

Ridgeview Middle School

PROGRAM OF STUDIES: 2009 – 2010

The Ridgeview Middle School instructional program follows the Montgomery County Public Schools Middle Schools curriculum, with an ongoing focus on increasing the level of challenge for all students. Students are assigned to balanced interdisciplinary teams of approximately 125 students, five academic teachers, a counselor, and an administrator. The 6th grade guidance counselor and the administrator follow the students through grades 7 and 8, allowing them to establish strong relationships and communications with both students and families. The team structure enhances the school's ability to provide a coordinated instructional program to meet the learning needs of each child, effectively monitor a student's academic and social progress, and to facilitate communication with parents.

Sixth Grade Courses

REQUIRED SUBJECTS

- **English or ESOL**
- **Reading (or Spanish 1A/B GT)**
- **Mathematics**
- **Science**
- **World Studies**
- **Physical Education/Health**

ELECTIVE COURSES (*Choose one*)

- **Arts Rotation**
- **Chorus**
- **Band**
- **Strings**

REQUIRED COURSES

ENGLISH / ESOL

(Please note: All Ridgeview students are required to complete a summer reading assignment before the first day of school)

English 6

This course integrates the four English/Language arts processes (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) and the two contents (language and literature) in four thematic units: Foundations, Challenges and Adventures, Barriers, and Choices. Students read, analyze, and study a variety of different genres related to each of the themes and complete required common tasks. The common tasks focus primarily on the writing process, highlighting the informative, persuasive, narrative, and procedural intents. Students have many opportunities to present their work orally and through the medium of technology. Instruction in reading and writing strategies, grammar, and vocabulary is imbedded in every unit. Development of literary and interdisciplinary connections is encouraged. Language instruction, including grammar study, is based on individual student needs. Vocabulary is

developed through reading and a variety of relevant activities. Teachers use differentiation techniques in order to meet the needs of students of varying ability levels. All students develop portfolios and revisit their compositions as they work to strengthen their writing skills. English 6 prepares students through activities integrated into each thematic unit for state and local assessments. All sixth graders participate in the independent reading program called The Accelerated Reader.

English 6 GT

A rigorous curriculum and differentiated content and instruction challenge highly able students in English 6 GT. 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. All sixth graders participate in the independent reading program called The Accelerated Reader.

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)

In ESOL classes students learn basic English language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. ESOL students move through three levels of instruction, advancing through levels 1, 2, and 3 as their skills increase. Students learn communication and literacy skills to become independent learners. Students are pre-selected for ESOL classes using a county assessment process.

ESOL Level I: The introductory course for non-English speakers is designed to teach beginners English including reading, writing, listening, and speaking. The students learn about each other, themselves, and the world they live in. There is an emphasis on content area vocabulary development, pronunciation, and everyday conversational English. Students practice the present, past, and future tenses. They learn about their new country and compare new experiences with old ones. Several novels are read that tie in with personal growth.

ESOL Level II: The intermediate course is designed to help the student to understand and comfortably use intermediate vocabulary dealing with home and school life. Many novels are read that tie into interesting themes such as cultural roots and communities. Grammar in context is an important component of this level. Students continue to explore the world around them and identify their role and place in it using academic language.

ESOL Level III: The advanced course is designed to expand the basic and academic English language knowledge of the students. Increased fluency, expanded vocabulary, complex grammar functions, research and report skills, and a variety of writing styles and forms are emphasized.

Placement is based on scores received on a standardized test of English, teacher and ELL committee decision and ESOL grades.

READING

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. Students apply strategies to expository materials such as textbooks, newspaper articles, biographical essays and studies of mythology. 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. Comprehension is a key focus, including reading beyond the literal level.

Reading 6 GT

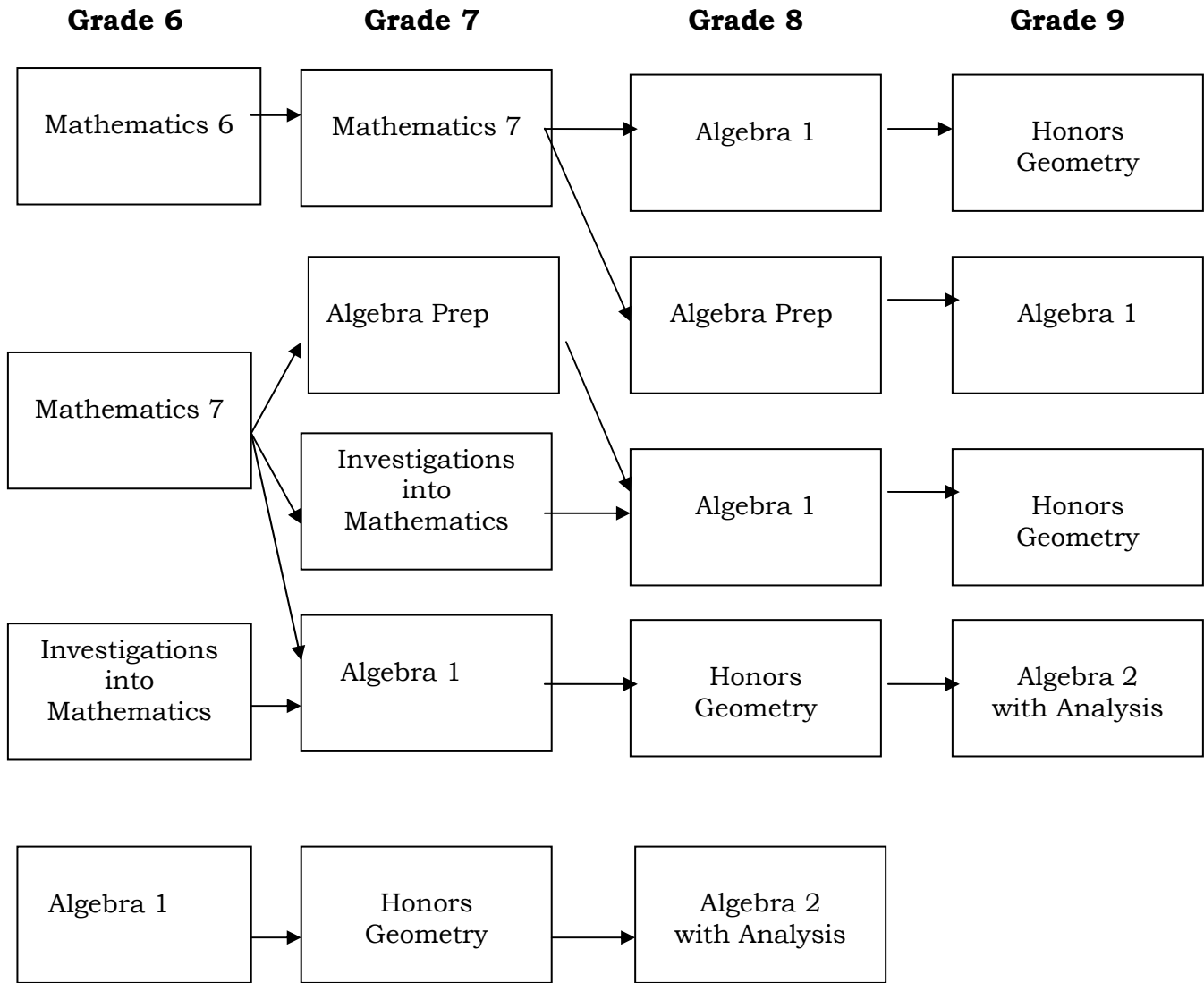
The Reading 6 GT program incorporates all aspects of the Reading 6 curriculum. However, it expands the regular program to include a more in-depth study of strategies, fast paced projects, and activities, independent learning, and accelerated instruction. Rigorous and differentiated content and instruction challenge highly able students. Reading 6 GT texts themselves are more challenging. Comprehension is a key focus, including reading beyond the literal level. It includes expository comprehension strategies to help students organize, synthesize and extend their understanding of increasingly difficult content related texts.

Reading Intervention

MCPS is committed to improving the reading ability of all students. Reading is the most basic skill that young adolescents need to develop for success in school and in preparation for life. **Read 180** and **Corrective Reading** are research based reading intervention programs that support and improve the performance of students who are reading below the proficient level.

MATHEMATICS

Montgomery County Public Schools Middle School Mathematics Sequence Flow Chart



(Please note: All Ridgeview students are required to complete a Math Review Packet before the first day of school.)

Mathematics 6

Math 6 is the on-level course for students in grade 6. This course is designed to extend students' understanding of numbers and computation to include fractions, decimals, and percents. All concepts are presented in a problem solving context requiring the use of reasoning and communication. Areas of focus include data representation and analysis, circle graphs, customary and metric measurement, geometric relationships, transformations, algebraic patterns, probability, fractions, decimals, and percents. Students in this course will go on to Middle School Math 7

or Investigations of Mathematics depending on demonstration of their mastery of the concepts. The course is designed to prepare students for Algebra I by Grade 8.

Mathematics 7

Math 7 is the above-level, GT math class for students in grade 6. Math 7 is designed to extend students' understanding of numbers and computation, to include integers and proportional reasoning. All concepts and skills are presented in the contexts of problem solving requiring the use of reasoning and communication. Areas of focus include functional relationships, arithmetic and geometric sequences, geometric precision, and data analysis. This course is designed for students who have successfully completed the Kindergarten to Grade 5 curriculum as well as the indicators in Mathematics 6. Students in Math 7 will go on to Algebra Prep, Investigations of Mathematics, or Algebra I the following year, depending on demonstration of their mastery of the concepts.

Investigations into Mathematics (IM)

This is an enriched course for mathematically accelerated students who have successfully completed the Kindergarten to Grade 5 curriculum, the indicators of the Middle School Math 6 course, and a majority of the Math 7 course indicators by the end of grade 5 or 6. Students successful in this course will take Algebra I the following year. The units of study include Patterns and Set Theory, Relations and Finite Operational Systems, Algebra Foundations, Real Number System, Data Analysis, Language of Algebra, Functions and Graphs, and Investigation of Three Dimensional Geometry. One of the goals of this class is to provide a theoretical view of the world to students while preparing them for Algebra I. Students learn both concrete and abstract mathematical concepts while improving their communication, thinking, and reasoning skills.

Algebra 1A/1B

Algebra 1A/1B is a high school level course. Students who successfully complete Algebra 1A/1B will receive high school credit. The Algebra 1A/1B grade will appear on a student's high school transcript. Algebra 1 A/B examines the basic structure of real numbers, algebraic expressions, data analysis, probability, and elementary properties of functions. Mathematical modeling of real-life problems and problem solving are major themes. A graphing calculator is used throughout the year. Students who complete Algebra in the 7th grade will take Honors Geometry in grade 8. **Students in Algebra will take the MCPS 2-hour Final Exams for Algebra 1A in January and Algebra 1B at the end of the school year. Students are also required to take the Algebra High School Assessment (HSA) at the end of the school year.***

**Please see general information section on high school credit requirements.*

SCIENCE

Science 6

The middle school science program allows students to investigate both the content and processes of science focusing on rigorous academic instruction. At each grade level, topics in earth science, biology, chemistry, and physics are interconnected to show students the relationships that exist among the sciences and the natural world. Inquiry and laboratory investigations are an integral part of the program. Problem solving and online investigations are used continually to allow students to investigate authentic problems and reinforce science concepts. The middle school science program was developed through a National Science Foundation grant and reflects the Maryland and National Science Content Standards. During the course, students study diversity and adaptations of organisms, Chesapeake Bay populations and ecosystems, force and motion, and energy and magnetism.

Cluster groups of identified high ability students are scheduled into each class. Teachers use a variety of instructional strategies to address the need for acceleration and enrichment and to provide all students with challenging and engaging science instruction. Adjustments in complexity and pacing are used to meet the needs of highly able students in the regular classroom.

WORLD STUDIES

World Studies 6

The revised middle school social studies curriculum is designed to provide students with a firm foundation in the structures and concepts of the systems of geography, economics, politics, and culture that exist in today's world as well the historical basis of those systems. Included in this foundation are the requisite skills necessary for students to independently acquire, interpret, evaluate, and communicate information. This foundation will help students build a more complex and comprehensive understanding of the systems and history of the United States and world in high school. There are two major strands that run through each unit. The first strand is specific present-day content in geography, economics, government, or culture. The second strand is always history. The history strand progresses chronologically by unit with ancient history to approximately 1000 CE in grade six. However, history is sometimes studied from the "present content" perspective. The four units of study include: Patterns of Settlement in the Ancient and Modern Worlds; Citizenship and Governance in Classical and Modern Times; The Impact of Economics: Change and Continuity in China; Cultural Systems Past and Present.

Cluster groups of identified high ability students are scheduled into each class. Teachers use a variety of instructional strategies to address the need for acceleration and enrichment and to provide all students with challenging and engaging world studies instruction. Adjustments in complexity and pacing are used to meet the needs of highly able students in the regular classroom.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION / HEALTH

Physical Education 6

Middle school students participate in a daily program of physical education that emphasizes team building, accountability, and positive interaction with the diverse population that surrounds them. By the end of Grade 6, students should be able to do the following:

- Demonstrate basic strategic concepts and psychomotor skills in team and individual activities.
- Demonstrate competency in rhythmic and creative movement activities.
- Work as a member of a group to accomplish a common goal.
- Display positive behavior and apply appropriate decision-making skills.
- Understand and practice proper safety habits and use of equipment and supplies.
- Participate in a variety of activities that can be applied to leisure hours throughout life.
- Set realistic personal fitness goals.

Health Education 6

All students receive nine weeks of health education in place of the nine-week physical education classes during one quarter of the school year. Instruction focuses on personal and social skill development and emphasizes the following key topics: Mental Health, Safety and Injury Prevention, and Project TNT (Towards No Tobacco Use).

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Please refer to **Special Education** information in ***“Did You Know”*** on page 5.

ELECTIVES

(Electives may not be changed after the second week of school.)

FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Spanish 1A/1B GT Grade 6

Spanish GT 1A/1B is an accelerated and intensive course that allows highly able students to complete a full level of foreign language study in one year, the equivalent of one year of high school Spanish. Students master the Spanish IA objectives in the first semester of sixth grade and continue to the Spanish IB curriculum in the second semester. Students develop the skills to communicate orally and in written form and derive meaning from written and spoken language. There is an emphasis on vocabulary development and mastery of grammatical structures needed for meaningful communication. Students learn to communicate about topics that involve them on a daily basis: new classes, new friends, getting acquainted, school, food, and are introduced to the culture of Spanish-speaking countries in relation to the theme areas they are studying. Students who

successfully complete Spanish 1 A/1B GT in grade 6 will go on to Spanish 2A/2B G/T in grade 7, and Spanish 3A/3B in grade 8. **Students will take the MCPS 2-hour Final Exam for Spanish 1A in January, and the Spanish 1B exam at the end of the school year.***

**Please see general information section on high school credit requirements.*

ARTS ROTATION

The arts rotation is a 9, 12, or 18 week rotation in which students explore various subjects offered in the rotation sequence. Students will have an opportunity to broaden their experience and determine which areas they might like to study in greater depth in the future. **The elective courses offered will depend on enrollment and staffing, to be determined in the late spring. Elective courses in the arts rotation may include:**

Art

Students explore the discipline of visual art examining processes used by various cultures. Students learn how art is related to culture and how it has been used historically for functional and spiritual purposes. Students learn by experimenting with similar techniques used by artists. Students study artistic connections to contemporary societies and develop their understanding of the vocabulary of the art processes in units such as creating sculpture, fabric dyeing, and collage.

Awareness of Language and Culture (AOLC)

This course offers students a wide range of learning experiences to introduce them to the skills and strategies required for Foreign Language study in grade 7. The six themes of the course are Languages around the World, Communication with and without Words, Relationships between Languages, Building Blocks of Languages, Experiencing Languages, and Understanding Culture.

Introduction to Computers

Introduction to Computers uses prepared computer programs. The focus of study is on the use of application software such as database system, spreadsheet, presentation, and word-processing packages. Students can develop skills in recognizing the potential of application software by completing several individual and group projects related to academic programs and personal interest.

MUSIC

Chorus

In 6th grade chorus students explore the fundamentals of singing. Students learn basic sight-reading and musicianship skills while singing and performing a wide variety of music. Students also work toward objectives listed in the National Standards for Arts Education, such as analyzing and evaluating music, and understanding music in relation to history and culture. Students enrolled in this course receive instruction daily for the entire school year. Participation in all performances is mandatory.

Band

In band students have the opportunity to begin or continue learning a band instrument. Instruction includes basic tone production, note reading, the development of performance skills, and the development of good practice habits. Participation in all performances is mandatory. Students enrolled in this course receive instruction daily for the entire school year.

Strings

In this course students have the opportunity to begin or continue learning an orchestral string instrument: violin, viola, cello, or bass. Instruction includes basic tone production, note reading, proper bowings and hand positions, and the development of performance skills and good practice habits. Participation in all performances is mandatory. Students enrolled in the course receive instruction daily for the entire school year.