

**John T. Baker
Middle School**



**2012-2013
Course Bulletin**

John T. Baker Middle School

25400 Oak Drive, Damascus, Maryland 20872 www.bakerms.org

Dear Parents,

Welcome to another exciting year at Baker Middle School! You will find that this is one of the finest middle schools in all of Montgomery County! Baker offers your child a wide range of academic possibilities. We pride ourselves in being responsive to all of our children's needs. Our programs offer courses for gifted and talented, special education, and on-level students in every subject area. In all classes, students are challenged to perform at a level commensurate to their ability and intellectual growth.



Our goal at Baker is *"to improve student achievement by promoting high expectations, developing a strong student work ethic, and increasing academic rigor."* Giving our students the academic tools and organizational habits that will prepare them to pursue future goals is a responsibility of all of us. This begins by making wise choices for your child's academic program. I am hoping that you will review the choices outlined within this booklet, attend the informational parent meetings, and make decisions based on what is best for your child. Proper placement of children ensures that they will be encouraged to work to their potential without being defeated by unrealistic goals. The school counselors will be willing to help in any decision you need to make.

I look forward to joining with you and your family in a close working partnership to ensure your child's academic success while providing a pleasant and productive experience for you at Baker.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Louise Worthington". The signature is written in dark ink on a light background.

Principal

John T. Baker Middle School

BAKER'S MISSION

John T. Baker Middle School seeks to be an exemplary learning community school. We build the foundation of this community through meaningful relationships, relevant and engaging learning, and effective communication. We challenge ourselves to be better than we think we can be, and advocate for the greater good of our community. Our success in this mission will build lifelong, confident learners, who have the tools necessary for success in a changing world.

ADMINISTRATION

301-253-7010

Mrs. Louise Worthington, *Principal*
Mrs. Robin Lupia, *Assistant Principal*
Mr. Vaughn Bradley Jr., *Assistant Principal*

SCHOOL COUNSELORS

301-253-7015

Ms. Robin Schmidt, *6th Grade A-I*
Ms. Lori Leister, *Resource Counselor, 6th Grade J-Z*
Ms. Corinne Whited, *7th Grade*
Ms. Jennie Schwaderer *8th Grade*

BAKER MIDDLE SCHOOL COURSE BULLETIN

Table of Contents

	Page
Curriculum and Philosophy	5
Gifted and Talented Program	5
Pride Program	5
Reading Programs	5
Special Education Programs	6
Instructional Program	6
6th Grade Course Description List	7
Guidelines for English and Reading Placement	7
6th Grade Academics	7
Outdoor and Environmental Education	8
7th Grade Course Description List	9
Guidelines for English Placement	9
7th Grade Academics	9
8th Grade Course Description List	10
Guidelines for English Placement	10
8th Grade Academics	10
Math Course Transition Chart	11
Math Course Description List	11
Physical Education and Health Course Description 6, 7, 8	12
Academic Electives Description List	13
Guidelines for Foreign Language Placement	13
Foreign Language	13
Arts Electives Description List	14
6th Grade Rotation	14
7th Grade Rotation	15
8th Grade Elective Pairings	15
Music Program	16

Baker Middle School Curriculum and Philosophy

Baker Middle School provides a strong emphasis on academic achievement and focuses on the intellectual, social, emotional and physical growth of students in their middle learning years. The curriculum addresses questions young adolescents have about themselves and the world around them and questions posed to them by the world in which they live. It addresses the needs of all students, including students with special needs. MCPS approved curriculum forms the framework upon which the Baker instructional program is built. Each student is assigned to a team. The team then becomes the primary vehicle for parent-teacher communication and collaboration. Each interdisciplinary team of teachers assumes the responsibility for determining how the various learning objectives are addressed within the blocks of time assigned to the teams. Curriculum connections and interdisciplinary activities are planned as often as possible to help students focus on the integration and application of knowledge and skills.

The interdisciplinary curriculum addresses the following curricular areas: English, reading, mathematics, social studies, science, foreign language, physical education, art, music, computer science and technology education. Both required and elective courses provide opportunities for students to develop positive personal attributes. Study skills, self-esteem, responsibility, integrity, pride in achievements, problem-solving and decision-making skills are an important part of middle school education.

Middle school prepares students academically for high school, for participation in their community, and for the world of the 21st century. All students will have the opportunity to reach their academic potential, to learn higher order thinking skills, to analyze information, to collaborate and to take responsibility for their own learning.

Gifted and Talented Program

Gifted and talented (GT) programming and instruction offer differentiated studies for highly able and potentially high achieving students who are capable or motivated to pursue rigorous and challenging instruction. This programming provides content and instruction that match the students' abilities, achievement levels, and interests.

Students receiving gifted and talented programming are expected to maintain at least a "B" average. Students who receive a grade of "C" at the end of the first marking period will be counseled about ways to improve their performance and will be supported in that effort by school staff. Students who receive a grade of "D" or "E" over

two consecutive marking periods will be considered for removal from gifted and talented programming.

Student GT placement recommendations are based on a variety of achievement data. This data may include teacher recommendations, writing samples, grades, and other formal assessment data. Parents may also recommend their child or students may nominate themselves for GT placement.

Pride Program – Grades 6/7/8

The Pride Program is an early intervention program at Baker Middle for at-risk students. Students are identified at grade level team meetings for entry into the program. Criteria for identification include, but are not limited to, factors such as attendance, grades, and other academic concerns such as study or organizational skills development. Pride offers academic support and reinforcement of basic skills for the students in the program. In addition, time management, organization, self-management and study strategies are supplemental areas of focus. The program is intended to promote and reinforce those skills necessary for a smooth transition to upper grades and high school.

Reading Programs

Corrective Reading provides intensive intervention for students who are reading below grade level. MCPS uses the decoding strand which consists of four instructional levels. Students take a placement test to determine which instructional level is appropriate. This decoding program helps students who have trouble identifying words, who don't understand how the arrangement of letters in a word relates to its pronunciation, and whose reading rate is inadequate. Students participate in tightly sequenced, carefully planned lessons that give them the structure and practice necessary to become skilled, fluent readers.

Read 180/Read 180 Flex is an intensive reading intervention program designed to help students make measurable gains in reading achievement. Students are assigned to the course based on a variety of assessments, including MAP-R and teacher recommendation.

The program consists of nine different workshops using high-interest non-fiction and fiction texts. The duration of each workshop is a minimum of three weeks. Each workshop provides instruction in reading skills, vocabulary development, writing and grammar skills, and "real-life" functional reading skills.

Special Education Programs

The special education program at Baker Middle School supports the inclusion of students with special needs in the comprehensive school program, to the fullest extent possible in order to meet the individual needs of students identified for special education services. Programs are driven by a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP), and classes are selected according to the goals and objectives on the IEP. Teachers then provide the consistent application of instructional methods and adaptations throughout the student's day so that IEP goals and instructional objectives can be met. The optimal learning environment may be the general education classroom, with special education services delivered within that classroom; however, specialized instruction can also be delivered in a more structured setting. Services are also provided by a speech pathologist, occupational therapist and physical therapist. Student services in these areas are provided within the regular education classroom

during instruction, in small groups or individual settings. These service providers consult with the school staff in order to identify ways to effectively work with students within their areas of expertise to best support instruction.

Specialized educational programming includes the Learning for Independence Program (LFI) and the School and Community Based Program (SCB). Both programs offer the students enrolled the opportunity to receive instruction based upon the specific cognitive and behavioral needs. The students in these programs receive functional life skills instruction, basic academics in the context of the general education program, a continuum of opportunities to participate within the general education program, and opportunities for the students to interact with their non-disabled peers in the arts and physical education classes. These programs serve students with multiple disabilities.

Baker Instructional Program

The Baker Middle School instructional program consists of a total of seven (7) classes. Educational growth and program continuity is maintained through a combination of required, recommended, and elective courses. A list of the required and elective offerings for the 2012-2013 school year, by grade level, is as follows:

SIXTH GRADE

Required Courses

English
Mathematics
Reading
Science
Social Studies
Physical Education/Health

Arts Electives

Unified Arts Rotations
Band Grade 6
Intermediate Orchestra
Chorus

SEVENTH GRADE

Required Courses

English
Mathematics
Science
Social Studies
Physical Education/Health

Arts Electives

Unified Arts Rotations
Intermediate Band
Concert Band
Advanced Orchestra (Strings)
Chorus

Academic Electives

Spanish 1 A/B
FY Spanish 1A
Read 180

EIGHTH GRADE

Required Courses

English
Mathematics
Science
Social Studies
Physical Education/Health

Arts Electives

Art
Computer Applications
TV Studio
Multimedia and Visual Comm.
Family and Consumer Sciences
Experiencing Theatre 8
Concert Band
Advanced Orchestra (Strings)
Chorus

Academic Electives

Spanish 1 A/B
FY Spanish 1B
Spanish 2 A/B
Read 180

6th Grade Course Description List

Guidelines for English and Reading Placement

Students are academically grouped for instruction in reading. Recommendations for all incoming sixth grade students are based on the following criteria:

- Recommendation of the fifth-grade language arts teacher
- Achievement in class as indicated by the language arts grades
- Results of MSA (Maryland School Assessment) and MAP-R (Measures of Academic Progress in Reading)

English 6

This course integrates the five English/ language arts processes (reading, writing, listening, speaking, and viewing) and the two contents (language and literature) in a thematic organization of four units. Rigor and challenge are essential components of the instructional approach to English 6. Students will read, discuss, and analyze complex texts.

Students in English 6 examine language and literature in the context of four thematic units: Foundations, Adventures, Challenges and Barriers, and Choices. Students read, analyze, and study different genres related to each of the themes and complete required common tasks. Anchor texts include multi-cultural, contemporary, and classic titles such as *Maniac Magee*, *Where the Red Fern Grows*, *Holes*, *Taking Sides*, and *White Mountains*. The common tasks focus primarily on the writing process for four types of writing—textual analysis, argument, research and synthesis, creative and reflective—and they include the use of information, word processing, and presentation technology to address a variety of language skills.

Students have opportunities to present their work orally and through the medium of technology. Instruction in reading and writing strategies, grammar, and vocabulary is embedded in every unit. All students develop portfolios and revisit their compositions as they work to strengthen writing skills. English 6 prepares students—through activities integrated into each thematic unit—for formal county, state, and national assessments.

Teachers will address the elements of each unit through the newly revised English/Language Arts Instructional Guide for Grade 6. The guide identifies the enduring understandings and essential questions of each unit and serves as a basis for the development of lesson plans.

Advanced English 6

Advanced English 6 is designed for able and motivated students with a lively interest in the power and versatility of language. In preparation for advanced middle and high school English courses, students read challenging texts written in various time periods and rhetorical contexts.

Students develop their ability to express ideas with clarity and precision by writing increasingly complex compositions for a variety of purposes, including literary analysis, persuasion, and research. Students participate in extensions of the four core sixth grade English units. Like their English 6 counterparts, students will maintain a writing portfolio. However, a special emphasis is placed on in-depth analysis of narrative literature, continued development of higher level thinking skills, experience with all forms of writing, and a variety of vocabulary building activities. This rigorous program requires independent reading of several books, and the ability to reflect and write critically about them. Frequently, the content and topics of the advanced courses are the same as the on-level classes, but the depth of study, or the expression of the understanding, or the product from the learning is more challenging. It is expected that students will maintain at least a “B” average in this course.

Reading 6

The Reading 6 curriculum focuses on building, refining, and extending reading strategies learned in elementary school. Students learn to personalize effective reading strategies for understanding while they read increasingly more complex and challenging middle school texts. Comprehension is a key focus, including reading beyond the literal level. Students apply strategies to expository materials such as science and social studies textbooks, newspaper articles, and biographical essays. Students then extend their strategies to the study of mythology. During this unit, vocabulary strategies are developed to incorporate etymologies, word parts, synonyms, and antonyms. Reading 6 prepares students for the demands of middle and high school courses and assessments.

Reading 6 G/T

The Reading 6 Gifted and Talented (GT) pathway includes expository comprehension strategies to help students organize, synthesize, and extend their understanding of increasingly difficult content-related texts. More emphasis is placed on drawing conclusions, making inferences, and supporting evaluations to prepare students for high school and college. The Reading 6 GT texts themselves are more challenging and includes *The Children’s Homer*. Vocabulary is examined and expanded through in-depth analysis of concept relationships, word structure, etymology, context clues, synonyms and antonyms, as well as application.

Advanced World Studies 6

The sixth grade world studies program is the first year of a two year sequential program in world studies. This program is organized for studying the concept of civilization. This course focuses primarily on the environment, technology, economy, culture, and social groups of ancient civilizations in Egypt, Greece, Rome, and China. The world studies curriculum places strong emphasis on the development of map and globe skills,

reference skills, and the application of reading and writing skills. The skills of historical thinking form the backbone of this course. Skills are built through the use of Document Based Inquiry (DBQ) tasks.

Investigations in Science 6 (IS6)

IS6 is a problem/project based curriculum. Instruction is interwoven around a relevant problem/project to allow a focus for student learning. Students engage in minds-on inquiry and hands-on explorations, productive discourse and purposeful reading and writing. Units studied in IS6 center around topics related to ecosystems, diversity and adaptation of organisms, forces and motion, energy, and light and sound. Students engage in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) in order to propose solutions to identified problems.

Outdoor and Environmental Education

As part of the science curriculum, every Grade 6 MCPS student has the opportunity to participate in outdoor and environmental learning through authentic, engaging, and interdisciplinary experiences at the Residential Outdoor and Environmental Education Program. The course of study does the following:

- Provides students with field experiences where scientific processes are used to investigate the environment, and where components of the MCPS Grade 6 curriculum are taught in a real-world setting. Students actively participate in Chesapeake Bay watershed lessons, including stream quality analysis and an in-depth study of predator-prey relationships. Using the natural world as both a laboratory and classroom, literacy and mathematical skills are integrated into the outdoor education experiences.
- Engages students in learning experiences during which they apply classroom knowledge and practice problem-solving strategies.
- Fosters inquiry, collaboration, and thinking in an atmosphere that utilizes various learning modalities and allows for informal and formative assessment.
- Builds positive interpersonal relationships as students learn and practice positive human relations skills with their peers and teachers.
- Encourages students to be active stewards of the environment in their daily life.

Students will participate in a MCPS required SSL lesson/project. Upon completion of the SSL project students will receive 10 SSL hours. MCPS requires a minimum of 75 SSL hours for graduation.

At the Grade 6 Outdoor and Environmental Education Program, students stay in dormitory-style housing at one of three sites. There is a fee charged for this program, set by the Board of Education, but funds exist for any student who may have difficulty meeting the financial requirements of the program. All students are strongly encouraged to attend the residential outdoor and environmental education experience.

7th Grade Course Description List

Guidelines for English Placement

- Recommendation of the sixth grade English and Reading teachers
- Achievement in class as indicated by the language arts grades
- Results of MSA (Maryland School Assessment) and MAP-R (Measures of Academic Progress in Reading) — placement in Advanced English requires advanced scores on MSA and MAP-R

English 7

This course integrates the five English/ language arts processes (reading, writing, listening, speaking, and viewing) and the two contents (language and literature) in a thematic organization of four units. It builds on the students' experiences in English 6 but involves greater rigor and challenge in its approach to the study of English.

Students in English 7 examine language and literature in the context of the challenges people face. The four thematic units are Identity, A Sense of Place, Voices from the Past, and Imagination. Students read, analyze, and study different genres related to each of the themes and complete required common tasks. Anchor texts include multicultural, contemporary, and classic titles such as *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, *The Outsiders*, *The Call of the Wild*, *The Great Gilly Hopkins*, *The Cay*, *Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The common tasks focus primarily on the writing process for four types of writing—textual analysis, argument, research and synthesis, creative and reflective—and they include the use of information, word processing, and presentation technology to address a variety of language skills.

Students have opportunities to present their work orally and through the medium of technology. Instruction in reading and writing strategies, grammar, and vocabulary is embedded in every unit. All students develop portfolios and revisit their compositions as they work to strengthen their writing skills. English 7 prepares students—through activities integrated into each thematic unit—for formal county, state, and national assessments.

Teachers will address the elements of each unit through the newly revised English/Language Arts Instructional Guide for Grade 7. The guide identifies the enduring understandings and essential questions of each unit and serves as a basis for the development of lesson plans.

Advanced English 7

Advanced English 7 is designed for the highly motivated and academically talented student who read and writes above grade level. It integrates the content and processes of the regular English program and addresses the needs of the more mature reader and writer. Throughout the course, students are challenged with anchor texts that require them to read independently above grade level, successfully complete assignments of a greater level of complexity, and display increased higher order intellectual skills. In particular, rigorous instructional practices place an emphasis on inferential thinking. Students develop their ability to express ideas with clarity and precision by writing increasingly complex compositions for a variety of purposes, including literary analysis, persuasion, and research. Frequently, the content and topics of the advanced courses are the same as the on-level classes, but the depth of study, or the expression of the understanding, or the product from the learning is more challenging. In preparation for Advanced English 8 and advanced high school English courses, students read challenging texts written in various time periods and rhetorical contexts. Students in this program must demonstrate strong study skills and maintain at least a “B” average throughout the year.

Advanced World Studies 7

The seventh grade world studies program is the second phase of a two year sequential program in world studies. During the first nine weeks the focus will be on patterns of conflict and power in feudal times. The key element will be the examination of feudalism as a political/economic system. The second unit will examine the role of trade in Africa in the past as well as the present. Key elements include ancient African kingdoms and the spread of Islam. The third unit, Meso-America, will focus on the Aztecs and Incas. The final unit, the interconnected world, is an examination of Europe's awakening through exploration. Settlement of the world is also part of the final unit. The skills of historical thinking form the backbone of this course. Skills are built through the use of Document Based Inquiry (DBQ) tasks.

Investigations in Science 7 (IS7)

Like IS6, IS7 is a problem/project-based curriculum. Instruction is interwoven around a relevant problem/project to allow a focus for student learning. Students engage in minds-on inquiry and hands-on explorations, productive discourse, and purposeful reading and writing. Units studied in IS7 center around topics related to biochemistry, genetics, structure and function, and biotechnology. Students engage in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) in order to propose solutions to identified problems.

8th Grade Course Description List

Guidelines for English Placement

- Recommendation of the seventh grade English teacher
- Achievement in class as indicated by the English grades
- Results of MSA (Maryland School Assessment) and MAP-R (Measures of Academic Progress in Reading)—placement in Advanced English requires advanced scores on MSA and MAP-R

English 8

This course integrates the five English/ language arts processes (reading, writing, listening, speaking, and viewing) and the two contents (language and literature) in a thematic organization of four units. It builds on students' experiences in English 6 and 7 and involves greater rigor and challenge in instruction. There is also an increasing complexity in the material selected as the foundation for the study of English as students prepare for the high school experience and the Maryland State Department of Education's High School Assessment (HSA). This rigor may be further extended in the William and Mary language arts program in the Utopia unit. The William and Mary program offers students opportunities for stretching their minds by reading, discussing, and analyzing complex texts.

Students in English 8 examine language and literature in the context of exploring the world and new ideas. The four thematic units are Journeys, Community, Responsibility, and Discoveries. Students read, analyze, and study different genres related to each of the themes and complete required common tasks. Anchor texts include multicultural, contemporary, and classic titles such as *Canyons*, *The Hobbit*, *The Giver*, *Animal Farm*, *Dacey's Song*, *The Pearl*, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, *As You Like It*, and *Out of the Dust*.

The common tasks focus primarily on the writing process for four types of writing—textual analysis, argument, research and synthesis, creative and reflective—and they include the use of information, word processing, and presentation technology to address a variety of language skills. Students are given opportunities to present their work both orally and with the use of technology.

Instruction in reading and writing strategies, grammar, and vocabulary is embedded in every unit. All students develop portfolios and revisit their compositions as they work to strengthen their writing skills. English 8 prepares students—through activities integrated into each thematic unit—for formal county, state, and national assessments.

Teachers will address the elements of each unit through the newly revised English/Language Arts Instructional Guide for Grade 8. The guide identifies the enduring

understandings and essential questions of each unit and serves as a basis for the development of lesson plans.

Advanced English 8

This course is designed for able and motivated students with a lively interest in the power and versatility of language. In preparation for advanced high school English courses, students read challenging texts written in various time periods and rhetorical contexts, making interdisciplinary connections with historical events and concepts developed in their Grade 8 U.S. History class. Students develop their ability to express ideas with clarity and precision by writing increasingly complex compositions for a variety of purposes, including literary analysis, persuasion, and research. Students who successfully complete both semesters and pass the semester B final exam will earn one high school **elective** credit toward graduation..

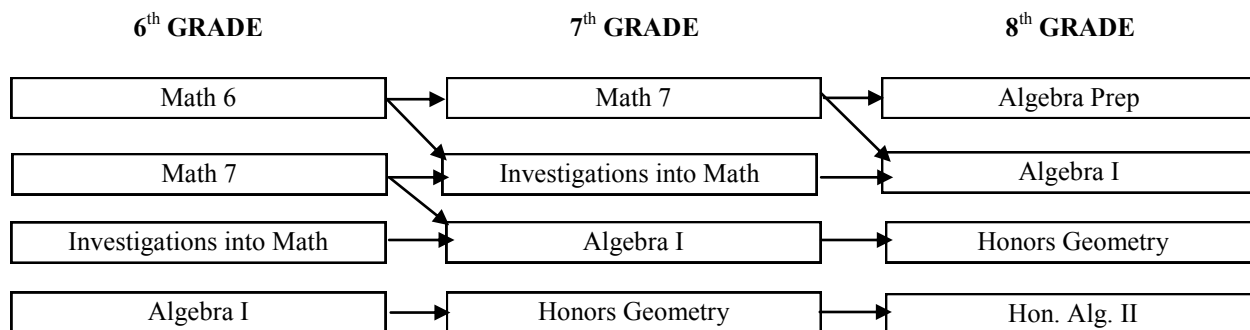
Advanced U.S. History 8

The 8th grade curriculum is the first part of a two-year sequence in U.S. History. The second part of the curriculum will be taught during 9th grade at the high school. The 8th grade curriculum will focus on United States history from the end of the French and Indian War (1763) through the American Civil War and Reconstruction (1877). Particular attention is paid to the American Revolution during unit one, the establishment of the Constitution during unit 2, westward expansion, sectionalism, relocation of Native Americans, industrialization, and immigration during unit 3, and the Civil War and reconstruction during the final unit. The skills of historical thinking form the backbone of this course. Skills are built through the use of Document Based Inquiry (DBQ) tasks.

Investigation in Earth Space Systems

IESS is a problem/project based curriculum. Instruction is interwoven around a relevant problem/project to allow a focus on student learning. This course emphasizes the dynamic processes of systems on and inside the Earth and its surrounding space environment. Topics include the interrelated systems—hydrosphere, cryosphere, geosphere, biosphere, and atmosphere.

Baker MS Math Course Transition – SY 2012-2013



Middle School Mathematics Course 6

This course extends students' understanding of algebra to include identifying and extending arithmetic and geometric sequences, writing and evaluating formulas and equations, and graphing in all four quadrants on the coordinate plane. Students find angle sums and do constructions with 2D figures. They develop and use formulas to find the area of 2D figures, including circles. Frequency tables and circle graphs become the focus of organizing and analyzing data, as students explore misuse of data and measures of central tendency. Students begin to compare theoretical and experimental probability, as well as work with rational numbers and exponents. Computation includes all operations with decimals and fractions, order of operations, and ratios and rates. Students in Math 6 will go on to either Math 7 or Investigations into Mathematics the following year.

Middle School Mathematics Course 7

This course extends students' understanding of numbers and computation as they learn how to do operations with integers. They connect their knowledge of ratios to the development of proportional reasoning. Students learn how to apply their geometric and measurement skills with increased precision. Other areas of focus include functional relationships, arithmetic and geometric sequences, and data analysis and representation using box and whisker plot, and scatter plots. The development of concepts and skills continues to be fostered through communication and reasoning about everyday situations. This course is for students who have completed the kindergarten to Grade 5 mathematics curriculum as well as the indicators in Math 6. Students in Math 7 will go on to Algebra Prep, Investigations into Mathematics, or Algebra the following year.

Algebra Prep

Algebra Prep extends students' understanding of numbers to include rational and irrational numbers in the real number system. One goal is to have all students develop computational fluency of real numbers. All concepts and skills are presented in the context of problem solving that

requires the use of reasoning and communication. Areas of focus include multiple representations of linear function, data analysis and representation, probability experiments and simulations, and geometric properties and relationships between two- and three-dimensional figures. Algebra Prep also previews concepts that are assessed on the Algebra/Data Analysis High School Assessment. This course is for students who have completed Math 7. Students in this course will take Algebra 1 the following year.

Investigations into Mathematics (IM)

This course provides rigorous study for students who have demonstrated proficiency in the content of Math 7 in Grade 5 or 6. The goal of this course is to ensure readiness for algebra and beyond. IM addresses all of the content of Algebra Prep at a deeper and more enriched level. Students extend their understanding of numbers to include rational and irrational numbers in the real number system and further develop computational fluency of real numbers. Areas of focus include multiple representations of linear function, data analysis and representation, probability experiments and simulations, and geometric properties and relationships between two- and three-dimensional figures. IM also previews concepts that are assessed on the Algebra/Data Analysis High School Assessment. The course includes additional concepts, such as set theory and modular arithmetic, which further develop students' abstract thinking. Students successful in this course will take Algebra 1 the following year.

Algebra I A/B

This course examines the basic structure of real numbers, algebraic expressions, and functions. The topics studied are linear equations, inequalities, functions and systems, quadratic equations and functions, polynomial expressions, data analysis, probability, and properties of functions. Mathematical modeling of real-life problems and problem solving are major themes of the course. Students successful in this course will take Honors Geometry the following year. High school credit is given upon successful completion of the full-year Algebra 1,

including passing the final exam to receive credit for the course. Students that successfully complete this course by passing both semesters and semester B exam will satisfy the high school Algebra I requirement. The grade earned in the class and the HSA score are reported on the student's high school transcript as well as included in the student's high school grade point average.

Honors Geometry I

(Prerequisite: Successful completion of Algebra I)
Honors Geometry provides a rigorous, in-depth look at the topics studied in the Geometry course. Geometry is studied as a mathematical system through the deductive development of relationships in the plane and in space. Students formalize their understanding of geometric concepts, including congruence and similarity, circle charts, secants and tangent segments, parallel and perpendicular lines, angle and side measures in polygons, proof, logic transformations, the Pythagorean Theorem, constructions, coordinate geometry, and surface area and volume of solids. Honors Geometry includes an additional unit, Trigonometry. Students successful in this course will take Honors Algebra 2 the following year. High school credit is given upon successful completion of the full year of Honors Geometry, including passing the final exam. Students that successfully complete this course by passing both semesters and semester B exam will satisfy the high school geometry requirement. The grade earned in the class is reported on the student's high school transcript as well as included in the student's high school Grade Point Average.

Honors Algebra II

Honors Algebra 2 provides a rigorous, in-depth look at the topics studied in the Algebra 2 course. Algebra 2 is the study of the complex number system and functions. Real-world problems are discussed, represented, and solved using advanced algebraic techniques, incorporating technology. The properties and algebra of functions, including polynomial, exponential, logarithmic, piecewise, radical, and rational, are analyzed and applied, as well as conics, matrices, systems of equations, sequences, and series. Students successful in this course will take Honors Pre-Calculus the following year. High school credit is given upon successful completion of the full year of Honors Algebra 2, including passing the final exam. Students that successfully complete this course by passing both semesters and semester B exam will be automatically granted the high school Algebra II credit. This course is taken at Damascus High School. The grade earned in the class is reported on the student's high school transcript as well as included in the student's high school grade point average.

Physical Education

Physical Education 6, 7, 8

Middle school physical education instruction focuses on standards-based content that has been categorized into three measurement topics: health-related fitness, movement skills and concepts, and personal and social responsibility. By the end of the year, students should know and be able to do the following:

- Health-Related Fitness
- Movement Skills and Concepts
- Personal and Social Responsibility

The learning tasks in physical education emphasize and teach problem-solving and decision-making skills. Middle School student participate in learning tasks that are organized into personal development and tactical games activities. These activities provide opportunities for student to learn specific criteria aligned to each measurement topic. Personal development activities center on creative expression or individual gains through participation in learning tasks. Tactical games activities concentrate on the application of tactics and strategies to the learning tasks. Students receive instruction and tactical game activities in the following areas.

- Invasion
- Net/Wall
- Target
- Personal Development

Health Education 6, 7, 8

Comprehensive Health Education promotes positive health-related attitudes and behaviors that support self-reliance and self-regulation while developing health literacy and lifelong wellness. Health-literate students have the knowledge, skills, and ability to maintain and enhance personal health and fitness; create and maintain safe environments; and access and utilize personal and community resources. Life skills emphasized throughout the program include setting goals; making decisions; identifying beliefs, attitudes, and motivations; assessing information; and advocating for personal, family, and community health.

Comprehensive health education includes the following seven units: mental and emotional health; tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs; nutrition and fitness; safety and injury prevention; family life and human sexuality; and disease prevention and control. Students receive nine weeks of health education. For grade 8 students a special emphasis on stress management and prevention of depression is included through Red Flags, a collaborative project with the Mental Health Association of Montgomery County.

Students will receive information about the family life and human sexuality unit and the disease prevention and control unit of instruction prior to the start of classroom

instruction. Information about pregnancy prevention and sexually transmitted diseases is included in Grade 8 health ed. Parents must sign a permission form checking “Yes” for their child to participate in these units of instruction. Parents who object to the content of the unit will check “No” on the parent permission form and the child will be excused from that unit. If excused, the child will complete an independent-study alternative unit of health education that does not include information about human sexuality or disease prevention, including HIV/AIDS.

Academic Electives

The goal of the MCPS foreign language program is to educate students in a language and culture in order to make them knowledgeable and active members of a global society. Students will learn to use foreign languages for meaningful communication in both spoken and written form. The foreign language program emphasizes language as it is used in real-life situations that students are most likely to encounter. All foreign language classes taught in the middle school are high school credit bearing courses and are the same classes offered in the MCPS high schools. The guidelines and expectations are the same for middle school students as for the high school students.

Students must pass the semester exams to earn credit for the course. Learning a foreign language is an enriching and rigorous undertaking that requires a serious commitment on the part of the student.

Foreign language enrollment for grade 7 and grade 8 students will be based on student recommendations for reading or math support classes. Student who have been recommended for a Reading class may not select a foreign language elective.

Guidelines for GT Spanish 1A/B Placement

- Recommendation & Initials of the sixth grade English teacher
- Achieving A’s and B’s in English and Reading Grade 6
- Able to handle the fast paced curriculum

GT Spanish 1A/B

This full year course is accelerated and enriched course that combines the Spanish 1 A/B courses. Students who successfully complete Spanish 1 continue on to Spanish 2 in the next semester. Students who select Spanish 1 are expected to demonstrate strong English/language arts skills. A countywide exam will be administered at the end of semester one and at the end of the school year to qualify for the high school foreign language credit.

In Level 1A students begin to learn to communicate orally and in written form about daily life. Emphasis is on vocabulary development, simple grammatical structures, and the basic culture of the people. Students are

encouraged to use the language beyond the school setting and keep informed of current events in countries where the target language is spoken.

In Level 1B students continue to develop oral and written communication skills. Emphasis remains focused on vocabulary development, simple grammatical structures, the application of language skills to daily life, and the basic culture of the people. Students are encouraged to use the language beyond the school setting and keep informed of current events in countries where the target language is spoken. High school credit is given upon successful completion of levels 1A and 1B, including passing the final exam.

Full Year Spanish 1A (Grade 7 only)

- Recommendation & Initials of the sixth grade English teacher
- Achieving As and Bs in English and Reading (Grade 6)
- Not in Reading or need support in Reading

In this full year Spanish course students learn to communicate orally and in written form to derive meaning from the written and spoken language. The course emphasis is on vocabulary development and conversations through simple grammatical structures taught as a means to understand the language and produce meaningful utterances. Throughout the course, students apply language skills to real-life communication. Students learn to communicate in simple terms about issues that are relevant to real life application, for example school and community connections. Students are introduced to the culture of the people whose language they are learning as it relates to different contexts or situations in which they might find themselves expected to communicate. A countywide exam will be administered to all students at the end of the school year. The next course in the sequence is Full Year Spanish 1B.

Full Year Spanish 1B

Prerequisite: Successful completion of FY Spanish 1A
Spanish 1B continues the sequence of learning in Spanish 1A. Students continue to develop skills with oral and written communication and deriving meaning from the written and spoken language. The emphasis on vocabulary development is continued in this course. Throughout the course students continue to apply language skills to relevant, real-life applications, for example family, home and community connections. Students learn about the culture of the people whose language they are learning as it relates to various contexts or situations they might find themselves expected to communicate. Making comparisons between their language and culture and that of the foreign language they are learning is also developed. An interdisciplinary focus relating to the content they are learning in other academic areas is also part of the course experiences. Students are encouraged to

use the language within and beyond the school setting and to keep informed of current events in those countries where the target language is spoken. The prerequisite for this class is the completion of Spanish 1A. A countywide final exam will be administered to all students at the end of the school year. Together the sequence of courses, 1A and 1B, are equivalent to one high school credit. Students expand their vocabulary and learn increasingly complex expressions and structures for written and oral communication to discuss the past. The culture of the people is examined in greater depth. Students continue to make comparisons between the language and culture studied. They are encouraged to use the language beyond the school setting and keep informed of current events in countries where the target language is spoken. High school credit is given upon successful completion of the full year of level 2, including passing the final exam.

GT Spanish 2A/B

Prerequisite: Successful completion of Spanish 1 A/B
Students in this course will continue to develop their listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. The themes studied in Spanish 1 are expanded to include more extensive vocabulary instruction and more advanced grammar instruction. The culture of the people whose language is being studied is explored in greater detail. The prerequisite for this class is the completion of Spanish 1. A countywide exam will be administered at the end of the first semester and at the end of the school year for students to earn the high school foreign language credit.

Enrollment in Spanish 3 or higher will occur in collaboration with Damascus High School.

Please keep in mind that, while taking and passing 2 credits of a foreign language fulfills one of the MCPS graduation requirements, an increasing number of colleges are increasing their entrance requirement to a minimum of three credits of a foreign language.

Arts Electives

Electives will be offered based on the number of students choosing a particular elective and is based upon staffing availability. Students should make their elective decisions carefully.

6th GRADE UNIFIED ARTS ROTATION

Sixth grade students begin their introduction to the arts through nine-week rotations. The Arts Program is a sequential, general study of the arts designed to expose students to various subject areas. The goal of arts education is to nurture their talents, interests, and to develop a lifetime appreciation of the arts. **Arts rotation course offerings are dependent upon staffing and student enrollment.**

Intro Computer 6 (Quarter)

In this course, students will examine the power of images in our day-to-day lives, and what they communicate to us. Students will study what makes an effective photograph, and then use a still digital camera to capture images. Students will also learn how to use digital image manipulation software on the computer to make images more powerful. Students will study effective web design, and build a web page to showcase their digital photography to the community.

World Beat (Quarter)

This Music class is an extension of the elementary general music curriculum addressing the unique needs, interests, and abilities of the mid-level student. Through sequential and spiral instruction, sixth graders acquire, revisit, and apply the music and aesthetic skills that allow them to become increasingly independent music makers. Instructional activities will include units which will include beginning theory of music, keyboard, as well as an introduction to the World Music Drumming curriculum. Students will also explore the varied styles of popular music, history, and culture.

Art 6 (Quarter)

Students apply their knowledge of line, color, shape form and texture to the creation of art works using a variety of materials. They begin to understand how artists organize art elements and principles to create drawings, paintings, sculptures, prints, commercial art and crafts. Students are taught safe and proper use of art tools, materials and the art room. Through projects, students investigate the arts and crafts of other cultures, identify art careers, heighten their sensitivity to the environment, and begin to apply criteria for recognizing quality in works of art. Students learn to incorporate themes and subjects from daily life in their work and become aware of the interdisciplinary connections between art and other subjects. **Materials fee to be determined (not to exceed \$3).**

Awareness of Language and Culture (Quarter)

Awareness of Language and Culture is a sixth grade course which helps students to understand language, why people use language, how language works, and the importance of language in today's world. This course lays a foundation for a successful language experience in seventh and eighth grade. Students explore verbal and nonverbal communication and gain an appreciation of linguistic and cultural diversity.

Beginning Theatre 6 (Quarter)

The purpose and goal of the class is to develop effective communication skills through the use of Body, Voice, Mind, and Feeling. Structured activities will provide opportunities to develop skills in listening, following directions, cooperation, observation, body control, concentration, critical thinking, problem solving, and imagination.

7th GRADE UNIFIED ARTS ROTATION

In the seventh grade, students continue their exploration in the arts, progressing through four nine-week courses. Students are presented opportunities to build on experiences introduced in the sixth grade arts program.

Arts rotation course offerings are dependent upon staffing and student enrollment.

Art 7 (Quarter)

Students follow a series of art activities that develop their skills in using the art elements and design principles when creating, discussing, and critiquing art. Observation and drawing skills improve as students learn ways to draw still life or posed figures using basic shapes and proportional relationships. Students develop an awareness of the effects of light and shadow on subjects and learn techniques to create contrast, unity, variety, and emphasis. Through studies of art from various cultures and historical periods, students become aware of unique styles, universal subjects, and themes. Many themes selected for art activities relate to other academic subjects. **Materials fee to be determined (not to exceed \$3).**

Computer 7 (Quarter)

In this course, students will examine the power of images in our day-to-day lives, and what they communicate to us. Students will study what makes an effective photograph, and then use a still digital camera to capture images. Students will also learn how to use digital image manipulation software on the computer to make images more powerful. Students will study effective web design, and build a web page to showcase their digital photography to the community.

Music Investigations (Quarter)

Music Investigations is a continuation of the sixth grade general music curriculum addressing the unique needs, interests, and abilities of the mid-level student. Through sequential and spiral instruction, seventh graders acquire, revisit, and apply the music and aesthetic skills that allow them to become increasingly independent music makers. Instructional activities will include units which will include theory of music, skills in piano-keyboard, as well as continued work with the World Music Drumming curriculum. An emphasis on creativity and composing skills using the classroom instruments is an essential part of the curriculum. Students will also explore the varied styles of popular music, history, and culture.

Contemporary Communications (Quarter)

The Contemporary Communication course provides students an opportunity to be a part of “real world” working experiences. Throughout the course students will continue to build upon their skills working as a team, be a productive member of a team, time management, strategies and problem solving skills. Students will use

PowerPoint, Publisher, Work, Audacity, Movie Maker, Flash, and Fireworks to complete projects in class.

Exploring Theatre 7 (Quarter)

Exploring Theatre 7 is a quarter, activity-oriented course designed to introduce students to the basic elements of the theatre experience. These include the fundamental techniques of performance, self-expression and confidence-building, group interaction and cooperation. These elements are the foundation for future study of drama and the basis for exploration of theatre as an art form.

8th GRADE SEMESTER ELECTIVES

Art 8 (Semester)

This course focuses on one or two selected activities during a semester. Emphasis is placed on three-dimensional sculpture, printmaking and commercial art (including computer generated art). In addition to the hands-on experiences, students will also explore the relationship of what they are doing in the classroom to that of artists within the field. The safe use of tools and materials is continually reinforced. **Materials fee to be determined (not to exceed \$3).**

Computer Applications and Web Design 8 (Semester)

This course is designed for students with a moderate to high experience with computer applications. Students will extend their knowledge of and use of the capabilities of word processing applications. Students will also learn how to use spreadsheets to perform calculations and create effective graphs and charts to display data. Students will learn HTML and web authoring software to produce a web site, and to serve as a web producer for the Baker web site. At the completion of the course, students will be able to produce an electronic portfolio, featuring your best work.

TV Studio 8 (Semester)

TV studio productions is a project based class designed to educate the student on the various tools, computer programs, methods, and skills needed to create video productions. The content includes analysis and reflection on broadcast media to use in original, creative products. The class will record, edit, and produce informative video segments for the morning announcements to include sporting events and teams, school and community events and student and staff interviews. Students will receive instruction in computer and stop motion animation. They will be trained on video equipment, lighting, and special effects. They will become competent with the computer programs such as pinnacle studio and movie maker.

Multimedia and Visual Communications (Semester)

This course focuses on incorporating the elements of text, image, sound, speech, video, and computer programming in Web-based applications. Student will explore the roles

of current digital technologies in communication. Students will use these technologies to enhance information, resulting in effective communication through interactive projects. Course outcomes are based on national and state technology standards such as the International Society for Technology in Education, the National Workforce Center for Emerging Technologies, and the Maryland State Technology Literacy Standards.

Family and Consumer Sciences (Semester)

Family and Consumer Sciences (FACS) programs focus on processes and skills that enhance individual, family, and societal well-being. Programs reflect the National Standards for FACS Education and integrate math, science, English and social studies. An inquiry-based curriculum encourages students to investigate and solve authentic problems. Students learn to use communication and critical thinking skills as well as current technologies to make informed decisions.

Experiencing Theatre 8 (Semester)

Experiencing Theatre 8 is a one-semester, performance-oriented course in which students investigate and experience aspects of production, aesthetics, criticism and theatre genre, within the framework of classroom presentations. Students develop the fundamental techniques of performance through activities involving stage movement, pantomime, voice, oral interpretation, theatre games, role-playing, improvisation, scene study and performance.

Baker Middle School Music Program

Electives will be offered based on the number of students choosing a particular elective and is based upon staffing availability. Students should make their elective decisions carefully.

6th Grade Band (Full Year)

This class is made up of students with prior band instrument experience. Students without band experience or students who are interested in changing instruments should contact the director before registering. This class focuses on the development of good tone production and technique. This group gives three or four mandatory evening concerts per year.

Intermediate Band 7 (Full Year)

This course is open to seventh grade woodwind, brass, and percussion students who have at least two years of experience or by teacher recommendation. Students will focus on refining the fundamentals of good performance with emphasis on style, intonation and technique. This group performs three to five mandatory concerts a year including participation in the MCPS Band Festival.

Concert Band 8 (Full Year)

This course is open to eighth grade woodwind, brass and percussion students with at least three years of experience who demonstrate a high level of proficiency on their instrument and/or by teacher recommendation. Students will rehearse and perform challenging band literature and strive to achieve a high level of musicianship by working extensively on dynamics, style technique, breath support, rhythm and intonation. This group performs five to ten mandatory concerts each year, including festivals and field trips.

Intermediate Orchestra 6 (Full Year)

This class is designed for students who have had previous elementary school experience with a string instrument (violin, viola, cello, or string bass). Students without orchestra experience or students who are interested in changing instruments should contact the director before registering. This class focuses on the development of good tone production and technique. The school has a limited number of violas, cellos and string basses to loan to students who need an instrument. Several evening performances are a required part of this class.

Advanced Orchestra for 7th and 8th grade (Full Year)

This class is designed for students who have had previous experience with a string instrument (violin, viola, cello, or string bass). The school has a limited number of violas, cellos, and string basses to loan to students. Several evening performances and participation in the MCPS Orchestra Festival are a required part of this class.

Chorus A for 6th and 7th grade (Full Year)

Chorus A is open to any student who enjoys singing regardless of previous choral singing experience. Students will develop their vocal skills and musical competence by practicing and performing various choral literature pieces at a beginning level. Emphasis is placed on musicianship skills, ear training, as well as rhythmic and melodic sight reading proficiency. Students perform in concerts for the school and community as well as in festivals as a requirement of this course. Students participating in Chorus A are eligible to audition for MCPS Honors Chorus.

Chorus B for 7th and 8th grade (Full Year)

Chorus B is open to students with previous choral singing experience at the middle school level. Students will continue to develop their vocal skills and musical competence by practicing and performing various choral literature pieces at an intermediate level. Emphasis is placed on musicianship skills, ear training, as well as rhythmic and melodic sight reading proficiency. Students perform in concerts for the school and community as well as in festivals as a requirement of this course. Students participating in Chorus B are eligible to audition for MCPS Honors Chorus.