

# Middle School Course Description Guide

## Grades 7 & 8

2015 - 2016



[www.hempfieldsd.org](http://www.hempfieldsd.org)

### 6<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> Parent Orientation Program

Centerville Middle School

Landisville Middle School

Wednesday, April 1, 2015

Wednesday, April 1, 2015

6:30 p.m. in CMS Auditorium

6:30 p.m. in LMS Cafeteria

### Mission

The mission of the Hempfield School District is to provide safe environments and responsive programs that inspire all students to become lifelong learners and contributing citizens in a global society.

### Vision

The vision of the Hempfield School District is personal growth, achievement and success for every student.

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## **Middle Level Education: What We Value and Believe**

The middle school years serve as the “bridge” between the elementary and high school levels; not only must our middle schools reinforce what students have learned while in elementary school, they must build upon this base and provide students with a solid foundation for their ninth grade experiences when they enter high school. At Hempfield, however, we believe our middle schools can and must aspire to achieve goals beyond merely preparing students to enter high school, for middle school is a time of tremendous personal growth for early adolescents.

The National Middle School Association (2005) identified seven *Key Developmental Needs* of early adolescents (10-15 years of age):

1. Positive social interactions with adults / peers
2. Structure and clear limits
3. Competence and achievement
4. Creative expression
5. Physical activity
6. Meaningful participation in families and school
7. Communities and opportunities for self-definition

### ***The Centerville and Landisville Middle Schools strive to:***

- Challenge all students academically with instruction that poses high expectations for all and which is responsive to the individual differences and needs of students.
- Help students to build the positive self-image needed to gain confidence in establishing and keeping relationships with peers and adults.
- Provide students with diverse, developmentally appropriate experiences in and out of the classroom to promote healthy physical, intellectual, social, and emotional growth.
- Provide students with leadership and role modeling intended to help them develop respect for themselves and for people from different backgrounds and cultures.
- Help students to develop the effective decision-making and personal management skills needed to become responsible young adults.
- Help students to realize that learning, both academic and non-academic, is a process that can lead to professionally and personally rewarding experiences throughout life.

## **HSD Middle School Framework and Rationale**

The Centerville and Landisville Middle Schools are learning communities designed to meet the unique developmental needs of early adolescents through a collaborative environment and student-centered educational program through which students can discover and explore their diverse talents and develop the knowledge and skills necessary to become healthy, purposeful, life-long learners.

The CMS and LMS staffs collaborate within and across buildings to meet the unique physical, intellectual, emotional, and social needs of the students. Teachers, counselors, and administrators recognize the wide range of developmental needs early adolescents possess. Not only do they design lessons and employ teaching methods that are responsive to student differences and readiness to learn, they provide clear limits, the structural framework, and environmental stability that middle school students need in order to function effectively and grow.

### **Interdisciplinary Teaming**

The middle school *interdisciplinary team* structure exists to create a child-centered school that is congruent with meeting the key developmental needs of early adolescents. This type of educational approach provides opportunities for a team of teachers representing English, mathematics, social studies, science, and reading/literacy (Grade-7) to communicate about and collaborate closely to resolve curricular, instructional, and other developmental issues for a group of students that they have in common.

Teachers on the interdisciplinary teams have common team planning time and meet on a regular basis with the appropriate school counselor to discuss student concerns and to engage in instructional planning. This structure also provides parents/guardians with ongoing opportunities to meet and communicate with all of their child’s team teachers.

Because of its focus on the individual student and the increased communication that occurs between professionals who share the same students, this approach ultimately benefits both the students and professionals who work with them.

## Instructional Program and Practices

The academic program in place at CMS and LMS is based on providing all students with access to rich, challenging curriculum and research-based, best instructional practices that are differentiated and intended to be responsive to the needs of a diverse student body. Staff members use a variety of student performance data to identify students' needs and readiness and to make placement decisions that match students to the instructional practices and materials for which they are most ready.

Particular emphasis is placed on honing content area literacy skills across all subject areas, as the development of proficient reading, writing, and thinking skills is critical to achieving academic success, regardless of the content area.

## Grouping Practices

The Centerville and Landisville Middle Schools employ a balanced approach to the grouping of students for instruction. In exploratory and elective course areas, students are grouped heterogeneously, meaning students of mixed readiness levels and interests are blended together.

In core areas such as English, reading, social studies and science, where course success is largely dependent upon students' skill with the construction of meaning from text they read and write, students are grouped into sections based on their literacy readiness level as determined by performance on district approved local reading assessments and, in some cases, prior PSSA performance. Teacher input may also be considered as appropriate. Performance on district-approved benchmark math assessments and teacher input are used to determine students' readiness for handling the different levels of abstraction associated with our middle level math courses.

Just as students develop physically at different times and rates, so too, do they develop at different rates intellectually. Respecting this fact, the professionals at CMS and LMS assess students in an ongoing fashion throughout the school year, making adjustments to the groups to which students are assigned when student achievement indicates readiness for increased levels of challenge or a more rapid pace of instruction.

## Placement in Core Area Courses

Because reading is an essential skill for learning the middle school curriculum, CMS and LMS employ text resources published *below*, *at*, or *above* the respective grade level. The overwhelming evidence from reading research points to the need for students to engage with text written for their current ability levels. That is, when we *meet students where they are* (current readiness level), they will develop skills at a faster pace, experience more success when reading, enjoy higher performance on comprehension-based assessments, and develop intrinsic motivation to read independently.

This is critical information for students and parents to consider when registering for courses. It is essential that we place students into text-based core subject courses where they will interact with text materials for which their performance on district assessments, the PSSA assessment, and teacher input suggest they are ready.

**At Hempfield, we continually review the research literature regarding best educational practices so that we can best meet the needs of our middle level students. Communication from students and parents is critical to our continuous improvement efforts.**

If you have any questions about your child's performance to date on various district assessments, his/her performance on the most recent reading PSSA, or how your child's teacher(s) view his/her course performance, please contact your child's current teacher(s). For questions about program information/placements, please contact the appropriate department supervisor below.

Ralph Heister (Science Supervisor)	898-5558
Wanda Richie (English Supervisor)	898-5550
Mike Mylin (Mathematics Supervisor)	898-5555
Terry Trego (Social Studies Supervisor)	898-5559
Pamela Mitchell (Reading Supervisor)	618-5088

## 7<sup>th</sup> GRADE ENGLISH

Middle school students are enrolled in one English course per year that covers the areas of literature, grammar, vocabulary, spelling, and writing. Students will study a wide variety of literary types, including poetry, drama, short stories, and

nonfiction. They also practice writing and speaking for different purposes and audiences, and engage in a general study of the English language. The seventh grade English program is designed to develop and improve students' communication and critical thinking skills.

### **Advanced English 7**

In this advanced literature and language course, students will engage in higher-level analysis of literature, including the study of short stories, classical mythology, nonfiction, drama, and poetry. Students will engage in a vocabulary program, complete assorted creative and expository writings, respond to prompts, and engage in grammar and word usage activities.

This course is designed for the student who is working at an advanced level in the language arts. To qualify for placement into this course, students are expected to have performed consistently at the high end of the Advanced Level on the Reading PSSA and performed above grade level on district approved local assessment(s). Teacher input may also be a factor for placement in this course.

The literary resources that students will use in this course are above the seventh-grade reading level.

### **English 7**

In this differentiated literature and language program students will study short stories, classical mythology, nonfiction, drama, and poetry. Students will complete a separate vocabulary program, complete assorted creative and expository writings, respond to prompts, and maintain a journal. In addition, students will investigate the parts of speech and the parts of the sentence.

This course is designed for the student who is working at or above grade level in the language arts. To qualify for placement into this course, students are expected to have performed at the Proficient or Advanced Level on the most recently reported Reading PSSA, and performed at or above grade level on district approved local assessment(s). Teacher input may also be a factor for placement in this course.

The literary resources that students will use in this course are on a seventh grade reading level, but additional resources will provide challenges for students with advanced skills in reading and writing.

### **Foundations of English 7**

Students in this course will study short stories, classical mythology, nonfiction, drama, and poetry. Classroom instruction will integrate vocabulary development throughout all reading selections and develop spelling lists based on frequently used words. Students in this level will complete assorted creative and expository writings, respond to prompts, and maintain a journal. In addition, students will explore the parts of speech and the parts of the sentence

This course is designed for the student who has shown a readiness for basic skills in the language arts and is intended to improve student readiness for more challenging material. Class sizes are generally smaller to allow for more individualized instruction and to encourage the students to improve their basic skills to reach grade level proficiency in the language arts.

To qualify for placement into this course, students are expected to have performed at Basic or Below Basic Level on the most recently reported Reading PSSA, and/or performed below grade level on district approved local assessment(s). Teacher input may also be a factor for placement in this course.

### **Fundamentals of English 7**

Students will study literature chosen from themes within the seventh grade curriculum. Vocabulary development is integrated throughout all reading selections, and spelling lists are based on frequently used words. Students in this level will complete assorted creative and expository writings, respond to prompts, and maintain a journal.

This course is designed for students who are reading, significantly below their current grade level as demonstrated on the Reading PSSA and various district-approved grade level assessments. Class sizes are smaller to allow for individualized instruction.

The qualifying student's IEP team determines placement in this course. The decision to exit the course will also be made by the IEP team.

## 7<sup>th</sup> GRADE READING/LITERACY

The seventh grade Reading/Literacy program is designed to meet students' individual needs in their development as independent readers. All seventh grade students are enrolled in a yearlong reading course taught by a Reading Specialist. Valid and reliable data from various assessments determine the placement of students in the reading courses. Reading, writing, speaking, researching, and listening competencies are integrated throughout students' learning experiences. As students progress from one grade level and course to the next, increases should occur in the complexity of materials and tasks and in the students' independent application of reading skills and strategies. Placement can be adjusted as students show evidence of significant growth and increased readiness for more complex and rigorous texts and writing assignments in response to reading.



### Advanced Strategic Literacy 7

The purpose of this course is to enable students to develop and strengthen advanced skills and strategies through integrated experiences in speaking, listening, reading, writing, researching and thinking skills. Emphasis will be on inference, application, analysis, and evaluation of content from varied texts including narrative and informational text. In this course, students will encounter challenging texts, discussions and writing. Therefore, students in this course are expected to be avid readers and sophisticated writers. A highly qualified reading specialist will provide instruction in this course. In addition, students in this course have consistently demonstrated that they are working above grade level in the English Language Arts. Students will have a) performed above grade level on the district approved local reading assessment, and b) performed consistently at the high Advanced Level on the Reading PSSA. In addition, input from grade 6 teachers will be considered.

### Strategic Literacy - 7

In Strategic Literacy 7, students will continue to refine and master previously learned language arts and reading skills in increasingly complex reading selections. They will continue to receive instruction in higher level reading skills from a highly qualified reading specialist while reading widely in classic and contemporary selections and informational texts. Emphasis remains on comprehension, vocabulary and thinking skills in an interactive environment so that students: listen actively; speak/talk to construct meaning; read, write, and research critically. Significant blocks of time will be provided for reading independent, instructional and recreational materials.

Students in this course have demonstrated they are working at grade level in the English Language Arts. To qualify for placement in this course, students are expected to have a) consistently performed at grade level on the district approved local reading assessment, and b) performed consistently at the Proficient Level on the PSSA reading test. In addition, input from grade 6 teachers will be considered.

### Foundations of Strategic Literacy 7

Students in this course will receive instruction in five key areas: phonological awareness and decoding, reading fluency and word recognition, vocabulary and phrase meanings, reading comprehension, and writing in response to text. The majority of the reading selections will be nonfiction to build student success in reading content area textbooks. Independent reading will be incorporated into the class to build fluency, expand vocabulary, provide practice, and increase the enjoyment of reading. Students are expected to stay in this course for the entire year unless results from mid-year assessments indicate that the student is ready to exit the program.

This is a remedial reading class for students who have demonstrated that they are reading two or more grade levels below their grade placement. It will include computer work, reading, and small group work every day.

### Fundamentals of Literacy 7

This differentiated reading course incorporates small group instruction with intensive guided practice and modeling of reading strategies that will enable students to improve their overall reading performance. Fiction and nonfiction text of varying

lengths and levels of difficulty will be used during direct instruction. A self-selected reading component will gradually be incorporated as students demonstrate readiness to read independently. Students will be expected to read for pleasure as a way to increase their reading stamina, improve their reading fluency, and use the reading strategies to monitor their comprehension while reading. Extensive modeling by the teacher, as well as oral and written responses, will be utilized to ensure students comprehend when they read texts independently. A program emphasizing decoding skills of multisyllabic words will be utilized and progress will be continually monitored. Placement in this course can be adjusted as students show evidence of significant growth.

This course is designed for students who are reading significantly below their current grade level as demonstrated on the district-approved benchmark reading assessment. In addition, PSSA results indicate Basic and Below Basic performance levels. The qualifying student's IEP team determines placement in this course, as well as when students may exit the program.

## **7<sup>th</sup> GRADE WORLD HISTORY**

This initial social studies course on the secondary level examines the evolution of modern man from Ancient Sumer and Egypt to the rise of nation states in the fifteenth century and the Age of Discovery. Students will also be introduced to the physical and political geography of the areas studied in the Eastern Hemisphere as well as the cultural and historical background of the studied civilizations. Numerous multimedia materials will be employed in examining the course content.



### **Advanced World History**

In-depth studies of social, political, economic, and religious systems of ancient Western cultures make up the core of the course. Analytical writing, through essays and research projects, as well as ongoing reading and vocabulary assignments are required.

In order to qualify for placement into this course, students are expected to have performed consistently at the high Advanced Level on the reading PSSA and performed above grade level on district approved local assessments. Teacher input may also be a factor for placement in this course. Many of the text resources used in this course are written for readers reading higher than a seventh grade level.

### **World History**

This course includes the study of social, political, economic, and religious systems of ancient Western cultures, with an emphasis on the relationship of ancient developments to the present-day. The incorporation of numerous forms of visual aids to illustrate the locations and characteristics of these early civilizations is an important component of this course. Students will experience vocabulary instruction, practice of literacy strategies, and collaborative inquiry, as well as research experiences.

## **7<sup>th</sup> GRADE LIFE SCIENCE**

The life science program in seventh grade introduces the major concepts and principles of biology.

### **Advanced Life Science**

This course is designed for the student who excels in science, possesses sound critical thinking and organization skills, and is able to grasp and expand on new concepts very quickly. Topics to be covered include the scientific method, cells, classification of life forms, genetics, and ecology. To qualify for placement into this course, students are expected to have a) performed above grade level on district approved local assessment(s) and b) consistently performed at the high Advanced level on the PSSA. Teacher input may also be a factor for placement in



this course. Many of the text resources used in this course are written for readers reading higher than a seventh grade reading level.

*All Advanced Life Science students will be required to complete one inquiry-based, independent project that will teach them to use the testable knowledge base and analytical, problem solving skills that define science.* Students will work with the instructor to select a topic area for research, define a problem, develop a testable hypothesis, design an experimental procedure, collect and analyze data, and formulate a conclusion. Each student will have the option to have her/his final cumulative paper and a display presented at the middle school science fair.

### **Life Science**

This course is designed for the student who enjoys science, possesses critical thinking and organization skills, and is able to grasp and expand on new concepts.



This life science course includes topics such as the scientific method, cells, classification of life forms, genetics, and ecology. Students will develop inquiry process skills and concept understanding. *All Life Science students will be required to complete one inquiry-based, project that will teach them to use the testable knowledge base and analytical, problem solving skills that define science.* Students will, as part of the course, be provided with a topic area for research, define a problem, develop a testable hypothesis, design an experimental procedure, collect and analyze data, formulate a conclusion and create a final cumulative paper and display. All Life Science students will have the opportunity to complete an independent research project (as described in the Advanced Life Science course description).

## 7<sup>th</sup> GRADE MATHEMATICS

The mathematics program in seventh grade offers the following courses based upon the readiness of the student. Calculators, computers, and manipulatives will be used to assist instruction and learning.

Note: *Sequencing flow-charts for grades 7-9 math courses can be found on pages 20*

### **Algebra 1A**

*Algebra 1A* includes a review of *Pre-Algebra* concepts, the study of the rules of algebra, matrices, signed numbers, equations, inequalities, graphing, formulas, functions, and systems of equations. The course presents algebraic concepts and skills using a problem-solving approach. This course is comparable to a high school level honors course. Content is covered at a rapid pace. Students are expected to do a significant amount of work outside of the regular class time. To qualify for this course, students are expected to have successfully completed a pre-algebra curriculum in sixth grade. Teacher input may also be a factor for placement in this course. Students who have not successfully completed Hempfield's sixth grade pre-algebra curriculum are required to obtain a qualifying score on a district-approved mathematics assessment before enrolling in this course.

### **Pre-Algebra**

Pre-Algebra is designed to develop abstract thinking skills in preparation for future courses in algebra and geometry. Abstract thinking skills are developed while studying topics such as percent, measurement, ratio, proportion, data analysis, integers, geometry, statistics, formulas, and equations. Pre-Algebra is presented in two different formats to meet the needs of students. A single-year accelerated format is available for students ready for faster paced learning to prepare for Algebra 1 in 8th grade. A two-year format is available to support students with more practice, application and review to help them deepen their understanding of the concepts presented.

### **Foundations of Mathematics 7**

*Foundations of Mathematics 7* is designed to help students improve their computational and problem-solving skills. Topics studied in this course will fall

into the categories of the number system, ratios & proportional relationships, expressions & equations, geometry, and statistics & probability.

### **Fundamentals of Mathematics 7**

*Fundamentals of Mathematics 7* emphasizes basic operations with whole numbers, fractional numerals, and decimal numerals. The goal of this course is to significantly improve a student's current understanding of mathematics. Placement in this course is determined by the qualifying student's IEP team. Class sizes are smaller to allow for individualized instruction. The aim of this course is to reinforce and extend basic mathematical skills so that all students can experience success in their future studies of advanced mathematical concepts. The decision to exit the course will be made by the IEP team.

## **7<sup>th</sup> GRADE EXPLORATORY COURSES**

### **Art**

Middle school art classes stress problem-solving skills and using one's mind to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate art. Students are introduced to art production, art history of many cultures, art criticism, and aesthetics. Major areas to be studied include painting, drawing, sculpture, textile design, printmaking and ceramics.

Seventh Grade Art exposes students to the basic principles of design and color theory. Students are taught to draw realistically by developing their perception skills. Students create and discuss their own art projects. They are also introduced to the master works of famous artists.



### **Computer Keyboarding and Applications**

This required seventh grade course is designed as an introduction to keyboarding and computer applications. The development of proper keyboarding skills (touch typing) is stressed. The Microsoft Office Suite programs; Word, Excel, and PowerPoint will be used to prepare letters, memos, reports, charts, graphs, and presentations. In addition to the Internet Safety Unit, the students will create an iMovie or a video podcast as a course requirement.



### **Family & Consumer Sciences**

During students two years at the middle school level they will participate in two family and consumer science courses. One course is designed to provide students with a better understanding of consumer education and practical living skills. Units of study include nutrition, safety and sanitation, consumerism and basic cooking skills. Students analyze food labels, portion sizes and meal planning principles as they learn more about nutrition. Students will learn how to plan, prepare, and serve attractive, nutritious, economical foods with an emphasis on the importance of correct table setting and table manners.

The other course will cover the basic skills of reading, writing, and mathematics as they apply to everyday living situations. Students are introduced to consumer education in the topics of clothing selection and care, fibers, and fabrics, laundry skills, and sewing. Students will use a sewing kit to construct a simple sewing project.



## **Music**

All seventh grade students are required to continue exploring elements and concepts of music. Topics in seventh grade music class include learning how to listen for and describe musical elements and various music styles using an informed vocabulary; learning to recognize relationships between music, other art forms, and culture; learning to read and compose music using conventional rhythmic and pitch notation; and performing basic music compositions using keyboards, singing voices, and percussion instruments.



## **Physical Education**

The seventh grade physical education program consists of activities designed to promote the components of physical fitness.

*Boys* -This course provides students with an introduction to selected team and individual activities. Students are taught basic movements, skills, strategies, knowledge, and appropriate behaviors associated with successful beginning participation in football, soccer, basketball, volleyball, team challenges, and tennis. Students also participate in activities that promote fitness development and lifelong activities. Sportsmanship and fair play is required, and aspects of cooperation and teamwork are integrated into the curriculum. A physical education uniform is required for participation.



*Girls* -This course provides students with an introduction to selected team and individual activities. Students are instructed in the basic movements, skills, strategies, knowledge, and appropriate behaviors associated with successful beginning participation in field hockey, soccer, football, basketball, volleyball, frisbee, team challenges, tennis, and throwing and catching. Students are also involved in activities that promote fitness development. A physical education uniform is required for participation.



## **Adaptive Physical Education**

This course is a diversified program of developmental activities, games, sports, rhythms, and therapeutic exercises adapted to consider the interests, and abilities of the students. The program's learning experiences are designed for students with disabilities who may not safely or successfully engage in unrestricted participation in the vigorous activities of the general physical education course. The goal of this program is to permit each student to attain an understanding of his/her physical potentials and limitations, to develop competency in a variety of skills, and to work toward health related physical fitness within the scope of his/her abilities.

## **Health Education**

The Middle School Health curriculum promotes an understanding of sound mental/emotional, physical, and social well-being, and provides instruction that is aimed to help our students live a healthy lifestyle. The program's learning experiences are designed to give the student's an understanding of the different body systems, along with providing them with the knowledge to make healthy nutritional choices. The program also explores how to react in emergency situations.



## **Technology Education – Exploring Technology**

This course is designed to offer all middle school students experiences related to the basic concepts and evolution of technology. Teacher-planned experiences will require students to work cooperatively and independently on assignments. Problem-solving activities will focus on the areas of communication, construction, manufacturing, energy/power, transportation, and biotechnology. Students are required to keep a class notebook.

## **7<sup>th</sup> GRADE ELECTIVE COURSES**

**Hempfield’s Middle School Chorus, Band, and Orchestra** offer students a performance level that bridges the gap between elementary and high school experiences.

### **Middle School Chorus**

Students may elect to continue developing their singing technique, ensemble skills, and music literacy skills through rehearsing and performing a wide variety of musical styles in Middle School Chorus. Students in chorus rehearse twice per cycle during the school day to prepare for two or three concerts during the school year. The director will assess each student’s performance and skill development in rehearsal and concerts on a pass/fail basis. All students are required to participate in all performance opportunities. Select students may be invited to participate in a smaller chamber chorus at the director’s discretion. Students in each Middle School Chorus are also eligible to audition for a combined CMS/LMS extracurricular musical production that rehearses after school.



### **Middle School Band**

Students may elect to continue developing their wind and percussion instrumental technique, ensemble skills, and music literacy skills through rehearsing and performing a wide variety of musical styles in Middle School Band. Students in this fully balanced ensemble rehearse three times per cycle during the school day to prepare for two or three concerts during the school year. The director will assess each student’s performance and skill development in rehearsal and in concerts for a letter grade. All students are required to participate in all performance opportunities. Each August the director offers a Summer Band Camp program for all middle school band students. The combined CMS/LMS Middle School Band may perform with the High School Marching Band in the fall and in an occasional parade. Select students may be invited to audition for a combined CMS/LMS extracurricular Jazz Band. Select band students in each middle school may also be invited to perform in the LLMEA County Middle School Band Festival.



### **Middle School Orchestra**

Students may elect to continue developing their string instrumental technique, ensemble skills, and music literacy skills through rehearsing and performing a wide variety of musical styles in Middle School Orchestra. Students in this fully balanced string ensemble rehearse three times per cycle during the school day to prepare for two or three concerts during the school year. The director will assess each student’s performance and skill development in rehearsal and in concerts for a letter grade. All students are required to participate in all performance opportunities. Select students in each orchestra may be invited to participate in a smaller chamber ensemble at the director’s discretion. Select string students in each middle school may

also be invited to perform in the LLMEA County Middle School Orchestra Festival.



## 8<sup>th</sup> GRADE ENGLISH

Eighth grade English builds on the concepts studied in seventh grade including the study of literature, spelling, vocabulary, and continued instruction of the writing process.

### **Advanced English 8**

In this advanced literature and language course, students will engage in higher-level analysis of literature, an in-depth study of grammar and usage, both expository and creative written composition, public speaking, and a challenging vocabulary program. Students selecting this level must complete assigned summer readings as a preparation for the class.

This course is designed for the student who is working at an advanced level in the language arts. To qualify for placement into this course, students are expected to have consistently performed at the high end of the Advanced Level on the Reading PSSA, and performed above grade level on the district approved local assessment(s). Teacher input may also be a factor for placement in this course.

The fundamental text resources used in this course are above an eighth-grade reading level.

### **English 8**

This course includes the study of grammar, usage, spelling, written composition, public speaking, literature, and a challenging vocabulary program. This class requires students to prepare daily homework assignments, complete outside reading, and present speeches to inform and persuade. Students will complete assorted creative and

expository writings, respond to prompts, and maintain a journal. Students selecting this level must complete assigned summer reading as a preparation for the class.

This course is designed for the student who is working at or above grade level in the language arts. To qualify for placement into this course, students are expected to have performed at or above grade level on district approved local assessment(s). Teacher input may also be a factor for placement in this course.

The fundamental text resources used in this course are on an eighth grade reading level, but instruction also includes a wide variety of literary selections to provide challenges for students of different reading and writing abilities.

### **Foundations of English 8**

Using a unified text and supplementary materials, students will read various genres of literature that incorporate lessons containing language, vocabulary, writing, and spelling instruction. Teachers also will coordinate language workshops, speaking and listening activities, and reading instruction with the studied literature. Students will complete assorted creative and expository writings, respond to prompts, and maintain a journal.

Students selecting this level must complete assigned summer reading as a preparation for the class. This course is designed for the student who has shown basic skills in the language arts, and is intended to improve student readiness for more challenging material. Class sizes are generally smaller to allow for more individualized instruction and to encourage the students to improve their basic skills to reach grade level in the language arts.

Students are placed in this course based on their performance on the district-approved benchmark assessments. Teacher input may also be a factor for placement in this course.

### **Fundamentals of English 8**

In this course students will study literature selected for content, relevance, and reading ability level. Vocabulary development is integrated throughout all reading selections and spelling lists are based on frequently used words. Students in this level will write friendly letters, complete assorted creative

and expository writings, respond to prompts, and maintain a journal.

This course is designed for students who are reading significantly below their current grade level as demonstrated on the Reading PSSA and various district-approved grade level assessments. Class sizes are smaller to allow for individualized instruction.

The qualifying student's IEP team determines placement in this course. The decision to exit the course will also be made by the IEP team.

## **8<sup>th</sup> GRADE READING/ LITERACY AND FOREIGN LANGUAGE**

Students in eighth grade have three options within the Reading/Literacy and Foreign Language strand. Most eighth grade students will be enrolled in a Reading course taught by a Reading Specialist. The courses that serve most students are: Strategic Literacy 8 or Literacy Workshop 8. (See the descriptor...) These courses are designed to meet students' individual needs in their development as independent readers. The remaining eighth graders will qualify to take a Foreign Language.

Valid and reliable data from various assessments determine placement of students in the reading and foreign language courses.



### **Foundations of Strategic Literacy 8**

Reading Specialists will work together to deliver the direct instruction in this differentiated reading course through small group and individualized instruction as needed. Students will be expected to improve their comprehension and vocabulary

development with increasing levels of performance toward grade level standards. Students will continue to use the reading strategies they have been taught with various kinds of short texts, content area text and novels. A program emphasizing decoding skills of multisyllabic words will continue from seventh grade with progress being continually monitored. An independent reading component will be incorporated as well as a writing component that focuses on literature responses. Oral and written responses will be made after every reading with specific focus on paraphrasing and summarizing the text. Time for sustained independent reading will give students opportunities to improve their reading fluency and to increase their stamina for reading various kinds of texts. Placement in this course can be adjusted as students show evidence of grade appropriate reading performance. Students in this course have demonstrated they are not yet reading independently on grade level. To qualify for placement in this course, students have a) performed one or more grade levels below their current grade placement on district approved local Reading Assessment(s), and b) are not Proficient on the PSSA reading test. In addition, input from grade 7 teachers will be considered.

### **Literacy Workshop**

This course is required for students who take the Exploring French/German/Spanish course. It will meet one period per day for one marking period and is taught by a Reading Specialist. In this course, students will participate in a reading workshop using self-selected materials as the basis of the program. Students will learn how to find books that support their author or genre tastes, as well as discover the importance of choosing books that will further their abilities as independent readers. Student selection of materials will occur within the parameters of our district-approved curriculum. Strategic literacy instruction will be incorporated with an emphasis on the application of the strategies within varied independent reading and writing opportunities; including Dialogue Journals, Book Talks, Literature Circles and teacher or peer conferencing. A culminating independent project will be required and students will be expected to present the project to the class.



Students in this course need time and feedback to fully master the independent reading skills required for success at the high school level. As a result of the extended time for independent reading that this course provides, students will continue to develop

their reading fluency, word knowledge, writing skills, stamina, and motivation.

### **Fundamentals of Literacy 8**

This differentiated reading course continues to incorporate small group instruction with intensive guided practice and modeling of reading strategies ensuring students improve their overall reading performance. Fiction and nonfiction text of varying lengths and levels of difficulty will be used during direct instruction. A self-selected reading component will gradually be incorporated as students demonstrate readiness to read independently for longer periods of time. Students will be expected to read for pleasure as a way to increase their reading stamina, improve their reading fluency, and use the reading strategies to monitor their comprehension while reading. Extensive modeling by the teacher, as well as oral and written responses, will be utilized to ensure students comprehend when they read texts independently. A program emphasizing decoding skills of multisyllabic words will continue from seventh grade and progress will be continually monitored to ensure growth. Placement in this course can be adjusted as students show evidence of grade level performance.

This course is designed for students who are reading significantly below their current grade level as demonstrated on the district-approved benchmark reading assessment. In addition, PSSA results indicate Basic and Below Basic performance levels. The qualifying student's IEP team determines placement in this course, as well as when students may exit the program.

### **Exploring French, German and Spanish + Literacy Workshop 8**

As an exploratory course, *Exploring French / German / Spanish* presents the opportunity to study three foreign languages. The course includes three marking periods of language study, one language per marking period. The fourth marking period



(may fall into marking periods 1-4) will be the *Literacy Workshop* course (below course description). Each marking period of the *Exploring French/German/Spanish* course concentrates on vocabulary acquisition as well as cultural information. This course better enables students to make decisions concerning the selection of future language courses in high school, and also will help prepare students for the basic principles of language learning.

### **French I – German I – Spanish I**

French I, German I, and Spanish I courses are the first step in the overall modern language program in the Hempfield School District. *To qualify for these courses, students must obtain the recommendation by their seventh grade English and Reading teachers; the rationale for this recommendation is related to the high-level grammar, word usage, and vocabulary components of each full-year foreign language course.* Upon successful completion of one of these courses and teacher recommendation, the student may enroll in a second year foreign language course at Hempfield High School.

Each of these full-year introductory courses includes presentations to students in the *following natural learning order*: listening/understanding, speaking, reading, and writing. In order to establish foundations for verbal proficiency, each course includes pronunciation, recitation, comprehension, vocabulary development, and in-depth grammar study. Using the verbal approach, emphasis is placed on vocabulary building and pronunciation with an accompanying explanation of the fundamentals of the respective language's grammar. Related cultures are presented as part of the classroom experiences, drawing from textbook and supplemental materials. Basic geography of respective countries is also included. In addition to the culture presented in text readings, supplemental materials from newspapers, videos, magazines, and

other media sources are also used to introduce students to family life, foods, holidays, customs and traditions, education, and the geography of related countries. **Verbal proficiency is stressed throughout the course.**

## 8<sup>th</sup> GRADE AMERICAN HISTORY I

The eighth grade social studies course introduces students to our country's early beginnings in the seventeenth century and traces our development through the Colonial and Revolutionary War era to eventual independence. The course examines the political, economic, social, and cultural development of the United States beginning with the Confederation Period and traces it through the late-nineteenth century. In addition to historical content, students will study the physical and political geography of the western hemisphere with particular emphasis on the United States and how geography played a role in our nation's development. The study and discussion of current events is also part of this course.

### Advanced American History I

In this course students will be required to become familiar with primary and secondary historical sources. Analytical writing, through essays and research projects, as well as above grade level reading and vocabulary assignments are required.

In order to qualify for placement into this course, students are expected to have consistently performed at the high Advanced level on the reading PSSA and performed above grade level on district approved local assessments. Teacher input may also be a factor for placement in this course. The reason for these qualifications is that many of the text resources used in this course are higher than an eighth grade reading level.

### American History I

This course combines practical understanding of our history and geography with the issues of technological change and life in our culture. Analytical writing, through essays and research

projects, as well as reading and vocabulary assignments are required.

## 8<sup>th</sup> GRADE EARTH SCIENCE

The science program in eighth grade includes learning experiences with text resources and supplemental enrichment materials that emphasize the major concepts and theories of earth science (weather and its causes, earth's surface features, and earth in the context of space and environmental studies).

### Advanced Earth Science

This course is designed for the student who excels in science and is able to grasp and expand on new concepts very quickly. To qualify for placement into this course, students are expected to have performed above grade level on district approved benchmark assessments. Teacher input may also be a factor for placement in this course. Students will be required to complete challenging reading and writing assignments and perform investigative laboratory exercises that are more challenging than traditional academic work. *Advanced Earth Science students will be required to complete one independent research project and participate in the Middle School Science Fair.*



### Earth Science

This course is designed for the student who enjoys science and is able to grasp and expand on new concepts. Students will be required to complete challenging reading and writing assignments, perform investigative laboratory exercises, and actively participate in classroom discussions. Additionally, this course will work with resources



and materials that emphasize the importance of earth science in our daily lives. *All Earth Science students will be required to complete one inquiry-based project as part of the course that will teach them to use the testable knowledge base and analytical, problem solving skills that define science.* All Earth Science students will have the opportunity to complete an independent research project and participate in the Middle School Science Fair.

## 8<sup>th</sup> GRADE MATHEMATICS

The mathematics program in eighth grade offers the following courses based upon the readiness of the student. Calculators, computers, and manipulatives will be used to assist instruction and learning.

Note: *Sequencing flow-charts for grades 7-9 math courses can be found on pages 20*

### **Algebra 1B**

*Algebra 1B* includes the study of matrices, probability, graphing, linear functions, quadratic functions, systems of equations, complex numbers, polynomials, polynomial functions, and rational expressions. The course presents advanced algebraic concepts and skills using a problem-solving approach. Connections between concepts taught in the course and their practical applications will be emphasized. This course is comparable to a high school level honors course. Content is covered at a rapid pace. Students are expected to do a significant amount of work outside of the regular class time. This course is offered to students in eighth grade who have successfully completed the Algebra 1A course in grade seven.

### **Algebra 1A**

*Algebra 1A* includes a review of Pre-Algebra concepts, the study of the rules of algebra, matrices, signed numbers, equations, inequalities, graphing, formulas, functions, and systems of equations. The course presents algebraic concepts and skills using a problem-solving approach. This course is a high school level course. Content is covered at a rapid pace. Students are expected to do a significant amount of work outside of the regular class time. This course is offered to students in eighth grade who have successfully completed the Pre-Algebra Accelerated course in grade seven. Students successfully completing the course will be prepared to take Algebra 1B in grade nine.

### **Pre-Algebra**

*Pre-Algebra* is designed to prepare students for success in courses such as algebra and geometry. Students will learn to think mathematically, use technology, look for patterns, communicate mathematically, and solve problems in such key areas as percent, measurement, ratio, proportion, data analysis, integers, geometry, statistics, formulas, and equations. Pre-Algebra is designed to give students practice and review to help them deepen their understanding of the concepts presented. Students successfully completing the course will be prepared to study *Algebra 1A* and *1B* in grade nine.

### **Foundations of Mathematics 8**

*Foundations of Mathematics 8* designed to help students improve their computational and problem-solving skills. Topics studied in this course will fall into the categories of the number system, expressions & equations, functions, geometry, and statistics & probability. Students successfully completing this course will be prepared to study Foundations of Pre-Algebra and Foundations of Algebra 1A in grade nine.

### **Fundamentals of Mathematics 8**

*Fundamentals of Mathematics 8* emphasizes the use of fractions, decimals, and percents within a problem-solving context. The goal of this course is to significantly improve a student's current understanding of mathematics. Placement in this course is determined by the qualifying student's IEP team. Class sizes are smaller to allow for individualized instruction. The course seeks to provide a variety of options and alternative approaches that will appeal to all students in the course. The decision to exit the course will be made by the IEP team.

## 8<sup>th</sup> GRADE EXPLORATORY COURSES

### **Art**

The eighth grade art program builds on the basic skills taught in seventh grade and expands upon their knowledge of color theory as well as a wider range of multicultural units. Students will be exposed to different cultures, as well as challenged to learn more about their own cultures.

Students will develop creative problem-solving skills and critical thinking skills while constructing both individual and group projects which utilize a variety of mediums. Through lectures, demonstrations and critiques, the students will experience art process, art history, art criticism, and aesthetics.

### **Family Consumer Sciences**

During students two years at the middle school level they will participate in two family and consumer science courses. One course is designed to provide students with a better understanding of consumer education and practical living skills. Units of study include nutrition, safety and sanitation, consumerism and basic cooking skills.

Students analyze food labels, portion sizes and meal planning principles as they learn more about nutrition. Students will learn how to plan, prepare, and serve attractive, nutritious, economical foods with an emphasis on the importance of correct table setting and table manners.

The other course will cover the basic skills of reading, writing, and mathematics as they apply to everyday living situations. Students are introduced

to consumer education in the topics of clothing selection and care, fibers, and fabrics, laundry skills, and sewing. Students will use a sewing kit to construct a simple sewing project.

### **Health Education**

The Middle School Health curriculum promotes an understanding of sound mental/emotional, physical, and social well-being, and provides instruction that is aimed to help our students live a healthy lifestyle. Students study the impact of steroid, alcohol, tobacco, and other chemical abuse on the body. Discussions include peer recognition of potential issues, and how to access support services. Communicable and non-communicable diseases are also discussed. The students receive instruction on the importance of developing healthy eating habits and discuss decision-making skills that foster wellness.

### **Music**

All eighth grade students are required to continue exploring elements and concepts of music. Topics in eighth grade music class revolve around the history and evolution of popular music styles.

Students learn about various creative artists associated with the development of popular music throughout the world. Students also learn to listen for, identify, analyze, and describe various elements, styles, and artistic traits associated with jazz, popular, and rock music; continue to develop music literacy skills by reading conventional music notation and performing popular music styles on keyboards and percussion instruments; and learn to improvise, compose, and perform their unique versions of popular music styles using keyboards, voices, and percussion instruments.

### **Physical Education**

*Boys* -This course provides students with an introduction to selected team and individual activities. Students are taught basic movements, skills, strategies, knowledge, and appropriate behaviors associated with successful beginning participation in football, soccer, basketball, volleyball, team challenges, and tennis. Students also participate in activities that promote fitness development and lifelong activities. Sportsmanship and fair play is required, and aspects of cooperation and teamwork are integrated into the curriculum. A physical education uniform is required for participation.



*Girls* -This course provides students with an introduction to selected team and individual activities. Students are instructed in the basic movements, skills, strategies, knowledge, and appropriate behaviors associated with successful beginning participation in field hockey, soccer, football, basketball, volleyball, frisbee, team challenges, tennis, and throwing and catching. Students are also involved in activities that promote fitness development. A physical education uniform is required for participation.

### **Adaptive Physical Education**

This course is a diversified program of developmental activities, games, sports, rhythms,

and therapeutic exercises adapted to consider the interests, and abilities of the students. The program's learning experiences are designed for students with disabilities who may not safely or successfully engage in unrestricted participation in the vigorous activities of the general physical education course. The goal of this program is to permit each student to attain an understanding of his/her physical potentials and limitations, to develop competency in a variety of skills, and to work toward health related physical fitness within the scope of his/her abilities.

### **Health Education**

8th Grade:

The Middle School Health curriculum promotes an understanding of sound mental/emotional, physical, and social well-being, and provides instruction that is aimed to help our students live a healthy lifestyle. The students will study the impact of eating disorders, alcohol, tobacco, and other substances on the body. Communicable and noncommunicable diseases are also discussed.

### **Technology Education-Applying Technology**

*Applying Technology* prepares students to expand on basic concepts and skills taught in seventh grade. Teacher-planned experiences will require students to work cooperatively and independently on assignments related to the application of technology. Hands-on and problem-solving activities will focus on the areas of communication, construction, manufacturing, energy/power, transportation, and biotechnology. Students are required to maintain a class notebook.



### **Computer Keyboarding and Applications**

This required eighth grade course is designed as an introduction to the design and marketing concepts used in the business arena. The development of proper keyboarding skills ("touch typing") is revisited as a bell ringer activity.

Students will apply their computer skills by designing a marketing campaign for a CO<sub>2</sub> Racecar they will design in their Technology Education class. The use of the Office Suite will again be highlighted in designing such projects as an informational newsletter and brochure, an advertisement such as a poster or flyer, and an announcement such as a ticket for their race event or an invitation to the event. The projects will be used in a culminating activity of designing a video pod cast commercial for the toy car. This project will use background knowledge obtained in 7<sup>th</sup> grade, and will add the use of green screen technology, shooting from multiple angles, and use of picture in picture to enhance their projects.

## **8<sup>th</sup> GRADE ELECTIVE COURSES**

**Hempfield's Middle School Chorus, Band, and Orchestra** offer students a performance level that bridges the gap between elementary and high school experiences.

### **Middle School Chorus**

Students may elect to continue developing their singing technique, ensemble skills, and music literacy skills through rehearsing and performing a wide variety of musical styles in Middle School Chorus. Students in chorus rehearse twice per cycle during the school day to prepare for two or three concerts during the school year. The director will assess each student's performance and skill development in rehearsal and concerts on a pass/fail basis. All students are required to participate in all performances. Select students may be invited to participate in a smaller chamber chorus at the director's discretion. Students in each Middle School Chorus are also eligible to audition for a combined CMS/LMS extracurricular musical production that rehearses after school.

### **Middle School Band**

Students may elect to continue developing their wind and percussion instrumental technique, ensemble skills, and music literacy skills through rehearsing and performing a wide variety of musical styles in Middle School Band. Students in this fully balanced ensemble rehearse three times per cycle during the school day to prepare for two or three concerts during the school year. The director will assess each student's performance and skill development in rehearsal and in concerts for a letter grade. All students are required to participate in all performances. Each August the director offers a Summer Band Camp program for all middle school band students. The combined CMS/LMS Middle School Band may perform with the High School Marching Band in the fall and in an occasional parade. Select students may be invited to audition for a combined CMS/LMS extracurricular Jazz Band. Select band students in each middle school may also be invited to perform in the LLMEA County Middle School Band Festival.

### **Middle School Orchestra**

Students may elect to continue developing their string instrumental technique, ensemble skills, and music literacy skills through rehearsing and performing a wide variety of musical styles in Middle School Orchestra. Students in this fully balanced string ensemble rehearse three times per cycle during the school day to prepare for two or three concerts during the school year. The director will assess each student's performance and skill development in rehearsal and in concerts for a letter grade. All students are required to participate in all performances. Select students in each orchestra may be invited to participate in a smaller chamber ensemble at the director's discretion. Select string students in each middle school may also be invited to perform in the LLMEA County Middle School Orchestra Festival.

## **OTHER SERVICES**

### **LIBRARY**

The Middle School Library program provides integrated instruction of 21st Century Information Literacy Skills to meet the PACC Standards for all curriculum areas. The amount of instructional time each student receives is dependent upon individual

middle school teams and teachers. Library instruction provides students with an opportunity to develop information literacy skills, including locating, accessing and evaluating information, developing searching techniques, learning a research process and using information ethically. The middle school librarians collaborate with teachers and technology specialists to integrate technology into all areas of the curriculum.

Digital resources and eBooks are used to teach information literacy and technology fluency skills within the context of the curriculum and provide supplemental text for the classroom and research projects. Print and digital eBooks are also available for recreational reading in a variety of interest areas and reading levels.

A Makerspace area in the library expands the impact of the Middle School Library for all students. The Makerspace provides students with the opportunity and flexible space to be creative and exhibit problem-solving skills. Students can explore, design and create hands-on projects as well as skill-share with classmates.

### **English as a Second Language**

English as a Second Language (ESL) is designed for students who possess limited English language skills. Within our ESL program, there exists four levels/courses. Since our program is consistent with our high school's ESL course offerings, ESL students will experience the same progression of English language development while attending Hempfield High School. Our four middle school ESL course offerings are as follows:

#### **English as a Second Language I**

As an introductory course, ESL I is designed for students who are at the entry level of English language acquisition. ESL I presents to the student, in natural learning order, the skills of listening/understanding, speaking, reading, and writing. Using the oral language development approach, emphasis is placed on vocabulary building, pronunciation, grammar, and social communication in a cultural context. Topics include everyday situations related to school, family, foods, holidays, customs, sports, and leisure time activities.

#### **English as a Second Language II**

Course content focuses on American culture, customs, and geography. Conversational ability and vocabulary are increased. Grammar, reading

instruction, verb tenses, questioning, summarizing, and writing skills are emphasized. All reading and writing skills are presented first as oral language development exercises to provide the oral language proficiency necessary for academic success. Writing narrative, descriptive, informative, and expository compositions is a guided skill developed at this level.

### **English as a Second Language III**

Grammar, history, literature, cultural and current events, and oral practice are combined to prepare the second language student for more academic success in our regular curricular programs. Grammar and reading continue as key components to the ESL program. Oral proficiency is increased through dialogues, oral reports, and class discussion. Written work includes note-taking, journals, dialogue writing, and fundamentals of composition. Essay writing is modeled and practiced.

### **English as a Second Language IV**

The focus of ESL IV is the continued development of English language acquisition in the areas of reading, writing, listening, speaking and comprehension at Intermediate II through Advanced I and Advanced II levels of proficiency. English language structure, idioms, figurative language, grammar, vocabulary development and usage are emphasized. Analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating academic material through composition work, discussions, presentations, and developmentally appropriate reading materials are incorporated at this level. Manipulation of the English language to achieve native-speaker goals is the expectation of English Language Learners at this level.

## **7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Gifted Program**

Middle School Gifted Services are designed to offer a continuum of services to meet the diverse needs of gifted students. A variety of service delivery options are available for students dependent upon students' individual needs and interests. Students can participate in Gifted Seminar class designed with planned learning experiences or units of study. Gifted Seminar classes will occur during non-instructional periods. Students who opt not to participate in the Gifted Seminar classes will be offered consultative services with the Gifted Support Teacher who will monitor progress and adjustments at the middle school level. These consultative services will be offered at a minimum of four times per academic year.

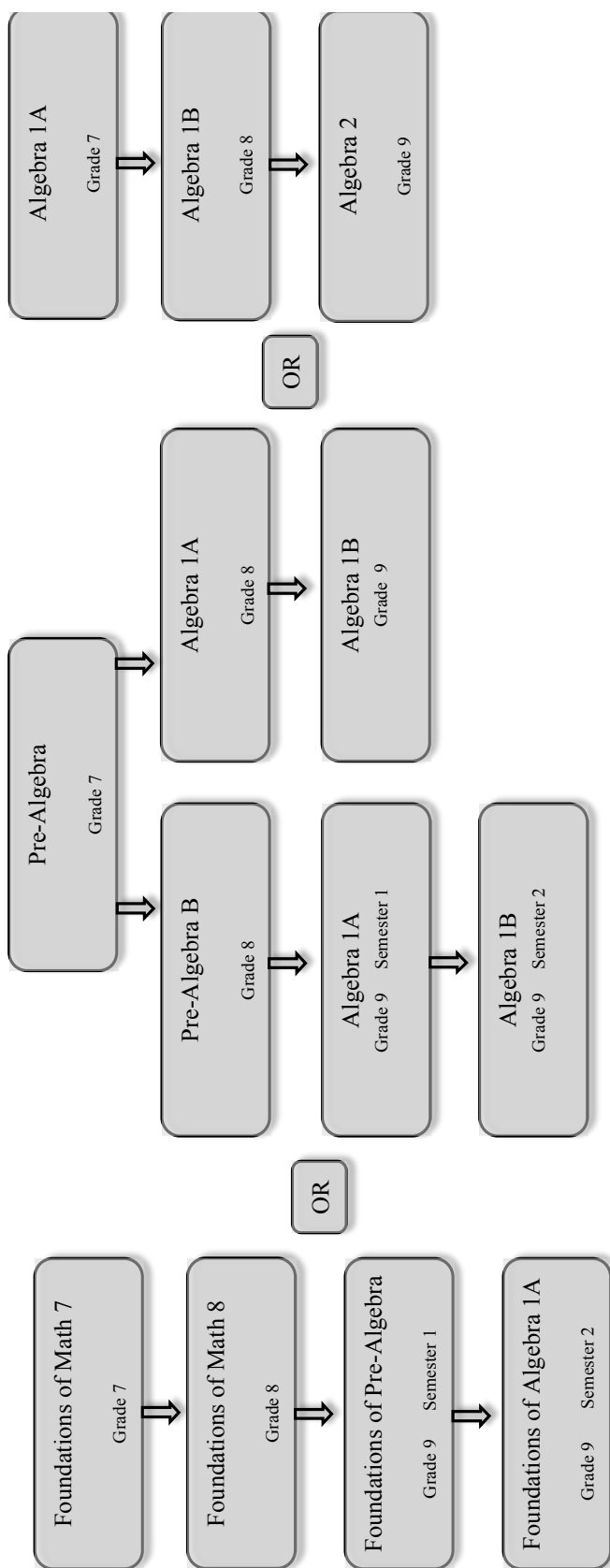
In addition to the Gifted Seminar class and consultative services, all identified gifted students are eligible to participate in specially designed seminars and workshops. Mini- sessions designed to address specifically targeted needs; book discussions and videoconferences are additional options available through the Middle School Gifted Services.

Gifted Services at the middle school focus on:

- Extending and refining existing knowledge
- Guiding student to apply knowledge meaningfully
- Developing critical thinking skills and reasoning abilities
- Participating in experiences that foster creative thinking and expression
- Stimulating students to excel as self-directed learners and thinkers



### Sequencing of Mathematics Courses for Grades 7-9



**Notes**

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