

*Mercer County*  
*Junior High*



*golden eagles*

*Course Description Book*  
**2020-2021**

**Mercer County Junior High School**  
**2020-2021**  
**Course Descriptions**

**Literature**

Grade 7

Although primarily a reading course, literature is designed to help students gain knowledge of reading, verbal, and communication skills. Through literary works such as short and long stories, essays, poetry, drama, and novels, students will both learn and improve their reading and writing skills. Communication skills, both verbal and written, are practiced through such daily activities as questioning, debating, and presenting. Finally, this course allows for continuous participation and growth of students as they are challenged to form and express their own opinions dealing with the material that is covered. (*The Language of Literature* – McDougal-Littell – 2002)

**English**

Grade 7

English will primarily focus on increasing grammar, writing, and vocabulary skills. This course is designed to align with the Common Core Standards to help students improve their understanding and skill level on the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking. (*Language Network*, by McDougal-Littell, 2001, will be used as a reference. Primary material will be pulled from various sources.)

**Math**

Grade 7

This course builds on concepts that were learned in previous years. The 7th grade Illinois Learning Standards have been used to develop this curriculum. The units covered include ratios and proportionality, rational number operations, expressions, equations, data distribution, probability, and geometry measurement. The eight mathematical practices are also incorporated into daily learning; make sense of problems and persevere in solving them, reason abstractly and quantitatively, construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others, use appropriate tools strategically, attend to precision, look for and make sense of structure, and look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning.

**7<sup>th</sup> Grade Advanced Math**

Grade 7

This course is designed to challenge those students that excel in math. The curriculum follows the 8<sup>th</sup> grade Illinois Learning Standards. Units covered include real numbers and exponents, expressions and equations, congruence and similarity, functions, linear systems, Pythagorean Theorem, patterns, and bivariate data, and volume. The eight mathematical practices are also incorporated into daily learning; make sense of problems and persevere in solving them, reason abstractly and quantitatively, construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others, use appropriate tools strategically, attend to precision, look for and make sense of structure, and look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning.

## **Science**

Grade 7

This course uses an integrated approach to science that includes life, earth and physical science. Topics in the area of life science include cells and cell processes, heredity, dissection and human anatomy/physiology. Topics in the area of physical science include atoms, states of matter, the periodic table, and physical and chemical properties/changes. Topics in the area of earth science include rocks, minerals, plate tectonics, earthquakes and volcanoes. All areas include labs and hands-on activities. (Various single topic books based off the NGSS – *Glencoe Science* – 2002)

## **Social Studies: Geography**

Grade 7

The focus of 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Social Studies mainly centers on the different facets of the Earth's geography. Not only does this include physical geography, but also climate, cultural, economic, and political aspects. The class will pay particular attention to these in terms of their existence in the western hemisphere, with the fifty states being a special area of concentration. The eastern hemisphere will be discussed as time allows. Extensive work will be done in regards to working with maps. (*World Studies – Western Hemisphere* – Prentice Hall – 2005)

## **Literature**

Grade 8

Although primarily a reading course, literature is designed to help students gain knowledge of reading, verbal, and communication skills. Through literary works such as short and long stories, essays, poetry, drama, and novels, students will both learn and improve their reading and writing skills. Verbal and communication skills acquired daily through such activities as questioning, debating, and presenting. Finally, this course allows for continuous participation and growth of students as they are challenged to form and express their own opinions dealing with the material that is covered. (*The Language of Literature* – McDougal-Littell – 2002)

## **English**

Grade 8

English was developed primarily to give students more class time to improve writing instruction. The main focus of this class is writing and grammar. This course is designed to help students improve their writing skills necessary for daily life. Along with the elements of grammar, we cover a broad range of writing topics dealing with three main types of writing: exposition, narration, and persuasion. (*Language Network* – McDougal-Littell – 2001)

## **Math**

Grade 8

This course builds on concepts that were learned in previous years. The curriculum follows the 8<sup>th</sup> grade Illinois Learning Standards. Units covered include real numbers and exponents, expressions and equations, congruence and similarity, functions, linear systems, Pythagorean theorem, patterns, bivariate data, and volume. The eight mathematical practices are also incorporated into the daily learning; make sense of problems and persevere in solving them, reason abstractly and quantitatively, construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others, use appropriate tools strategically, attend to precision, look for and make sense of structure, and look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning.

## **8<sup>th</sup> Grade (Math I)**

Grade 8

This course is designed to challenge those students who excel in math. The curriculum follows the 9th grade Illinois Learning Standards. Conceptual categories of units covered include number and quantity, algebra, functions, modeling, geometry, and statistics and probability. The eight mathematical practices are also incorporated into the daily learning: make sense of problems and persevere in solving them, reason abstractly and quantitatively, construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others, use appropriate tools strategically, attend to precision, look for and make sense of structure, and look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning.

## **Science**

Grade 8

This class will build on the scientific concepts that students have learned previously and work to prepare students for science courses offered at the high school level. The year will incorporate areas of study in physical science, life science, and earth science. Specific topics include density, buoyancy, astronomy, animal diversity, dissection, and energy. (Various single topic books based off the ILS – Glencoe Science – 2002)

## **Social Studies: American History**

Grade 8

This course covers U.S. History up to the time of Reconstruction. The first semester will be spent covering the Reformation, early European colonization of North America (Separatist and Puritans) the first Indian wars (King Philips and Queen Ann's war) the French and Indian War, The American Revolution and the U.S. Constitution. First semester includes flag and voting test units. The second semester covers the War of 1812, Jacksonian era politics, Industrialization, The Mexican War, Slavery, and the Civil War. The second semester includes a mini unit on the history of Illinois, and the Illinois state constitution test. (*Call to Freedom* – Holt – 2005)

## **Physical Education**

Grades 7 and 8

The department has developed a curriculum with a variety of activities with special attention on participation, safety, and success. Topics covered include physical health and fitness programming, recreational and leisure time activities, positive social behaviors, and team building skills. This course is for an entire year. ***Students will be required to wear a school PE uniform during class.***

## **Elective Courses**

### **Band**

Grades 7 and 8

Junior High Band is an intermediate level band. Students are required to have prior musical experience either through 6<sup>th</sup> grade beginning band or private instruction. The course is designed to build upon skills students have already developed as well as introduce new skills. Students explore and perform a variety of musical styles throughout the year. Students will also study basic music theory, history, and terminology. The band will perform several times throughout the school year, including parades. Band will meet as a combined group of 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade every day. The *Mercer County Golden Eagles JH Band* will give the music student an opportunity to excel on their instrument as well as build a life-long appreciation of music.

### **Chorus**

Grades 7 and 8

Junior High Chorus includes singing choral music, sight reading, music theory, and music appreciation. We will also have two concerts a year, winter and spring. Each year in April, students will be attending the Prairieland Choral Festival. We also will be doing a mini-musical to be presented at the New Boston Elementary school during the school day. Chorus students will sing at 8<sup>th</sup> grade promotion ceremony. Students can also participate in extra activities such as IESA Festivals and Solo/ Ensemble contest. **(Students are required to attend Organization Contest each year.)**

### **Fundamentals of Art I**

Grades 7 and 8

Students taking this course will investigate the tools and processes used for creating art in a variety of different media. Basic art elements and principles will be reviewed and used as the central focus for creation. Students will have the opportunity to work in both 2D and 3D design.

### **Fundamentals of Art II**

Grade 8

### **Prerequisite – Art Fundamentals I**

Students will further their knowledge of art techniques and processes and continue to build skill in wide variety of art media. Projects include both 2D and 3D design. The students and teacher will work together to plan, develop and execute a permanent work of art to be displayed on school grounds.

### **20<sup>th</sup> Century History I and II**

Grades 7 and 8

This class is designed to incorporate many of the aspects of social studies into a year-round study of the history of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. While there will of course be emphasis on the United States, other major events in the world will also be examined. A major area of concentration will be placed on studying primary and secondary accounts of the events that have happened in the last one hundred years. In doing so, we will gain more in-depth knowledge of the stories that have shaped our modern world. Reading, writing, and research will be three core components of this class that will all involve ELA standards and Common Core.

### **Samples of Topics Covered:**

The current conflict in the Middle East, the Cold War, the global Civil Rights Movement, the Olympics as a reflection of society's politics and morals, music and art through the decades, how individuals have shaped society

### **Study Hall**

Grades 7 and 8

Students have the option of taking study hall as an elective. Students will have the opportunity to receive support from a teacher to help them complete assignments, study for assessments and a quiet environment to read if all other coursework is finished.

### **Yearbook**

Grades 7 and 8

This course includes everything that it takes to begin and complete the yearly yearbook. You will be taking pictures and videos at all events, (sports, concerts, parades, etc.) loading and editing pictures on the computer and working online on the yearbook website. This includes page design, publishing techniques of all events as well as brainstorming the theme that is carried throughout the book. Walsworth Yearbook Company also includes the option of connecting yearbook photos with short videos that will be learned online through the Aurasma School account. This innovative class will expand your understanding of publishing, improve your grammar, and create a strong bond with classmates. Note: On days that there are no photos or summaries to work on; you need to have homework or an A.R. book to read.