

# **JULIUS WEST MIDDLE SCHOOL**

**651 Great Falls Road  
Rockville, MD 20850**



**GRADE 8  
2009-2010**

## **COURSE OFFERINGS BOOKLET**





## Grade 8

### Language A – English/Language Arts



#### **English 8**

The course is organized with an overarching theme, Explorations, which includes four thematic units: Journeys, Community, Responsibility, and Discoveries. Formative assessments in each unit are designed to measure student progress towards mastering focus indicators for the processes and content of English. No one process (writing, speaking, reading, viewing, and listening) is taught in isolation. Students learn to write clearly, read critically, speak thoughtfully, and listen carefully. Students experience and appreciate language and literature as catalysts for deep thought and emotion. This course will provide differentiated instruction for all levels of students.

#### **Advanced English 8 - high school credit course**

This new 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 (semester B final exam currently under consideration/development) will earn one elective credit toward graduation. The grade in this one elective credit class will be included in the student's high school GPA.

#### **Reading 8/Reader's Theater**

The Reading 8 curriculum develops and extends the reading strategies framed in previous reading and content courses. This curriculum is primarily designed for readers who experience difficulty comprehending grade-level material and who wish to improve their reading comprehension of expository text as they prepare for the demands of high school. Students will spend time understanding their personal learning style and adapting the strategies which will help them most in the comprehension, enjoyment, and extension of reading to their other content classes. Students apply research-based reading strategies as they read for information on a variety of topics in order to identify their own interests and strengths, as well as to identify areas of study and careers they may wish to pursue in the future. Students will conduct research using electronic and traditional texts to develop their ability to understand and evaluate the demanding expository texts they will encounter in high school.

Students interested in scriptwriting, directing, and producing a dramatic work may also have the opportunity to take pieces of literature, analyze them, and adapt them into a script that can then be performed with a minimum of preparation, props or scenery. Students may also participate in an extensive study of the works of William Shakespeare.

## **English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)**

### Level 1

This introductory course is designed to teach beginning level English as a new language. The four skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking are integrated into thematic units. This course meets two class periods every day.

### Level 2

This intermediate level course builds on the skills taught in level 1. Students at this level of proficiency understand basic functional and social vocabulary. Materials presented to the students are arranged thematically, always taking into consideration the interests of middle school students. The concept of cultural roots is discussed, and students read biographies and autobiographies and publish their own autobiographies in book form. This course meets one period every day; intermediate ESOL students also have one ESOL reading class every day.

### Level 3

The advanced level course builds on the skills taught in level 2. As they expand their vocabulary and increase their control of English, students review grammar structures and continue to develop skills in manipulating sentences. This course meets for one period every day. Advanced students also enroll in an ESOL reading class as needed.

### ESOL Reading

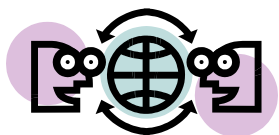
This is a mandatory one period course for level 2 students and is offered to level 3 students as needed. A variety of word attack skills are presented. Students learn to personalize effective reading strategies for understanding while they read increasingly more complex and challenging middle school texts

### Academic Language

This is a two period class for beginning ESOL students. It teaches them the language of science, social studies, and math in order to prepare them for these classes in the mainstream.

### METS

This is a special program designed for ESOL students who have missed education in their native countries. Instruction in math, reading, and social studies is presented to the students in very small group settings at their own levels. The purpose of this program is to provide a foundation in and preparation for the challenges of mainstream classes.



## **Language B - Modern World Languages**

The development of thematic units in each course is based on the five C's of the National Standards for Foreign Language instruction: Communities, Communication, Connection, Culture and Comparison. The MYP Areas of Interaction are integrated throughout the delivery of the MCPS Foreign Language curriculum.

## **Level 1B – Full year – high school credit course**

### **Chinese 1B/French 1B/Spanish 1B**

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, keep informed of current events in countries where the target language is spoken.

#### **Assessment:**

The students are able to earn ½ of a foreign language high school credit, if they pass the class and the county exam in June.

## **Level 1A/1B - Full year - high school credit courses**

### **French 1A/1B, Spanish 1A/1B**

A level 1 fast paced class is offered for 8<sup>th</sup> grade students who have not yet begun the study of a world language. Level 1A is taught semester one, and Level 1B is taught semester two. The pace of the class is more demanding, putting into practice excellent study skills. The focus of this course of study is to establish and build student capacity in four skill areas: speaking, writing, listening and reading. Emphasis is on vocabulary development, simple grammatical structures, and the basic culture of the people. It also seeks to increase awareness of the global community in reference to the foreign language. 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

### **Spanish for Spanish Speakers 1A/1B**

Spanish for Spanish Speakers provides language instruction for students who have some proficiency in Spanish. This course utilizes an approach comparable with that of English courses offered to English-speaking students.

The curriculum is based on a three-year cycle. Within each year, all of the four themes that constitute the curriculum are taught (Heritage, Identity, Family Relations, and Community). Within each thematic unit, there are three levels of performance, corresponding to Levels 1–3 of Spanish for Spanish Speakers. Thus, all students encounter the same themes, but may be presented with differentiated materials and engage in differentiated tasks that reflect their abilities and needs.

#### **Assessment:**

The students are able to earn foreign language high school credit, if they pass the class and the county exam. The Level 1A exam is in January, where they may earn ½ of a credit. If they pass the class and pass the county exam in June for Level 1B they will earn another ½ of a high school credit.

## **Level 2A/2B – high school credit courses**

### **Chinese 2A/2B, French 2A/2B, Spanish 2A/2B**

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.

This class is in two parts, semester one, level 2A and semester two, level 2B. The pace of this class is more demanding, putting into practice excellent study skills, and applying and expanding on the material from the previous year.

**Assessment:**

The students are able to earn one foreign language high school credit, if they pass the class and the county exam. The Level 2A exam is in January, where they may earn  $\frac{1}{2}$  of a credit, and the level 2B exam is in June, at which time they may earn an additional  $\frac{1}{2}$  of a high school credit.



## Mathematics

### Algebra Prep

Algebra Prep extends students' understanding of numbers to include rational and irrational numbers in the real system. 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. Those who are successful will take Algebra 1 the following year.

### Algebra 1 - high-school credit course

Algebra 1 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. Successful completion of this course satisfies the high school Algebra I requirement. Students successful in this course will take Geometry the following year.

**Assessment:**

In addition to formative and unit assessments, students in this course take the state High School Assessment Test for Algebra, which is a high school graduation requirement, and the MCPS Algebra 1 mid-term and final semester exams.

### Honors Geometry - high-school credit course

Honors Geometry is for students who have successfully completed and performed above average in Algebra 1. Students who successfully complete this course will take Algebra 2 with Analysis the following year. The units of study include Introduction to Geometry; Exploring Geometric

Relations and Properties; Logic and Geometric Proofs; Right Triangle Relationships and Coordinate Geometry; Similarity and Trigonometry; and Measurement, Circles, and Patterns in Geometry and Algebra. Students who are successful in this course satisfy the high school geometry requirement.

**Assessment:**

In addition to formative and unit assessments, students in this course take the MCPS Geometry 1 mid-term and final semester exams.

## Humanities - Social Studies



The social studies program in middle school builds chronological and thematic understanding of world and United States history while developing the social studies strands of geography, economics, political systems, and culture. Each social studies unit is organized around a historical era and a social studies strand. A mix of modern content and the lessons of history provide the background knowledge and thinking skills that prepare students for high school instruction and their duties as citizens. At all grade levels, students build understanding of the modern world by applying concepts of geography, economics, political systems, and culture to present-day scenarios.

### US History 8/Advanced US History 8

In Grade 8 students learn about the founding and early development of our nation from the Revolution through Reconstruction. Students enrolled in the Advanced US History cluster will be expected to deepen their understanding of key concepts and events through reading, writing, document analysis, and historical thinking. These skills will also help prepare students for successful participation in Advanced Placement (AP) social studies classes in high school. Students will be expected to show progress in skill development and historical knowledge on exams and historical document-based projects.

Teachers will implement the curriculum in Grade 8 as follows:

#### Unit 1: Democracy: Political System of the People 1763–1783

- The causes, course, and consequences of the American Revolution.
- The various perspectives and influence of individuals and groups in the colonies and Britain.
- The important ideas and documents that came out of the Revolution.
- Overview of themes, principles, and concepts of United States history from the Revolution to the present.

#### Unit 2: Creating a National Political System and Culture 1783–1815

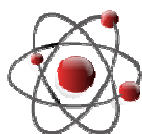
- Challenges and debates of the Articles of Confederation and the Constitutional Convention.
- The resulting system and structure of government and the adoption of a Bill of Rights.
- The efforts of early administrations to establish the new government, and foreign and domestic events that shaped an emerging national culture.

### **Unit 3: Geographic and Economic Change Shape the Nation 1815–1840**

- The United States' geographical expansion and settlement.
- The various perspectives and influence of individuals and groups, including significant leaders, women, African Americans, and Native Americans.
- The political and cultural consequences of geographic expansion.
- The developing sectional economic and cultural tensions.

### **Unit 4: A Nation Divided and Rebuilt 1840–1877**

- The major events, issues, and debates leading up to the Civil War that reflected cultural divisions among the North, South, and West.
- The effect of the war on economic, social, and political systems of the nation.
- The goals, results, and impact of Reconstruction on the extension of rights to African Americans



## **Science**

The middle school science program allows students to investigate both the concepts and process skills of science. At each grade level, topics in earth science, biology, chemistry, and physics are inter-connected to show students the relationships that exist between the sciences and in 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 reflects the Maryland and National Science Content Standards. High expectations and differentiated instruction allow all students a challenging and engaging access to science.

### **Science 8 - Living in a World of Change**

#### **Unit 1: Atmospheric Phenomena**

- Explore some of the key components of Earth's weather patterns.
- Use weather instruments to collect data and predict future weather conditions.
- Investigate how global patterns within the atmosphere and hydrosphere affect the climate of our planet.
- Investigate how coastal communities prepare for severe weather conditions.

#### **Unit 2: Introductory Chemistry**

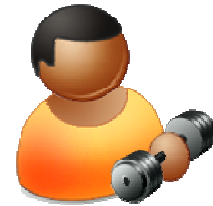
- Investigate how matter can be identified by observable measurable properties.
- Distinguish between physical and chemical changes.
- Determine that matter is neither created nor destroyed.
- Classify elements into groups based on properties.
- Distinguish between elements, compounds, and mixtures.

#### **Unit 3: Earth's Structure and History**

- Investigate the Earth's internal structure.
- Differentiate rock types and investigate the processes of the rock cycle.

- Explain how major geologic events are a result of crustal movement.
- Determine the difference between physical and chemical weathering.
- Investigate the formation of the universe, galaxies, stars, and planets (earth).
- Explore the evidence proving the earth's surface has changed over time
- Explore the role of sedimentary rock layers as evidence of changing life forms.
- Investigate that evolution is the process of change over time.

## Physical Education/Health



### PHYSICAL EDUCATION

#### Core of Required Physical Education Activities for Grades 6–8

By the end of Grade 8, students receive instruction in the following activities in each of two groups:

- **Personal Development/Team Activities**—cross-country, field hockey, dance activities, flag football, personal fitness, volleyball, weight training.
- **Individual/Dual Activities**—racquet games, tennis, track and field, tumbling.

#### Core of Preferred Physical Education Activities for Grades 6–8

By the end of Grade 8, students receive instruction in the following activities in each of two groups:

- **Individual/Dual Activities**—adventure activities, archery, golf, gymnastics, table tennis, wrestling.
- **Team Activities**—basketball, soccer, softball, street/floor hockey.

#### Physical Education 8

Middle school students participate in a comprehensive physical education program. The amount of time devoted to each instructional component varies according to the developmental needs of students, their grade level, and the physical education teacher's special interests.

By the end of Grade 8, students should be able to do the following:

- Demonstrate improved skill levels in team, individual, dual, dance, and personal development activities.
- Demonstrate game strategies in individual, dual, and team play.
- Continue to analyze personal levels of physical fitness and practice skills previously developed to increase these levels of fitness.
- Know the rules of safety and practice them in all activities.
- Accept the responsibility when asked to lead and be supportive of others when in a leadership role.
- Accept the responsibility when asked to follow and be supportive of others when in a follower-ship role.
- Demonstrate good sports etiquette, teamwork, and cooperation.
- Begin to develop an appreciation for a variety of organized sports activities as a participant and a spectator.
- Continue to display positive behavior and apply appropriate decision-making skills.

Students in Grade 8 continue to develop good sports etiquette, teamwork, and cooperative skills. Individual and dual activities receive increased attention as students receive guidance in setting realistic lifetime goals for maintaining and/or improving their skills and fitness.

### **Health Education**

Today's students are growing up in a world filled with hazards that were either unknown or largely ignored only a few years ago. Health education instruction in middle school supports what students learn at home about good health and safety practices by providing accurate information appropriate for their age level. The program is designed to help students develop personal and social skills and positive attitudes about health that will help guide them through their formative years to adulthood.

Comprehensive health education includes the following six units: **mental health; tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs; nutrition and fitness; safety and injury prevention; family life and human sexuality; and disease prevention and control.**

### **Health Education 8**

Students in Grade 8 receive nine weeks of health education and **the two focus topics are family life and human sexuality and disease prevention and control.** Special emphasis on teen depression is included in Grade 8 through Red Flags, a collaborative project with the Mental Health Association of Montgomery County. Parents of Grade 8 students will receive information about the family life and human sexuality unit of instruction prior to the start of classroom instruction. Information about teen pregnancy prevention and sexually transmitted diseases is included in Grade 8 health education, and parents must sign a permission form for their child to participate in this unit of instruction. If a parent objects to the content of the instruction and indicates that objection on the permission form their 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 sexually transmitted diseases.

**\*All students must provide signed parental permission forms to be eligible to receive this instruction in Grade 8.**



## **Arts/Technology Electives**



### **Semester Courses**

#### **Art 8 - semester**

The Grade 8 general art course helps to expand students' knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of the visual arts. Knowledge of techniques and skills is increased through the use of a variety of media. Through in-depth activities, discussions, the Internet, and class critiques, students learn about art from other cultures and historical periods.

Students work in two- and three-dimensional media, including drawing, painting, and sculpture. Units in ceramics, printmaking, graphic design, and architecture may be explored. Art careers and the role of artists and designers in society are discussed. Craftsmanship and the safe use of tools and materials are emphasized.

By the end of this course, students should be able to do the following:

- Demonstrate knowledge of art media, processes, and techniques when creating artwork.
- Draw still life and figures from observation with accurate shapes, proportions, highlights, and shadows.
- Use color, line, shape, form, and texture to express a theme or communicate an idea.
- Choose and evaluate a range of subjects, symbols, and ideas when creating artwork.
- Identify works of art by style, culture, or historical period, and incorporate ideas from different styles, cultures, or historical periods in their artwork.
- Understand the role of the visual arts in society.
- Understand the connections between art and other disciplines.
- Use art vocabulary to critique and evaluate works of art.
- Compare and contrast the characteristics, design, and function of two- and three-dimensional works of art.
- Demonstrate responsibility in the care and safe use of art materials, tools, equipment, and facilities.
- Prepare artwork for display or broadcast on the Internet or Web sites.

### **Computer Applications 8 - semester**

Computer Applications provides students with active learning experiences related to the productive use of computer-based applications. Students use word processing, desktop publishing, spreadsheet, desktop presentation, Web page development, and Internet research skills to complete meaningful and authentic projects. This course focuses on the selection and use of appropriate technology tools and resources to accomplish a variety of tasks and solve problems. 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 Department of Education content standards related to technology.

By the end of this course, students will continue to develop the following skills:

- Use keyboarding, word processing, and desktop publishing skills to communicate and publish information.
- Use spreadsheet software to design, organize, and manipulate text and numerical data, as well as create charts to display data.
- Research and evaluate the accuracy, relevance, and appropriateness of Internet-based sources.
- Design, develop, publish, and present products using technology resources that demonstrate and communicate curriculum concepts to audiences inside and outside the classroom.
- Use graphics, multimedia, hypermedia, Web editors, and telecommunications tools to organize and present information.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the principles involved in computer network operations and the functions of hardware and software.

### **Family and Consumer Sciences (FACS) 8 - semester**

Individuals and families carry out complex processes in their daily lives. A multitude of decisions are made from the minute the day starts. Those decisions range from how to care for and interact with family members and peers to what to eat for good health and nutrition, what to wear and how to care for those items, how to utilize and manage resources, how to organize and make living environments functional and aesthetically pleasing, and how to make good

education and career decisions. Family and Consumer Sciences (FACS) focuses on these enduring questions, which need to be addressed throughout the life cycle.

The FACS program helps students develop critical and creative thinking skills and utilize current developing technology to achieve individual, family, and societal goals. A problem-based curriculum meets the students' needs by allowing them to explore the various areas of FACS in preparation for a more specific area of study in high school.

By the end of each grade level, students will develop an understanding of the following:

- The reasoning and decision-making process
- Family and human development and healthy relationships
- Resource management associated with family needs
- The interrelationship between nutritious food choices and health/wellness
- The use and care of textile products
- The function and aesthetics of living environments
- The exploration of career options and the career-planning process.

### **T.V. Studio 8 - semester**

Have you ever wondered what multimedia or visual communications really are? Everybody reads about it, talks about it, and wants it. This course will allow students to learn about computer technology through engaging lessons and project-based learning experiences. This course will focus on incorporating the elements of text, image, sound, speech, video, and computer programming in Web-based applications. Students will learn to use technology to enhance information, resulting in effective communication through interactive projects. Course outcomes are aligned with national and state technology standards.

By the end of this course, students will be able to do the following:

- Use the Internet effectively to research information.
- Investigate the impact of technology on society and career development.
- Complete numerous hands-on projects related to Web-based application.
- Use decision-making skills and critical thinking to design projects.
- Collaborate with peers using technology tools to solve problems.
- Identify and use appropriate technology tools to solve problems.
- Develop oral presentation skills and produce an informational broadcast for school-wide presentations.

### **Theatre 8 - semester**

In this performance-oriented course, students investigate and experience aspects of production, aesthetics, criticism, theatre genre, and history within the framework of classroom presentations. Students will develop the fundamental techniques of performance through activities involving stage movement, pantomime, voice, oral interpretation, theatre games, role-playing, improvisation, and scene study.

Upon completion of the course, students should be able to do the following:

- Demonstrate personal creative potential in scripted and original presentations.
- Identify and develop acting techniques and apply them in various types of performances.
- Demonstrate individual growth through confidence and poise in performance.
- Assume the responsibility of a group member in class activities.
- Identify and demonstrate acceptable audience behavior.

- Use appropriate theatre vocabulary when discussing the art form.
- Recognize the aesthetic component of a theatrical production.

### **Full Year Courses**

#### **Instrumental Music – full year**

##### **Advanced Band 8/Advanced Orchestra 8 – second year level**

*Prerequisite: Attainment of outcomes for Advanced Band (First year/Level 1) or Advanced Orchestra (First year/Level 1).*

By the end of Advanced Band (Second year/Level 2)/Advanced Orchestra (Second year/Level 2) students should be able to meet the Basic Instrumental Music Components and Expectations and do the following:

- Distinguish between abstract and programmatic music.
- Discuss the social, intellectual, and historical influences on each.
- Perform and historically categorize transcriptions of a variety of composers.

#### **Chorus 7, 8 – full year**

Chorus is offered to students in Grades 7-8 who want to sing and develop their essential musicianship skills. Mastery of breath control, vocal production, diction, intonation, tone blending, singing in harmony, and music-reading proficiency (including sight-singing) are emphasized. Music selected for study and performance is aligned with the content standards for each grade.

Concerts are the culmination of many hours of hard work and provide opportunities for students to demonstrate mastery of the knowledge and skills outlined in the content standards. They are like exams in that they communicate the measure of success to both students and parents.

Determining whether students can apply this learning in a public performance is authentic to the real world of music performance. Therefore, participation in all concerts is mandatory.

By the end of this course, students will be able to do the following:

- Sing accurately and with good breath control throughout their singing ranges, alone and in small ensembles.
- Sing independently, on pitch and in rhythm, with appropriate diction and posture.
- Notate, sight-read, and perform short melody and rhythm improvisations and compositions.
- Identify and perform the dynamic and tempo markings in printed music.
- Explain the interrelationships between a selected piece of music and various disciplines.
- Sing selected pieces from memory.
- Perform with confidence the music that has been prepared.
- Devise criteria for evaluating performances.
- Demonstrate appropriate audience etiquette.

#### **Software Applications by Design A/B – full year (high school credit)**

This course helps prepare students to take the Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS) certification core-level examinations for Microsoft Word, Excel, Access, and PowerPoint. Students design and complete word processing, desktop publishing, spreadsheets, databases, and multimedia projects that reinforce the MOS standards taught throughout this course. Students who successfully complete both semesters and pass the semester B final exam will earn one elective credit toward high school graduation.