
LAUREL HIGHLANDS SCHOOL DISTRICT

2011 – 2012



Middle School Curriculum Guide

LANGUAGE ARTS:

English 6

This course focuses on grammar, usage, mechanics and writing. Included in the students' evaluation is a weekly spelling grade. Students will be able to identify basic grammatical, mechanical and usage errors in relation to agreement, case and tense. They will be able to compose well-constructed sentences and paragraphs as well as write and edit a persuasive letter and a "How To" essay.

Reading 6

The sixth grade reading curriculum is general in that all students in sixth grade will be exposed to the same literary elements and content. The following is a list of eligible content that is covered: Understanding Fiction and Nonfiction with Comprehension and Reading Skills, Identify, Interpret, Compare, and Describe Components Within and Between Text, Identify and Interpret Literary Devices, Identify and Interpret Concepts and Organization of Nonfiction Text.

Materials: Holt Elements of Language Textbook, Language Workbook, Pencil, and Dry Erase Marker

Reading Remediation and Acceleration 6

The 6th grade students will work in the Compass Lab on their individual PSSA Reading weaknesses. Their weaknesses have been diagnosed from their 5th grade PSSA test scores. Each student has his own computer which allows them to improve at their own level. This extra Reading course is one method the district uses to improve and accelerate PSSA test scores.

English 7

Grade 7 English focuses on grammar, literature, and writing. Students will study the eight parts of speech and build upon related grammar concepts throughout the school year. Students will read, interpret, and analyze various forms of literature and/or poetry and recognize different literary techniques found within them. Students will also practice composing well-structured paragraphs by writing and editing at least six different essays for proper grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.

Honors English 7

Prerequisite: Teacher recommendation, A average in Grade 6 English for the year, Minimum 3.7 cumulative GPA for Grade 6, Advanced or Proficient on the most recent PSSA Reading test.

Students who qualify for this course will complete the same course components of those for Grade 7 English, but with more emphasis on writing and vocabulary. Students will be introduced to a minimum of 150 vocabulary words throughout the school year.

Reading and Comprehension 7

Reading and Comprehension 7 is a one-year course divided into two semesters. The course is designed to utilize fiction and non-fiction selections from the Elements of Literature textbook and novels written by award-winning authors. Various instructional strategies are incorporated into activities designed to increase comprehension skills, expand reading vocabulary and improve higher-order thinking skills.

English 8

In this course, students will explore in-depth grammar beyond the eight parts of speech. Grammar, usage and mechanics skills are integrated into at least six informational and persuasive compositions

throughout the year. An emphasis is placed on literature, with students reading a novel, numerous fictional and non-fictional pieces, and poetry.

Honors English 8

Students who qualify for this course will complete the same course components of those for English 8, but with a greater emphasis on writing and literature. Students are also introduced to college vocabulary throughout the second semester. To qualify for this course students must earn an A average in English 7, maintain a 3.7 or higher grade point average, score in the advanced or proficient range of the previous year's PSSA Reading Assessment, and receive a recommendation from their 7th grade English teacher.

Diagnostic Reading and Study Skills 8

During this course students will learn how to comprehend, analyze, and interpret different forms of literature, including poetry (from the Elements of Literature Second Course text books.) You will learn literary terms and reading concepts that students will need for the PSSA test. Students will also learn test taking and study skills during the content of the literature class.

MATHEMATICS

Integrated Mathematics 6

This is a course for all students that begins to introduce simple Algebraic expressions as well as decimals, number theory and fractions, collecting and displaying data, plane geometry and probability.

Math Remediation and Acceleration 6

The 6th grade students will work in the Compass Lab on their individual PSSA Math weaknesses. Their weaknesses have been diagnosed from their 5th grade PSSA test scores. Each student has his own computer which allows them to improve at their own level. This extra math course is one method the district uses to improve and accelerate PSSA test scores.

Transition Mathematics 7

Prerequisite: Teacher recommendation, minimum of a 90% in 6th Grade mathematics, Proficient or Advanced on the state assessment, and meeting the minimum criteria on a math placement test

This course weaves together three themes-applied arithmetic, algebra, and geometry- by focusing on arithmetic operations in mathematics in the real world. The course introduces algebra by examining uses of variables and variable representation on the number line and coordinate plane. This course also introduces basic algebra skills and connects geometry, measurement, and algebra.

Integrated Mathematics 7

This is a course that continues the study of simple algebra expressions as well as decimals, number theory and fractions, collecting and displaying data, statistics, plane geometry and probability. Similar figures, ratios and proportions are also introduced.

Algebra I

This course includes Basic Mathematic skills necessary for higher mathematics and science. Skills, including expressions, equations, polynomials, factoring, ratio and proportions, linear functions, systems of equations and inequalities.

Honors Algebra I

Prerequisite: Transition Math C or better.

This course uses Algebra to describe patterns, solve linear equations and inequalities, and to solve systems of equations and inequalities. We work with probability, proportions, percent, and examine slopes and equations of lines. We finish the year with a study of polynomials, factoring and algebraic fractions.

Integrated Math 8

This course continues the study of Integrated Math 7. We write and solve equations, graph, work with integers, rational numbers, exponents, scientific notation and the Pythagorean Theorem. We look at different types of graphs and when to use each type. We discuss plane and 3 dimensional figures and how to use formulas to find area, perimeter and volume.

SCIENCE

Science 6

The sixth grade Science curriculum encompasses four components of Science – Life Science, Physical Science, Earth Science, and the Human Body. The Scott Foresman Science textbook is used in the curriculum. Technology is utilized to enhance student learning and comprehension. The Smartboard, Senteo clickers, and Interactive websites are resources that benefit the students.

Life Science 7

During their 7th grade year, students will be introduced to different aspects of life science. The first half of the year the students will learn about ecology, the environment and ways to protect it. The second half of the year, they will learn about several different body systems. Many different styles of teaching, labs and evaluations are used in the 7th grade science classroom. We also utilize different types of technology to enhance student learning and improve comprehension in all areas.

Earth Science 8

Welcome to 8th grade Earth Science class. This is a semester course. In this course we will investigate the scientific concepts, rules and principles which are associated with planet Earth as well as other celestial bodies. Major units of study include; Astronomy (the study of the universe).Geology(the structure and processes of the Earth). Meteorology (the study of the Earth atmosphere). Oceanography (the study of the oceans). A variety of methods will be used throughout the semester to evaluate the students including; tests, quizzes, homework, class work, reports , and lab activities.

Physical Science 8

This course is a semester long. It is an introduction to basic chemistry and physics. The students will experience aspects of these two fields through lecture as well as hands-on-activities in a half semester course. The order of topics for the semester is as follows: Scientific Method; International System of Metrics; measurements of length, mass, volume, temperature, and density; labs in volume and density with lab report; interpreting graphs; periodic table; atomic structure with model; and chemical formulas. Many science activities correlate with mathematics. Mathematical reasoning is given through the development of formulas to calculate surface area and volume, by graphing information, and by conversion of metric units. A “Question of the Day” will be documented by the student to assist in PSSA science testing. A unit called “Forces of Science” will be completed on Fridays.

Assessment will be based on test, lab, quizzes, essays, and end of the year final test. Materials: Holt Physical Science, Teacher Prepared Study Guides, PowerPoint and Internet presentations

SOCIAL STUDIES

Geography 6

The sixth grade course of geography is a semester course. The Pennsylvania state standards covered in the semester course are 7.1 A) Geographic Tools and B) Location of places and regions. Each student will be responsible for keeping a current notebook for power point lecture notes. Materials covered in the textbook People, Places and Change..Western World are Geographers World, Planet Earth, Wind, Climate and Natural Environments, The World's People, Geography and History of the United States and Regions of the United States. Additionally, students will be assigned a weekly map. Each student will be evaluated on the following maps for spelling and location: 1. Continents and Oceans 2. Eastern United States 3. Southern and Midwestern US 4. Pacific US. Students will be evaluated for location only on the following countries in South America, Central America, Asia, Middle East and Europe. Students will also be evaluated for US Lakes and Rivers. All students are encouraged for visit www.sheppardsoftware.com for interactive practice of states and countries. Evaluation criteria will be tests, quizzes (straight average), notebooks, attendance and participation.

Social Studies 6

This course will cover the foundation of human civilization from its beginnings. We will discuss major civilizations and their influence on today's world. This will include government, warfare, and new ways of food production leading to the modern world we live in presently.

World History 7: Stone Age to 1500 A. D.

World History 7 covers Ancient World History from the Stone Age to the Renaissance Period. The course utilizes the Holt World Series textbook and incorporates many hands-on activities and technology. A special emphasis is placed on the foundations of Western Civilization while bridging to the modern world.

United States History 8: Beginnings to 1914

We will cover Prehistoric Pennsylvania through the completion of the American Civil War. Along the way we will see the development of a government, the hardships of a fledgling country, the plight of the people to progress into a nation, war's affect on the economies here and abroad, and individuals that set themselves apart to shape our great nation. By the end of the 8th grade year the students will be Historical Thinkers not history students as we piece together our nations past.

Text: Holt - United States History: Beginnings to 1914

Honors U. S. History 8

The requirements for Honors U.S. history are a little more stringent. The student must have an A average for the 7th grade year in World History, a PSSA score of Advanced in Reading, and maintain a 3.8 GPA throughout the 7th grade school year. Once the requirements are met the students will be expected to do all of the regular History Class requirements plus write essays, advanced research, and more critical thinking assignments.

COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

Computer Science 8

Introduction to Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint (2007 Edition) - Semester Course

Microsoft Word 2007- The objectives for Microsoft Word 2007 are to have students be able to produce a brochure for a mock business. Topics covered consist of but are not limited to: font, size, color, inserting clip, word and web art, using textboxes, formatting, and background color.

Microsoft Excel 2007- The main objective is for students to be able to produce spreadsheets that are formula oriented. The spreadsheets should generate information when numerical data is entered into the document. Microsoft Excel is not a word processor. It should be used to calculate various mathematical models.

Microsoft Power Point 2007- The objectives for Microsoft Power Point 2007 are to have students be able to produce a professional presentation that includes bulleted list, animation, sound, and video.

Keyboarding 7

The middle school keyboarding course is designed to provide an introduction to the “touch typing” method of keyboarding. Students work at an individualized pace towards a 35 words per minute goal while attaining an accuracy level of 95% or better. Students work diligently with modern keyboarding software on lessons that teach and constantly reinforce the letter, number, and symbol keys on an industry standard QWERTY style keyboard.

6th Grade Technology Education:

This 6th Grade class is an introductory course designed around a hands-on learning approach. The primary focus of this Technology Education class is oriented around basic electronics. The students explore many different vocabulary terms and basic circuit principles in this class. As the students learn basic electronic principles, they involve themselves in a step-by-step project that parallels many principles that are directly related to our technological world. The students only have this class once per week. During every class, I demonstrate what the students are to do on their project and then they complete the steps based off of their observation. We only meet 18 times or less throughout one semester. At the end of the semester, students will have fabricated a working matching game. When the correct response is chosen on the game, two lights burn bright indicating a correct choice was made. The students really enjoy this project.

7th Grade Technology Education:

This 7th Grade course will help students develop an understanding of the different processes and procedures involved in Manufacturing and Construction Technology. It will also give students a hands-on approach to tool selection and usage for completing specific technology-related tasks. After an extensive lesson on lab safety, students will complete a total of three manufacturing projects if time permits. After receiving proper demonstration, they will use machines and tools to complete their projects. Students will also be instructed extensively on measuring, a prerequisite to complete the projects, during the course of my 45-day course. By extensively focusing on measuring in this course, the students should score higher on the PSSA tests on the measuring section.

Technical Drawing 8

In this course, Technical Drawing, students will use a “hands-on/minds-on” approach to explore numerous facets of the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) related fields. Students will develop skills and knowledge to become Technologically Literate, so they may: Assess, Utilize, Manage, and Develop Technologies. Students will apply the Technological Design Process

to: graphically communicate ideas, examine issues with technology, and produce a transportation prototype. Students will also develop analytical and critical thinking skills to solve real world problems while considering the global impacts of their solutions. Finally, students will explore career possibilities in STEM related fields and produce a project portfolio.

MUSIC

Middle School Band (GRADES 6 - 8)

The Middle School Band Classes will provide students with knowledge of their instrument, other instruments, elements of music, proper fundamentals of breathing and posture, study of age appropriate band literature, and rehearsal techniques. Special emphasis will be placed on developing musicianship and ensemble responsibility through performance in a variety of settings. Each grade level (6th - 8th) progresses in demand of musical responsibilities.

Choir 6

Membership is by audition only. This choir meets every day and performs 2 evening concerts a year. The Winter performance incorporates 2-part harmony while the Spring Concert's repertoire contains 3-part harmony.

Choir 7 & 8

Membership is by audition only. This choir utilizes 4-part harmony and performs 2 evening concerts a year as well as at special school events.

General Music 6

6th Grade students in the Laurel Highlands Middle School are required to take a weekly course in General Music all year. This course is divided into two semesters. In one semester, students will learn music appreciation from a historical view point. Students will learn about the lives and music of composers from Bach to Beethoven through class activities, projects and videos. During the other semester, students will get a hands-on experience in music. Students will learn about the theory, composition and performance of music through written activities, listening activities, music reading activities and singing/keyboard performance activities.

General Music 7

7th Grade students in the Laurel Highlands Middle School are required to take a daily course in music for one nine week grading period. Students will continue learning to read, write and perform music through experiences in composing/arranging for percussion quartet, playing keyboard accompaniments to selected pieces, improvising to given chord progressions and pieces on keyboards and sight-singing simple melodies using solfege syllables. Students will also study American musical theatre and opera through videos and learn about various careers in music outside of performing and teaching.

FINE ARTS

Family Living 6

Students will be introduced to ways of understanding and handling adolescence, being a unique individual, and family relationships. This course includes learning techniques in communicating with others, decision making, and character building. A seven week unit on fire safety is also offered in this course. This unit includes learning how fires burn, how to prevent them, safe ways to put out a

fire, and how to help others. Information is facilitated by classroom lectures, discussion, and technology.

Food and Nutrition 7

Students will have the opportunity to promote wellness, healthful living, and resource management as well as learning techniques in food preparation, food handling, and safe use of equipment. This course includes both hands-on experience using teamwork in food laboratory exercises and information is presented through classroom lectures and technology.

Art 8

In alignment with Pennsylvania state and National Standards, 8th grade students will: explore color, form and shape, line, space, texture and value. This will be achieved through various media including: pencil, pastels, paint and clay. Art History and vocabulary are integrated into project presentation. Students are required to create a notebook to document the projects' materials and descriptions about how they went about making it and a diagram of the project.

Guidance 6 & Guidance 7

All students at LHMS in grades six and seven take guidance class one period per week (Character Education). In Guidance 6 class students receive an orientation to middle school, helping them make a smooth transition from fifth to sixth grade. Additional topics covered: study skills, bullying & harassment, interpersonal relationships, and career guidance. In Guidance 7 class students study life skills which include: self-esteem, respect, responsibility, decision-making, conflict resolution, anger & anxiety management, interpersonal relationships, and career guidance.

Guidance 8

The focus of Guidance 8 is getting to know the students, furthering career exploration (building on Guidance 7), and preparing the students for high school. Discussions include the differences between the high school and middle school, scheduling (review of required and elective courses offered for freshman), the importance of earning credits, and graduation requirements (credits and career portfolio). The students will utilize the electronic career portfolio(s) provided by the school district to continue their career exploration and have an understanding of the high school courses/electives needed to best prepare the students for their future careers. Students will log career related activities from 8th grade into their electronic career portfolio.

WORLD LANGUAGE

Spanish I

Pre-requisite: Strong language arts skills recommended.

In Spanish I, the 8th grade student is introduced to the language through listening, speaking, reading and writing activities. An adequate vocabulary and command of the present tense will be achieved. Students will be assessed through presentations and projects, in addition to homework, class work, quizzes and exams. Students will be expected to use their basic spoken Spanish skills in the classroom at all times. Being prepared for class is a requirement. Students will also learn about the Hispanic culture and why it is important to study Spanish.

French I

The 8th grade student will learn basic listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills as well as learning about French culture and its influence in the world. In order to accomplish this goal, the student will learn fundamental vocabulary and grammar rules, learning how to apply them to any communication method. Assessments will include written and oral homework assignments, quizzes and exams. Students will be expected to bring all needed materials and preparatory work to class and be organized.

Culture of World Language 7

In order to prepare the student for the global marketplace the student will understand the importance of international communication in modern times and students will acquire the basic study skills necessary for success in foreign language study (a semester of French and a semester of Spanish), learn basic vocabulary and grammar skills needed for effective communication, to understand the spoken and written word, use research tools for language and culture information while learning the locations, customs, and cultures of the areas of the world where the language is used.

LIBRARY SCIENCE

Library Science 6

In this class student(s) will review previously learned research skills and gain new skills which will allow students to become proficient in researching for all the other classroom subjects from middle school through college and into their personal lives.

Students will be scheduled one day a week for 18 weeks in the library. During this 43 minute, weekly period, students will discuss Book Parts, Dictionary, Encyclopedia, Thesaurus and Card Catalog Skills. Students will also be taught in detail how to use the Dewey Decimal System to find nonfiction books and how a Dewey Number is formed for better understanding of our library system. Initial classes will center on correct Library Behavior in a research library. During class time students will also learn the Library Layout to facilitate their research projects.

Library Science 7

In this class student(s) will review previously learned research skills and gain new skills which will allow students to become proficient in researching for all the other classroom subjects from middle school through college and into their personal lives.

Students will be scheduled one day a week for the whole year in the library. During this 43 minute, weekly period, students will discuss Almanac, Atlas, Dictionary Types, Using the Internet for Research (including Internet Safety), Bibliography Format, Access PA (Interlibrary Loan), Access PA Power Library (Database System), and United Streaming (Database).

HEALTH / PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Laurel Highlands Middle School's physical education department teaches the developmental needs of the 6th, 7th, & 8th grade students. The program includes health and wellness to serve the purpose of developing good attitudes toward physical activity for the present as well as a lifetime. The physical activities are listed below.

MEDICAL EXCUSE (ME)

If a student has a medical problem that affects his/her ability to participate in a physical education class, the course will be waived during the time period that the medical condition exists. The medical

problem must be documented in writing by a physician and the documentation must be made available to the guidance office to become part of the student's permanent record. If the student has a Medical Excuse for over 50% of the total classes for the year, the student will receive a Medical Excuse (ME) for the year with no credit assigned. The Course requirement will be waived for that school year. If the Medical Excuse (ME) is for a less than 50% of the total classes for the year, the student will receive the grade he/she earned and credit for the class. For long-term conditions, a new medical excuse must be provided for each school year.

P.E. (6th, 7th, & 8th) --- Lifetime/Team Sports

This course was designed to equip the learner with the knowledge and skills necessary for participation in team sports and to stress the importance of lifetime sports. Skill explanation and demonstration will be reinforced along with the sport's history and basic rules. Adherence to the rules for each sport, good sportsmanship and practical competition will be highly encouraged. Lifetime/Team sports covered during this course may include, but are not limited to baseball/softball, basketball, football, handball, hockey, soccer, speedball, volleyball, golf, tennis, bowling, badminton and ping-pong.

P.E. (6th, 7th, & 8th) --- Physical Fitness

This course was designed to educate, evaluate and improve upon the learner's overall physical fitness. Each of the five components of physical fitness (cardiovascular fitness, body composition, flexibility, muscular strength and muscular endurance) will be covered. The instructor will explain the significance in maintaining a healthy level of physical fitness as it relates to a persons' overall well being. Training performed during this course may include, but is not limited to aerobics, cardio equipment, ply metrics, weight training, walking/jogging and yoga.

Health 7

The main objective of this course is to present material useful to the student in making choices critical to good health and mental well being. Emphasis is placed on the functioning to the biological body, emotional wellness, coping skill, first aid, fitness, and nutrition. Drug and alcohol prevention education incorporated to build self-esteem and help the students understand the psychology of addiction and the impact of alcohol and other drugs on families and society. The known effects of drug and alcohol are presented as well as identifying self needs, coping skill and responsibility behaviors.

GIFTED

Gifted Support

The Laurel Highlands School District provides support classes for mentally gifted students. The curriculum includes options and alternatives which have been created and refined to provide opportunities for students of varying abilities. Programming for the mentally gifted at the middle school level is done through enrichment activities and are delivered through a gifted coordinator. Each identified student's Gifted Individualized Education Program (GIEP) addresses a student's learning style and academic needs are selected for that individual student.

LEARNING SUPPORT

LS Reading 6

This is a remedial reading class in which all sixth graders will be exposed to the same literary elements and content with adaptations and modifications. The following is a list of eligible content that is covered: Understanding Fiction and Nonfiction with Comprehension and Reading Skills, Identify, Interpret, Compare, and Describe Components Within and Between Text, Identify and Interpret Literary Devices, Identify and Interpret Concepts and Organization of Nonfiction Text.

LS English 6

This course focuses on grammar, usage, mechanics and writing. Included in the students' evaluation is a weekly spelling grade. Students will be able to identify basic grammatical, mechanical and usage errors in relation to agreement, case and tense. They will be able to compose well-constructed sentences and paragraphs as well as write and edit a persuasive letter and a "How To" essay.

LS Math 6-8

This course provides math instruction to students in grades 6, 7, and 8. It provides instruction in a positive, productive learning environment to meet individual learning needs. Students will utilize a variety of materials and resources, participate in small group learning activities, and use critical thinking skills to gain a better understanding of mathematics. This course will increase student knowledge of number systems and relationships, computation and estimation, measurement and estimation, mathematical reasoning, mathematical problem solving, statistics and data analysis, probability and predictions, algebra, and geometry.

General Science 6

The sixth grade Learning Support Science encompasses four components of Science- Life Science, Physical Science, Earth Science and the Human Body. The Scott Foresman Science text book is used in the curriculum. The curriculum is enhanced by the use of The Smartboard, website resources such as "United Streaming, and Brain Pop activities to improve the learning and comprehension of the students.

LS English 7

This course focuses on grammar, usage, mechanics, and writing. Also, included in the course is the use of the literary novel "Holes" by Louis Sachar. The students will be able to identify and use basic grammatical, mechanical, and usage error in relation to agreement, case, and tense. Students will also review The 8 Parts of Speech throughout the course of the year. The students will be able to compose well-constructed sentences and paragraphs as well as write and edit essays and several different writing genres.

LS History 6-8

This class combines 6th grade Social Studies: The World, 7th grade World History: Stone Age to 1500 A.D., and 8th grade United States History: Beginnings to 1914. Also, included in the class is the Literary novel "Night" by Elie Weisel. Because this is a diverse class the students cover many topics from early civilizations, Stone Age and Early Cultures to Prehistoric Pennsylvania and the Completion of the American Civil War. The students receive their instruction from the regular education textbook modified to fit each of their individual needs.

General Science 7/8

The 7th and 8th grade Learning Support Science encompasses four components of Science- Life Science, Physical Science, Earth Science and the Human Body. The AGS General Science and the AGS Earth Science text books are used in the curriculum. The curriculum utilizes the Smartboard, website resources such as “United Streaming”, and Brain Pop activities to enhance the learning and comprehension of the students.

Inclusion Science

This course is the same as the general education history course for students that need extra help in academically succeeding in science. There are two teachers in the classroom; one general education teacher and one learning support teacher. The students that are identified in the special education program are “pushed” in the general education environment. The adaptations are based on their individualized education plan.

Inclusion History

This course is the same as the general education history course for students that need extra help in academically succeeding in history. There are two teachers in the classroom; one general education teacher and a learning support teacher. The students that are identified in the special education program are pushed in the general education classroom. The identified students receive adaptations and modifications within the general education environment. The adaptations and modifications are based on their individual education plan.

Life Skills Support

The Life Skills Support Program is designed for students at the middle school level with significant cognitive disabilities who require extensive instruction to learn. The emphasis of the program is on functional academics, daily living skills, self care skills (personal hygiene), self advocacy skills, community based instruction, healthy life choices, and social skills. The goal of the program is to for the students to function as independently as possible in the home, school, and community setting.

PSSA Prep 7/8

PSSA Prep 7th and 8th grade Learning Support students scoring at the Basic or Below Basic level on their 6th grade and 7th grade 4Sight and PSSA tests will be scheduled for PSSA remediation classes. The course reviews the basic concepts using problems similar to those included on the PSSA Assessment. Specific instructions, assessments, and diagnostics for each standard are addressed.