphasizing positive and negative space, among other projects. Artists and artistic styles of the 15th through the 21st centuries will be examined, and students will also be engaged in reading and writing about art. Student work is displayed regularly in the school and at local venues, and select framed student work will rotate on display within the school.

## Teen Connections

Teen Connections is a Career Technical course that is aligned to the THS Family and Consumer Science program.
Teen Connections is designed for students in Grade 8. Topics focus on teen connections in the home, school, and community. Course content provides 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.

## TMS CONTACTS

If parents or students have any questions about courses, pathways, recommended courses for high school success, or any other academic related topic, please contact the following individuals:

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