

***Gregory-Portland Independent School District***

***Middle School***

***COURSE DESCRIPTION GUIDE***

**2019-2020**



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*Es norma de el Escolar Independiente de Gregory-Portland no discriminar por motivos de raza, color, origen nacional, sexo o impedimento, en sus programas y servicios.*

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# ***Gregory-Portland Independent School District***

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## **Intent of this Guide**

The provisions and information set forth in this Course Description Guide are intended to be informational and not contractual in nature. The District hereby reserves and retains the right to amend, alter, change, delete, or modify any of the provisions of this guide at any time, from time to time, in any manner that the Administration or the Board of Trustees of the District deems to be in the best interest of the students of this District. The contents of this guide apply to all students and programs in the District and do not amend, abridge, or replace Board policies or administrative regulations established by the District.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The administration, faculty, and staff of Gregory-Portland Middle School are committed to insuring excellence in the programs offered and to providing high quality learning opportunities for all students.

The number one priority of the school is to prepare all students to be healthy, productive citizens. It is crucial that Gregory-Portland Middle School students receive a sound foundation in the four core subject areas as preparation for high school and then higher education or vocational education or work options. These core subject areas are Mathematics, Science, English Language Arts, and History.

A variety of elective course options are also offered at the Middle School. Elective courses allow students to explore areas of interest. Students may continue study in elective subject areas during high school. Electives are important because these courses can provide students with early career preparation or life-long recreational or vocational interests.

This booklet provides information for the student and his or her parents to use as they discuss and consider course choices for the sixth, seventh, and eighth grades. The counselors, administration, and faculty of Gregory-Portland Middle School are available to answer questions and assist in these important decisions.

**All students are required to take courses mandated by the state. The curriculum of each course minimally includes any state mandated TEKS and, if appropriate, preparation for state tests (State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness) (STAAR) and end of course (EOC) exams.**

### **Middle School Courses for High School Credit**

The following list includes middle school courses that provide high school credit. These courses are offered at the middle school in order to allow students to take higher level courses or additional elective courses in high school. It is important that eighth grade students and their parents attend meetings conducted in the spring semester by high school counselors to explain high school graduation requirements and the four year plan. State laws and other guidelines continue to change these requirements and it is very important to understand the rules which apply to the student as they enter high school.

We strive for every student to be successful. Students need the necessary skills and academic foundation to progress to the next level of academic challenge. All efforts are made to have students scheduled into classes where they can be successful.

Students must meet each courses entrance requirements before they will be allowed to register for the course. Students enrolled in Algebra I must meet specific grade requirements in order to remain in the course (See course description for Algebra I). Students must enroll in high school courses within the first seven days of the course.

- Algebra I
- Art, Level I
- Spanish I
- Theater Arts I
- Health: Semester Course
- Speech: Semester Course
- Touch System Data Entry (Keyboarding): Semester Course

## **Intent of this Guide**

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## **OVERVIEW**

### **Regular and Advanced Core Courses, Mathematics, English Language Arts, Science, History**

**Gregory-Portland Middle School routinely evaluates and adjusts its curriculum and instruction to ensure that the school is meeting district, state and federal standards in regard to the quality and rigor of the learning of all of its students. In many cases, this means that the curriculum and student expectations for courses may be higher than and/or different from prior years. Parents and students should carefully read and discuss the information provided before finalizing course choices.**

Students may enroll in regular courses or advanced courses in any of the core subject areas. All core courses require in-depth study of the district's curriculum through instructional processes and learning experiences that utilize higher order thinking skills. This means that students will demonstrate mastery of the curriculum from the lowest level of cognitive ability to the higher mental levels of complexity and abstraction. Students will demonstrate this mastery through their ability:

- to recall required knowledge or content, (lowest level of complexity and abstraction)
- to discuss the meaning of the content,
- to apply the content,
- to analyze the content,
- to synthesize the content, and,
- at the highest level of complexity and abstraction to evaluate the content.

**Regular courses** are designed to challenge and prepare students to meet rigorous academic standards. These courses reflect the high levels of expectations for learning for all students of Gregory-Portland Middle School. Success in these courses requires students to not only participate fully during class but to study outside of class as well as complete homework, projects, and research assignments.

The unique interests, abilities, characteristics, and personality of the student should be considered in the selection of each course.

**Advanced courses** are designed to provide very rigorous learning opportunities for students who are seeking more difficult challenges in subject areas of particular interest or ability. The choice to participate in one or more advanced courses should include a consideration of the student's willingness to pursue learning the curriculum at a depth and complexity beyond the rigors of the regular course. Advanced courses will require additional study and homework. **Summer assignments may be required.** The expectations for projects and research assignments will be more rigorous than those of regular courses. Success in Advanced courses requires maturity and self-discipline. It is important that students and parents discuss the impact that enrollment in one or more of these courses may have on the student's free time and flexibility to explore other areas of interest.

The intent of advanced courses is to provide students with rigorous and demanding academic challenges. Students enrolling in advanced courses need to understand from the onset that the expectations and demands in these courses go beyond that of other classes. Students must also understand that it is their responsibility to master the rigor of the advanced course; therefore, students may need to plan on attending tutorials before or after school to ensure their success.

A parent may request the removal of their child from an advanced course at any time. However, in the student's best interests, students shall be removed from an advanced course if they fail to meet specific academic standards.

Students will be allowed to continue in an advanced course provided that they are passing at the first six-weeks, do not fail two consecutive three week grading periods, and pass each nine-week grading period. Failure to meet the required grade shall result in an automatic schedule change out of the advanced course.

The **technology applications curriculum** has four strands: foundations, information acquisition, work in solving problems, and communication. Students receive integrated instruction in technology applications throughout Science, History, Mathematics, and English Language Arts.

## ***English Language Arts***

**In English Language Arts (ELA) classes, the emphasis is on acquisition and refinement of grammar, conventions of writing, oral and written communication skills, improving reading fluency, comprehension knowledge and skills. ELA will incorporate reading, writing, and oral communication. A student may be assigned to a highly structured class for focused differentiated instruction in an effort to remediate their deficiencies.**

### **ELA**

### **Grade 6**

In Grade 6, students refine and master previously-learned knowledge and skills in increasingly complex presentations, reading selections, and written compositions. Sixth-grade students analyze a speaker's persuasive techniques and credibility. Students evaluate a spoken message in terms of its content, credibility, and delivery. Sixth-grade students continue to read widely in classic and contemporary selections and informational texts. Students use knowledge of Greek and Latin roots and prefixes and suffixes in reading. Students recognize how style, tone, and mood contribute to the effect of the text. Sixth-grade students are able to select and use different forms of writing for specific purposes such as to inform, persuade, and entertain. Students vary sentence structure and use verb tenses appropriately and consistently such as present, past, future, perfect, and progressive. Sixth-grade students edit their writing based on their knowledge of grammar and usage, spelling, punctuation, and other conventions of written language. Students produce final, error-free pieces of written compositions on a regular basis. Sixth-grade students draw data from multiple primary and secondary sources for use in research reports and projects.

### **Advanced ELA**

### **Grade 6**

**Prerequisite: All students who passed the previous year's Reading STAAR will be granted automatic admittance into this course. Students will be allowed to continue in an advanced course provided that they are passing at the first six-weeks, do not fail two consecutive three week grading periods, and pass each nine-week grading period. Failure to meet the required grade shall result in an automatic schedule change out of the advanced course.**

The intent of advanced courses is to provide students with rigorous and demanding academic challenges. Students enrolling in 6<sup>th</sup>-grade advanced ELA courses need to understand from the onset that the expectations and demands in these courses go beyond that of other classes. Students must also understand that it is their responsibility to master the rigor of the advanced course; therefore, students may need to plan on attending tutorials before or after school to ensure their success.

It is the primary responsibility of the parent to request the removal of their child from an advanced course, however, if the student fails the first six-weeks, two consecutive three week grading periods, or a nine week grading period, the student shall be rescheduled out of the advanced class.

Independent reading materials will be at the 6<sup>th</sup> grade level and above. Students who struggle in reading and writing should carefully consider the challenges before signing up for an advanced class.

**Special ELA projects may be required for the summer and throughout the school year.**

**ELA****Grade 7**

In Grade 7, students refine and master previously-learned knowledge and skills in increasingly complex presentations, reading selections, and written compositions. Seventh-grade students analyze a speaker's persuasive techniques and credibility. Students evaluate a spoken message in terms of its content, credibility, and delivery. Seventh-grade students continue to read widely in classic and contemporary selections and informational texts. Students use knowledge of Greek and Latin roots and prefixes and suffixes in reading. Students recognize how style, tone, and mood contribute to the effect of the text. Seventh-grade students are able to select and use different forms of writing for specific purposes such as to inform, persuade, and entertain. Students vary sentence structure and use verb tenses appropriately and consistently such as present, past, future, perfect, and progressive. Seventh-grade students edit their writing based on their knowledge of grammar and usage, spelling, punctuation, and other conventions of written language. Students produce final, error-free pieces of written compositions on a regular basis. Seventh-grade students draw data from multiple primary and secondary sources for use in research reports and projects.

**Advanced ELA****Grade 7**

**Prerequisite: All students who passed the previous year's Reading STAAR will be granted automatic admittance into this course. Students will be allowed to continue in an advanced course provided that they are passing at the first six-weeks, do not fail two consecutive three week grading periods, and pass each nine-week grading period. Failure to meet the required grade shall result in an automatic schedule change out of the advanced course.**

The intent of advanced courses is to provide students with rigorous and demanding academic challenges. Students enrolling in 7<sup>th</sup>-grade advanced ELA courses need to understand from the onset that the expectations and demands in these courses go beyond that of other classes. Students must also understand that it is their responsibility to master the rigor of the advanced course; therefore, students may need to plan on attending tutorials before or after school to ensure their success.

It is the primary responsibility of the parent to request the removal of their child from an advanced course, however, if the student fails the first six-weeks, two consecutive three week grading periods, or a nine week grading period, the student shall be rescheduled out of the advanced class.

Independent reading materials will be at the 7<sup>th</sup> grade level and above. Students who struggle in reading and writing should carefully consider the challenges before signing up for an advanced class.

**Special ELA projects may be required for the summer and throughout the school year.**

**ELA****Grade 8**

In Grade 8, students refine and master previously learned knowledge and skills in increasingly complex presentations, reading selections, and writing. Eighth grade students continue to read widely in classic and contemporary selections and informational texts. Students are able to identify characteristics of various literary forms. Eighth grade students are able to select and use different forms of writing for specific purposes such as to inform, persuade, or entertain. Students produce multi-paragraph compositions with varied sentence structure. Eighth grade students edit their writing based on their knowledge of grammar and usage, spelling, punctuation, and other conventions of written language. Students produce final, error-free pieces of written composition on a regular basis. Students use citations competently and write by following accepted formats for research reports. Eighth grade students present oral and written reports, including presentations strengthened by visual and media.

**Prerequisite:** All students who passed the previous year's Reading STAAR will be granted automatic admittance into this course. Students will be allowed to continue in an advanced course provided that they are passing at the first six-weeks, do not fail two consecutive three week grading periods, and pass each nine-week grading period. Failure to meet the required grade shall result in an automatic schedule change out of the advanced course.

The intent of advanced courses is to provide students with rigorous and demanding academic challenges. Students enrolling in 8<sup>th</sup> grade advanced ELA courses need to understand from the onset that the expectations and demands in these courses go beyond that of other classes. Students must also understand that it is their responsibility to master the rigor of the advanced course; therefore, students may need to plan on attending tutorials before or after school to ensure their success.

It is the primary responsibility of the parent to request the removal of their child from an advanced course, however, if the student fails the first six-weeks, two consecutive three week grading periods, or a nine week grading period, the student shall be rescheduled out of the advanced class.

Independent reading materials will be at the 8<sup>th</sup> grade level and above. Students who struggle in reading and writing should carefully consider the challenges before signing up for an advanced class.

**Special ELA projects may be required for the summer and throughout the school year.**

#### **Student Success Initiative (SSI)**

**The Student Success Initiative (SSI) was created by the Texas Legislature to ensure that all students receive the instruction and support they need to be academically successful in reading and mathematics. Under the SSI grade advancement requirements, students are required to pass the State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR) Grade 8 reading and mathematics test to be promoted to ninth grade.**

**If at the end of the school year a student does not pass 8<sup>th</sup> grade reading, math or pre-algebra, summer school attendance and passing is required for promotion to grade 9.**

## **Mathematics**

### **Math**

### **Grade 6**

Within a well-balanced mathematics curriculum, the primary focal points at Grade 6 are using direct proportional relationships in number, geometry, measurement, and probability; applying addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division of decimals, fractions, and integers; and using statistical measures to describe data.

Throughout mathematics in Grades 6-8, students build a foundation of basic understandings in number, operation, and quantitative reasoning; patterns, relationships, and algebraic thinking; geometry and spatial reasoning; measurement; and probability and statistics. Students use concepts, algorithms, and properties of rational numbers to explore mathematical relationships and to describe increasingly complex situations. Students use algebraic thinking to describe how a change in one quantity in a relationship results in a change in the other; and they connect verbal, numeric, graphic, and symbolic representations of relationships. Students use geometric properties and relationships, as well as spatial reasoning, to model and analyze situations and solve problems. Students communicate information about geometric figures or situations by quantifying attributes, generalize procedures from measurement experiences, and use the procedures to solve problems. Students use appropriate statistics, representations of data, reasoning, and concepts of probability to draw conclusions, evaluate arguments, and make recommendations.

Problem solving in meaningful contexts, language and communication, connections within and outside mathematics, and formal and informal reasoning underlie all content areas in mathematics. Throughout mathematics in Grades 6-8, students use these processes together with graphing technology and other mathematical tools such as manipulative materials to develop conceptual understanding and solve problems as they do mathematics.

### **Advanced Math 6**

### **Grade 6**

**Prerequisite:** All students who passed the previous year's Math STAAR will be granted automatic admittance into this course. Students will be allowed to continue in an advanced course provided that they are passing at the first six-weeks, do not fail two consecutive three week grading periods, and pass each nine-week grading period. Failure to meet the required grade shall result in an automatic schedule change out of the advanced course.

**Students who enroll in Grade 6 Advanced Math are expected to have a very strong foundation in 5<sup>th</sup> grade math skills and fundamentals.**

### **SIXTH GRADE STUDENTS IN ADVANCED MATH 6 WILL COMPLETE THE DISTRICT MATH CURRICULUM FOR 6<sup>TH</sup> GRADE AND BEGIN 7<sup>TH</sup> GRADE CURRICULUM IN PREPARATION FOR ENROLLMENT IN PRE-ALGEBRA IN SEVENTH GRADE.**

Advanced Math 6 is a unique advanced course, in that it will cover three semesters of mathematics over the course of the academic year. The intent of advanced courses is to provide students with rigorous and demanding academic challenges. Students enrolling in grade 6 advanced math courses need to understand from the onset that the expectations and demands in these courses go beyond that of other classes. It is the student's responsibility to master the rigor of the advanced course.

Independent reading materials will be at the 6<sup>th</sup> grade reading level and above. Students who struggle in reading should carefully consider their existing reading skills level and course subject matter skills before signing up for an advanced class.

**Special math projects may be required for the summer and throughout the school year.**

Within a well-balanced mathematics curriculum, the primary focal points at Grade 7 are using direct proportional relationships in number, geometry, measurement, and probability; applying addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division of decimals, fractions, and integers; and using statistical measures to describe data.

Throughout mathematics in Grades 6-8, students build a foundation of basic understandings in number, operation, and quantitative reasoning; patterns, relationships, and algebraic thinking; geometry and spatial reasoning; measurement; and probability and statistics. Students use concepts, algorithms, and properties of rational numbers to explore mathematical relationships and to describe increasingly complex situations. Students use algebraic thinking to describe how a change in one quantity in a relationship results in a change in the other; and they connect verbal, numeric, graphic, and symbolic representations of relationships. Students use geometric properties and relationships, as well as spatial reasoning, to model and analyze situations and solve problems. Students communicate information about geometric figures or situations by quantifying attributes, generalize procedures from measurement experiences, and use the procedures to solve problems. Students use appropriate statistics, representations of data, reasoning, and concepts of probability to draw conclusions, evaluate arguments, and make recommendations.

Problem solving in meaningful contexts, language and communication, connections within and outside mathematics, and formal and informal reasoning underlie all content areas in mathematics. Throughout mathematics in Grades 6-8, students use these processes together with graphing technology and other mathematical tools such as manipulative materials to develop conceptual understanding and solve problems as they do mathematics.

**Special math projects may be required for the summer and throughout the school year.**

**Prerequisite:** All students who passed the previous year's Math STAAR will be granted automatic admittance into this course. Students will be allowed to continue in an advanced course provided that they are passing at the first six-weeks, do not fail two consecutive three week grading periods, and pass each nine-week grading period. Failure to meet the required grade shall result in an automatic schedule change out of the advanced course.

**Students who enroll in Grade 7 Pre-Algebra are expected to have a very strong foundation in 6<sup>th</sup> grade math skills and fundamentals.**

**SEVENTH GRADE STUDENTS IN PRE-ALGEBRA WILL COMPLETE THE DISTRICT MATH CURRICULUM FOR GRADES 7 AND 8 IN PREPARATION FOR ENROLLMENT IN ALGEBRA I IN EIGHTH GRADE.**

Grade 7 Pre – Algebra is an advanced course. The intent of advanced courses is to provide students with rigorous and demanding academic challenges. Students enrolling in grade 7 advanced Pre – Algebra courses need to understand from the onset that the expectations and demands in these courses go beyond that of other classes.

Independent reading materials will be at the 7<sup>th</sup> grade level and above. Students who struggle in reading and the course subject matter should carefully consider their existing reading skills level and course subject matter skills before signing up for an advanced class. It is the student's responsibility to master the rigor of the advanced course.

Within a well-balanced mathematics curriculum, the primary focal points at Grade 7 are using direct proportional relationships in number, geometry, measurement, and probability; applying addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division of decimals, fractions, and integers; and using

statistical measures to describe data. The primary focal points at Grade 8 are using basic principles of algebra to analyze and represent both proportional and non-proportional linear relationships and using data analysis to describe data and make predictions.

Throughout mathematics in Grades 6-8, students build a foundation of basic understandings in number, operation, and quantitative reasoning; patterns, relationships, and algebraic thinking; geometry and spatial reasoning; measurement; and probability and statistics. Students use concepts, algorithms, and properties of rational numbers to explore mathematical relationships and to describe increasingly complex situations. Students use algebraic thinking to describe how a change in one quantity in a relationship results in a change in the other; and they connect verbal, numeric, graphic, and symbolic representations of relationships. Students use geometric properties and relationships, as well as spatial reasoning, to model and analyze situations and solve problems. Students communicate information about geometric figures or situations by quantifying attributes, generalize procedures from measurement experiences, and use the procedures to solve problems. Students use appropriate statistics, representations of data, reasoning, and concepts of probability to draw conclusions, evaluate arguments, and make recommendations.

Problem solving in meaningful contexts, language and communication, connections within and outside mathematics, and formal and informal reasoning underlie all content areas in mathematics. Throughout mathematics in Grades 6-8, students use these processes together with graphing technology and other mathematical tools such as manipulative materials to develop conceptual understanding and solve problems as they do mathematics.

It is the primary responsibility of the parent to request the removal of their child from an advanced course, however, if the student fails the first six-weeks, two consecutive three week grading periods, or a nine week grading period, the student shall be rescheduled out of the advanced class.

**Special math projects may be required for the summer and throughout the school year.**

## Pre-Algebra

## Grade 8

Prerequisite: None

Within a well-balanced mathematics curriculum, the primary focal areas in Grade 8 are proportionality; expressions, equations, relationships, and foundations of functions; and measurement and data. While the use of all types of technology is important, the emphasis on algebra readiness skills necessitates the implementation of graphing technology.

Throughout mathematics in Grades 6-8, students build a foundation of basic understandings in number, operation, and quantitative reasoning; patterns, relationships, and algebraic thinking; geometry and spatial reasoning; measurement; and probability and statistics. Students use concepts, algorithms, and properties of rational numbers to explore mathematical relationships and to describe increasingly complex situations. Students use algebraic thinking to describe how a change in one quantity in a relationship results in a change in the other; and they connect verbal, numeric, graphic, and symbolic representations of relationships. Students use geometric properties and relationships, as well as spatial reasoning, to model and analyze situations and solve problems. Students communicate information about geometric figures or situations by quantifying attributes, generalize procedures from measurement experiences, and use the procedures to solve problems. Students use appropriate statistics, representations of data, reasoning, and concepts of probability to draw conclusions, evaluate arguments, and make recommendations.

Problem solving in meaningful contexts, language and communication, connections within and outside mathematics, and formal and informal reasoning underlie all content areas in mathematics. Throughout mathematics in Grades 6-8, students use these processes together with graphing

technology and other mathematical tools such as manipulative materials to develop conceptual understanding and solve problems as they do mathematics.

**Special math projects may be required for the summer and throughout the school year.**

## **Math Reinforcement**

## **Grade 8**

Eighth grade students are automatically scheduled into math reinforcement class upon not meeting standard on the 7<sup>th</sup> grade math STAAR test. The purpose of this class is to provide those students additional instructional support to strengthen their math skills to help them meet the standard on the grade 8 TAKS math test to enable them to be promoted to grade 9. This class takes the place of an elective. Students will be tested at the beginning of each semester to determine if sufficient progress has been made to exit the course and regain their elective.

## **Algebra I (One High School Credit) (Full Year Course)**

## **Grade 8**

**Prerequisite: Credit for Pre-Algebra as a 7<sup>th</sup> Grader and passing the 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Math STAAR**

Algebra I is a course for High School credit and is considered a middle school advanced course. The intent of advanced courses is to provide students with rigorous and demanding academic challenges. Students enrolling in Algebra I advanced courses need to understand from the onset that the expectations and demands in these courses go beyond that of other classes.

Independent reading materials will be at the 8<sup>th</sup> grade level and above. Students who struggle in reading and the course subject matter should carefully consider their existing reading skills level and course subject matter skills before signing up for an advanced class. It is the student's responsibility to master the rigor of the advanced course.

Algebra I will focus on the following key concepts:

Foundation concepts for high school mathematics. As presented in Grades K-8, the basic understandings of number, operation, and quantitative reasoning; patterns, relationships, and algebraic thinking; geometry; measurement; and probability and statistics are essential foundations for all work in high school mathematics. Students will continue to build on this foundation as they expand their understanding through other mathematical experiences.

Algebraic thinking and symbolic reasoning. Symbolic reasoning plays a critical role in algebra; symbols provide powerful ways to represent mathematical situations and to express generalizations. Students use symbols in a variety of ways to study relationships among quantities.

Function concepts. A function is a fundamental mathematical concept; it expresses a special kind of relationship between two quantities. Students use functions to determine one quantity from another, to represent and model problem situations, and to analyze and interpret relationships.

Relationship between equations and functions. Equations and inequalities arise as a way of asking and answering questions involving functional relationships. Students work in many situations to set up equations and inequalities and use a variety of methods to solve them.

Tools for algebraic thinking. Techniques for working with functions and equations are essential in understanding underlying relationships. Students use a variety of representations (concrete, pictorial, numerical, symbolic, graphical, and verbal), tools, and technology (including, but not limited to, calculators with graphing capabilities, data collection devices, and computers) to model mathematical situations to solve meaningful problems.

Underlying mathematical processes. Many processes underlie all content areas in mathematics. As they do mathematics, students continually use problem-solving, language and communication, and reasoning (justification and proof) to make connections within and outside mathematics. Students

also use multiple representations, technology, applications and modeling, and numerical fluency in problem-solving contexts.

It is the primary responsibility of the parent to request the removal of their child from an advanced course, however, if the student fails the first six-weeks, two consecutive three week grading periods, or a nine week grading period, the student shall be rescheduled out of the advanced class.

**Special math projects may be required for the summer and throughout the school year.**

## *Science*

### **Science**

### **Grade 6**

Grade 6 Science is interdisciplinary in nature; however, much of the content focus is on physical science. The strands for Grade 6 Science include:

Scientific investigation and reasoning: Students become familiar with different modes of scientific inquiry, rules of evidence, ways of formulating questions, ways of proposing explanations, and the diverse ways scientists study the natural world and propose explanations based on evidence derived from their work.

Matter and energy: Students learn that matter can be classified as elements, compounds, or mixtures. It is important that students learn the difference between elements and compounds based on observations, description of physical properties, and chemical reactions. Elements are classified as metals, nonmetals, and metalloids based on their physical properties. Energy resources are available on a renewable, nonrenewable, or indefinite basis.

Force, motion, and energy: Energy occurs in two types, potential and kinetic, and can take several forms. Thermal energy can be transferred by conduction, convection, or radiation. It can also be changed from one form to another. Students will investigate the relationship between force and motion using a variety of means, including calculations and measurements.

Earth and space. The focus of this strand is on introducing Earth's processes. Students should develop an understanding of Earth as part of our solar system. The topics include organization of our solar system, the role of gravity, and space exploration.

Organisms and environments: Students will gain an understanding of the broadest taxonomic classifications of organisms and how characteristics determine their classification. The other major topics developed in this strand include the interdependence between organisms and their environments and the levels of organization within an ecosystem.

### **Advanced Science**

### **Grade 6**

**Prerequisite: All students who passed the previous year's Science and Reading STAAR will be granted automatic admittance into this course. Students will be allowed to continue in an advanced course provided that they are passing at the first six-weeks, do not fail two consecutive three week grading periods, and pass each nine-week grading period. Failure to meet the required grade shall result in an automatic schedule change out of the advanced course.**

The intent of advanced courses is to provide students with rigorous and demanding academic challenges. Students enrolling in grade 6 Advanced Science courses need to understand from the onset that the expectations and demands in these courses go beyond that of other classes.

Independent reading materials will be at the 6<sup>th</sup> grade level and above. Students who struggle in reading and the course subject matter should carefully consider their existing reading skills level and course subject matter skills before signing up for an advanced class. It is the student's responsibility to master the rigor of the advanced course.

It is the primary responsibility of the parent to request the removal of their child from an advanced course, however, if the student fails the first six-weeks, two consecutive three week grading periods, or a nine week grading period, the student shall be rescheduled out of the advanced class.

**Special science projects may be required for the summer and throughout the school year.**

Grade 7 Science is interdisciplinary in nature; however, much of the content focus is on organisms and the environment. The strands for Grade 7 Science include:

Scientific investigation and reasoning: Students become familiar with different modes of scientific inquiry, rules of evidence, ways of formulating questions, ways of proposing explanations, and the diverse ways scientists study the natural world and propose explanations based on evidence derived from their work.

Matter and energy: Students learn that matter and energy are conserved throughout living systems, including radiant energy from the sun and its flow through living systems including the relationship between producers, consumers, and decomposers.

Force, motion, and energy: Students will observe force, motion, and energy in living systems and the environment, including: a) interactions between muscular and skeletal systems, b) direction and growth of seedlings, c) turgor pressure, and d) geotropism. Catastrophic events of weather systems such as hurricanes, floods, and tornadoes can shape and restructure the environment through the force and motion evident in them. Students will investigate weathering, erosion, and deposition occurrences in environments due to the forces of gravity, wind, ice, and water.

Earth and space. Students will observe Earth and space phenomena in a variety of settings. Both natural events and human activities can impact Earth systems. Students will become familiar with the characteristics of Earth and its relationships to objects in our solar system that allow life to exist.

Organisms and environments: Students will understand the relationship between living organisms and their environment. Different environments support different living organisms that are adapted to that region of Earth. Organisms are living systems that maintain a steady state with that environment and whose balance may be disrupted by internal and external stimuli. Students will learn how successful organisms can reestablish a balance through different processes such as a feedback mechanism, and will investigate how ecological succession can be seen on a broad or small scale. Students will learn about basic life processes and structures involved in obtaining energy, waste removal, growth and reproduction on the organ system and cellular level. Students will exam how traits in populations change over time through natural selection.

## Advanced Science

## Grade 7

**Prerequisite: All students who passed the previous year's Reading STAAR will be granted automatic admittance into this course. Students will be allowed to continue in an advanced course provided that they are passing at the first six-weeks, do not fail two consecutive three week grading periods, and pass each nine-week grading period. Failure to meet the required grade shall result in an automatic schedule change out of the advanced course.**

The intent of advanced courses is to provide students with rigorous and demanding academic challenges. Students enrolling in grade 7 advanced Science courses need to understand from the onset that the expectations and demands in these courses go beyond that of other classes.

Independent reading materials will be at the 7<sup>th</sup> grade level and above. Students who struggle in reading and the course subject matter should carefully consider their existing reading skills level and course subject matter skills before signing up for an advanced class. It is the student's responsibility to master the rigor of the advanced course.

It is the primary responsibility of the parent to request the removal of their child from an advanced course, however, if the student fails the first six-weeks, two consecutive three week grading periods, or a nine week grading period, the student shall be rescheduled out of the advanced class.

**Special science projects may be required for the summer and throughout the school year.**

Grade 8 Science is interdisciplinary in nature; however, much of the content focus is on earth and space science. The strands for Grade 8 Science include:

**Scientific investigation and reasoning:** Students will become familiar with different modes of scientific inquiry, rules of evidence, ways of formulating questions, ways of proposing explanations, and the diverse ways scientists study the natural world and propose explanations based on evidence derived from their work. Students will conduct investigations that require a research question, careful observations, data gathering, and analysis of the data to identify the patterns that will explain the findings. Students should understand that certain types of questions can be answered by investigations, and the methods, models, and conclusions built from these investigations change as new observations are made.

**Matter and energy:** Students recognize that matter is composed of atoms. Students examine information on the Periodic Table to recognize that elements are grouped into families. In addition, students understand the basic concept of conservation of mass. Lab activities will allow students to demonstrate evidence of chemical reactions. They will use chemical formulas and balanced equations to show chemical reactions and the formation of new substances.

**Force, motion, and energy:** Students experiment with the relationship between forces and motion through the study of Newton's three laws. Students learn how these forces relate to geologic processes and astronomical phenomena. In addition, students recognize that these laws are evident in everyday objects and activities. Mathematics is used to calculate speed using distance and time measurements.

**Earth and space:** Students identify the role of natural events in altering Earth systems. Cycles within Sun, Earth, and Moon systems are studied as students learn about seasons, tides, and lunar phases. Students learn that stars and galaxies are part of the universe and that distances in space are measured by using light waves. In addition, students use data to research scientific theories of the origin of the universe. Students will illustrate how Earth features change over time by plate tectonics. They will interpret land and erosional features on topographic maps. Students learn how interactions in solar, weather, and ocean systems create changes in weather patterns and climate.

**Organisms and environments:** In studies of living systems, students explore the interdependence between organisms and their environment. Interactions between organisms in ecosystems, including producer/consumer, predator/prey, and parasite/host relationships, are investigated in aquatic and terrestrial systems. Students describe how biotic and abiotic factors affect the number of organisms and populations present in an ecosystem. In addition, students explore how organisms and their populations respond to short- and long-term environmental changes, including those caused by human activities.

**Prerequisite: All students who passed the previous year's Reading STAAR will be granted automatic admittance into this course. Students will be allowed to continue in an advanced course provided that they are passing at the first six-weeks, do not fail two consecutive three week grading periods, and pass each nine-week grading period. Failure to meet the required grade shall result in an automatic schedule change out of the advanced course.**

The intent of advanced courses is to provide students with rigorous and demanding academic challenges. Students enrolling in grade 8 advanced Science courses need to understand from the onset that the expectations and demands in these courses go beyond that of other classes.

Independent reading materials will be at the 8<sup>th</sup> grade level and above. Students who struggle in reading and the course subject matter should carefully consider their existing reading skills level and

course subject matter skills before signing up for an advanced class. It is the student's responsibility to master the rigor of the advanced course.

It is the primary responsibility of the parent to request the removal of their child from an advanced course, however, if the student fails the first six-weeks, two consecutive three week grading periods, or a nine week grading period, the student shall be rescheduled out of the advanced class.

**Special science projects may be required for the summer and throughout the school year.**

Prospective advanced science students should review the requirement for the Camp Eagle trip incentive before committing to Advanced Science. This information is listed below and on the sponsor's webpage.

Camp Eagle Trip Requirements:

- Maintain an 85 average in Advanced Science Grade 8 through the third nine weeks
- Pay for own expenses
- Have no more than three (3) office referrals and no DAEP placement this school year

## **Social Studies**

In social studies classes, students build a foundation in history; geography; economics; government; citizenship; culture; science, technology, and society; and social studies skills. The grade level content enables students to understand the importance of patriotism, function in a free enterprise society, and appreciate the basic democratic values of our state and nation.

### **World Geography**

### **Grade 6**

In Grade 6, students will explore people, cultures and places of the contemporary world. Major units of study include geography and culture, the Americas, Europe, Russia, North Africa and Southwest Asia, Africa south of the Sahara, Asia (India, Southeast Asia, Japan, China, North and South Korea), Australia and the Pacific Rim. Through the study of these world cultures, students will gain a better understanding of how history has influenced the development of current societies and how cultures use various ways to organize government and economic systems. While investigating regions of the world, students will study about geographical influences, citizenship as it relates to specific forms of government, the impact of science and technology on society, and unique customs including religious practices. Students will utilize social studies skills, such as interpreting maps, graphs, and political cartoons in every unit of study.

### **Advanced World Geography**

### **Grade 6**

**Prerequisite: All students who passed the previous year's Reading STAAR will be granted automatic admittance into this course. Students will be allowed to continue in an advanced course provided that they are passing at the first six-weeks, do not fail two consecutive three week grading periods, and pass each nine-week grading period. Failure to meet the required grade shall result in an automatic schedule change out of the advanced course.**

The intent of advanced courses is to provide students with rigorous and demanding academic challenges. Students enrolling in Grade 6 Advanced World Geography courses need to understand from the onset that the expectations and demands in these courses go beyond that of other classes.

Independent reading materials will be at the 6<sup>th</sup> grade level and above. Students who struggle in reading and the course subject matter should carefully consider their existing reading skills level and course subject matter skills before signing up for an advanced class. It is the student's responsibility to master the rigor of the advanced course.

It is the primary responsibility of the parent to request the removal of their child from an advanced course, however, if the student fails the first six-weeks, two consecutive three week grading periods, or a nine week grading period, the student shall be rescheduled out of the advanced class.

**Special social studies projects may be required for the summer and throughout the school year.**

### **Texas History**

### **Grade 7**

In Grade 7, students study the history of Texas from early times to the present. Students examine the full scope of Texas history, including the cultures of Native Americans living in Texas prior to European exploration and the eras of mission-building, colonization, revolution, republic, and statehood. The focus in each era is on key individuals, events, and issues and their impact. Students identify regions of Texas and the distribution of population within and among the regions and explain the factors that caused Texas to change from an agrarian to an urban society. Students describe the structure and functions of municipal, county, and state governments, explain the influence of the U.S. Constitution on the Texas Constitution, and examine the rights and responsibilities of Texas citizens. Students use primary and secondary sources to examine the rich and diverse cultural background of Texas as they identify the different racial and ethnic groups that settled in Texas to build a republic and then a state. Students analyze the impact of scientific

discoveries and technological innovations such as barbed wire and the oil and gas industries on the development of Texas. Students use primary and secondary sources to acquire information about Texas.

A variety of rich primary and secondary source material such as biographies and autobiographies; novels; speeches, letters, and diaries; and poetry, songs, and artwork are used as teaching and learning resources. Selections may include a biography of Barbara Jordan or Lorenzo de Zavala and William B. Travis' letter "To the People of Texas and All Americans in the World". Motivating resources from museums, historical sites, presidential libraries, and local and state preservation societies will also be utilized whenever possible.

The eight strands of the essential knowledge and skills for social studies are integrated for instructional purposes with the history and geography strands establishing a sense of time and a sense of place. Geography and social studies skills are incorporated into the teaching of all essential knowledge and skills for social studies. A greater depth of understanding of complex content material is expected when social studies content from the various disciplines and critical-thinking skills are taught together.

## **Advanced Texas History**

**Grade 7**

**Prerequisite: All students who passed the previous year's Reading STAAR will be granted automatic admittance into this course. Students will be allowed to continue in an advanced course provided that they are passing at the first six-weeks, do not fail two consecutive three week grading periods, and pass each nine-week grading period. Failure to meet the required grade shall result in an automatic schedule change out of the advanced course.**

The intent of advanced courses is to provide students with rigorous and demanding academic challenges. Students enrolling in grade 7 advanced Texas History courses need to understand from the onset that the expectations and demands in these courses go beyond that of other classes.

Independent reading materials will be at the 7<sup>th</sup> grade level and above. Students who struggle in reading and the course subject matter should carefully consider their existing reading skills level and course subject matter skills before signing up for an advanced class. It is the student's responsibility to master the rigor of the advanced course.

It is the primary responsibility of the parent to request the removal of their child from an advanced course, however, if the student fails the first six-weeks, two consecutive three week grading periods, or a nine week grading period, the student shall be rescheduled out of the advanced class.

**Special social studies projects may be required for the summer and throughout the school year.**

## **U. S. History**

**Grade 8**

In Grade 8, students study the history of the United States from the early colonial period through Reconstruction. The knowledge and skills of this course comprise the first part of a two-year study of U.S. history. The second part, comprising U.S. history since Reconstruction to the present, is provided in the high school course, United States History Studies since Reconstruction (One Credit). The content builds upon that from Grade 5 but provides more depth and breadth. Historical content focuses on the political, economic, and social events and issues related to the colonial and revolutionary eras, the creation and ratification of the U.S. Constitution, challenges of the early Republic, westward expansion, sectionalism, Civil War, and Reconstruction. Students describe the physical characteristics of the United States and their impact on population distribution and settlement patterns in the past and present. Students analyze the various economic factors that influenced the development of colonial America and the early years of the Republic and identify the origins of the free enterprise system. Students examine the American beliefs and principles,

including limited government, checks and balances, federalism, separation of powers, and individual rights, reflected in the U.S. Constitution and other historical documents. Students evaluate the impact of Supreme Court cases and major reform movements of the 19th century and examine the rights and responsibilities of citizens of the United States as well as the importance of effective leadership in a democratic society. Students evaluate the impact of scientific discoveries and technological innovations on the development of the United States. Students use critical-thinking skills, including the identification of bias in written, oral, and visual material.

To support the teaching of the essential knowledge and skills, the use of a variety of rich primary and secondary source material such as the complete text of the U.S. Constitution and the Declaration of Independence; landmark cases of the U.S. Supreme Court; biographies and autobiographies; novels; speeches, letters, and diaries; and poetry, songs, and artwork is encouraged. Selections may include excerpts from the letters of John and Abigail Adams, an excerpt from the Seneca Falls Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions, and poems of the Civil War era. Motivating resources from museums, historical sites, presidential libraries, and local and state preservation societies will also be utilized whenever possible.

The eight strands of the essential knowledge and skills for social studies are intended to be integrated for instructional purposes with the history and geography strands establishing a sense of time and a sense of place. Skills associated with the geography and social studies skills strands should be incorporated into the teaching of all essential knowledge and skills for social studies. A greater depth of understanding of complex content material can be attained when integrated social studies content from the various disciplines and critical-thinking skills are taught together.

### **Advanced U. S. History**

### **Grade 8**

**Prerequisite: All students who passed the previous year's Reading STAAR will be granted automatic admittance into this course. Students will be allowed to continue in an advanced course provided that they are passing at the first six-weeks, do not fail two consecutive three week grading periods, and pass each nine-week grading period. Failure to meet the required grade shall result in an automatic schedule change out of the advanced course.**

Advanced U.S. History Grade 8 is designed to provide a very rigorous learning opportunity for students who are seeking more difficult challenges in social studies because it is of particular interest to them or because they have special ability in this content area. Students will learn the content of the district curriculum for grade 8 at a more complex level.

Independent reading materials will be at the 8<sup>th</sup> grade level and above. Students who struggle in history and reading should carefully consider their existing history and reading skills level before signing up for an advanced history class.

The intent of advanced courses is to provide students with rigorous and demanding academic challenges. Students enrolling in grade 8 advanced U.S. History courses need to understand from the onset that the expectations and demands in these courses go beyond that of other classes.

It is the student's responsibility to master the rigor of the advanced course.

It is the primary responsibility of the parent to request the removal of their child from an advanced course, however, if the student fails the first six-weeks, two consecutive three week grading periods, or a nine week grading period, the student shall be rescheduled out of the advanced class.

**Special social studies projects may be required for the summer and throughout the school year.**

## **Elective Courses**

### ***Art***

Gregory-Portland Independent School District art students will be able to use art terminology in the everyday world. They will incorporate a variety of art skills, techniques, artists, and media which will result in a greater appreciation of art.

#### **Art (Full Year Course)**

**Grade 6 & 7**

Four basic strands--perception, creative expression/performance, historical and cultural heritage, and critical evaluation--provide broad, unifying structures for organizing the knowledge and skills students are expected to acquire. Students rely on their perceptions of the environment, developed through increasing visual awareness and sensitivity to surroundings, memory, imagination, and life experiences as a source for creating artwork. They express their thoughts and ideas creatively, while challenging their imagination, fostering reflective thinking, and developing disciplined effort and problem-solving skills.

By analyzing artistic styles and historical periods, students develop respect for the traditions and contributions of diverse cultures. Students respond to and analyze artwork, thus contributing to the development of lifelong skills of making informed judgments and evaluations.

**Studio Fee: \$20.00 - This full year course will have expenses for supplies including a \$20.00 fee for projects and art supplies.**

#### **Art, Level I (Full Year Course) (One High School Credit)**

**Grade 8**

Prerequisites: None

This class covers various forms of basic Art through perception and expression based on historical and cultural heritage. Students will rely on their environment, familiar sensitivity, memory, spiritual values, imagination, and life experiences as a source for creating artwork. Students will express their thoughts and ideas creatively, while challenging their imagination. They will foster reflective thinking, and develop disciplined efforts, problem-solving, higher order and critical thinking skills.

Students will analyze artistic styles and historical periods and will develop respect for the traditions and contributions of diverse cultures. Students will respond and analyze artworks, thus contributing to the development of lifelong skills of making informed judgments and evaluations.

Students will learn and employ the Elements and Principles of Art and Design. They will learn about Linear Perspective and use the space on a flat surface to give the illusion of three dimensional structures. They will also learn about Color Theory and its uses. Students will demonstrate effectively the use of art media, tools and techniques in Design, Drawing, Painting, Printmaking, and Sculpture.

Students will open their mind and their eyes to the world of Art and will foster a new sensibility for aesthetics and will develop a critical eye for inner and outer beauty through artistic creativity.

**Studio Fee: \$20.00 - This full year course will have expenses for supplies including a \$20.00 fee for projects and art supplies.**

**Please refer to page 1 regarding high school credit course expectations.**

## ***Band***

Band offers students the opportunity to experience a new level of communication. This artistic language will be with them for life and opens up a world of aesthetic possibilities which will bring new meaning to their growth and development. Through instrumental music, children develop life skills which aid in their success: self-discipline, group cooperation, positive self-esteem, persistence, and confidence.

### **Beginning Band (Full Year Course)**

**Grade 6**

Prerequisite: Student and parent interview with Band Director and musicality test.

No previous experience is required for entry into this band. Students are taught the basic skills of playing an instrument and music reading. Students are placed on instruments by recommendation of the director. A personal interview of the student is conducted in the spring. Each director tries to place students on instruments that provide the best opportunity for the individual success of the student and to balance the instrumentation of the band program. Some outside-of-the-school day rehearsals are required to prepare the concerts.

**\$15.00 fee required for clothing**

### **Band (Full Year Course)**

**Grade 7 & 8**

Prerequisite: Student and parent interview with Band Director.

Band reviews basic fundamentals of instrumental music taught during the first year and refines those skills. Band provides individual competition through weekly tests and the All-Region Band audition. Advanced band expands the number of performance opportunities and competitive events: pep rallies, UIL band competition, and public performances. Students are assigned to the appropriate band class based on their performance ability.

**\$15.00 fee required for clothing**

## ***Choir***

Students in choir develop a greater understanding of math, history, and human anatomy through the skills they learn and the kinds of music they perform. Being a part of this organization will help develop self – discipline, leadership skills and positive self – esteem.

### **Beginning Choir (Full Year Course)**

**Grade 6**

Choir is open to both boys and girls interested in singing and learning the basics of singing. Students will learn and develop proper vocal technique and music reading skills in order to perform many different types of music from popular to traditional. Performance opportunities will include public concerts throughout the year. Prior to each performance/competition, students may have rehearsals outside-of-the-school day. Calendars will be distributed to students at the beginning of the year and rehearsal/performance schedules will be updated throughout the year.

**\$15.00 fee required informal uniforms and other supplies**

### **Treble Choir (Full Year Course)**

**Grade 7 & 8**

Prerequisite: Student interview with Director

This choir class is specifically designed for those students who have not been in choir in the recent past, as well as for other students who may need further development of their vocal and sight-reading skills. However, these students are able to participate in region auditions and other individual competitions if they are vocally capable as judged by the director. Students will learn and develop proper vocal technique in order to perform choral music of different styles and in a variety of languages. Public concerts will be held throughout the year, and after-school rehearsals will be held in preparation for these performances and individual competitions according to the choir calendar. Attendance is required at after-school rehearsals and at all concerts as they are major components of the course grade.

**\$30.00 fee required for formal and informal uniforms and other supplies**

### **Concert Girls' Choir (Full Year Course)**

**Grade 7 & 8**

Prerequisite: Student interview with Director

The Concert Girls' Choir is an auditioned group of 7th and 8th graders. Students will learn and continue to develop proper vocal technique in order to perform choral music of different styles and in a variety of languages. Public concerts will be held throughout the year, and after-school rehearsals will be held in preparation for these performances and individual competitions according to the choir calendar. Attendance is required at after-school rehearsals and at all concerts as they are major components of the course grade. Participation in region auditions and individual competitions is strongly encouraged for students in this group.

**\$30.00 fee required for formal and informal uniforms and other supplies**

### **Concert Boys' Choir (Full Year Course)**

**Grade 7 & 8**

Prerequisite: Student interview with Director

The Concert Boys Choir is an auditioned group of 7th and 8th graders. Students will learn and continue to develop proper vocal technique in order to perform choral music of different styles and in a variety of languages. Public concerts will be held throughout the year, and after-school rehearsals will be held in preparation for these performances and individual competitions according to the choir calendar. Attendance is required at after-school rehearsals and at all concerts as they are major components of the course grade. Participation in region auditions and individual competitions is strongly encouraged for students in this group.

**\$30.00 fee required for formal and informal uniforms and other supplies**

## **Theatre Arts**

### **Introduction to Theatre Arts (Full Year Course)**

**Grade 6**

Prerequisite: None

Students will participate in a variety of theatre arts activities designed to enhance academic and social skills. Theatre incorporates the use of evaluation, understanding, interpreting, expression, interaction, cooperation, and imagination. Students learn skills necessary to develop as productive citizens, and connect with their peers as creators, performers, collaborators, and future co-workers.

This is a performance class. Students may expect to perform for their classmates, as well as invited audiences of other classes multiple times throughout the year.

Students will be able to audition for the shows offered for the year. The class may also perform in competition events such as duet acting, solo acting, record mime, and oral interpretation.

Students are also expected to attend one performance event per semester.

**There is no upfront fee; however, students may incur individual costs per show (No more than \$10).**

### **Theatre Arts (Full Year Course)**

**Grade 7 & 8**

Prerequisite: None

Students will participate in a variety of theatre arts activities designed to enhance academic and social skills. Theatre incorporates the use of evaluation, understanding, interpreting, expression, interaction, cooperation, and imagination. Students learn skills necessary to develop as productive citizens, and connect with their peers as creators, performers, collaborators, and future co-workers.

This is a performance class. Students may expect to perform for their classmates, as well as invited audiences of other classes multiple times throughout the year.

Students will be able to audition for the shows offered for the year. The class may also perform in competition events such as duet acting, solo acting, record mime, and oral interpretation.

Students are also expected to attend one performance event per semester.

**There is no upfront fee; however, students may incur individual costs per show (No more than \$10).**

### **Theatre Arts I (One High School Credit) (Full Year Course)**

**Grade 8**

Prerequisite: Teacher approval and/or Theatre 7

Theater I is a High School Fine Arts course. Theater Arts I is a performance class, and students will rehearse and perform after school and possibly some weekends. Every effort will be made to accommodate other activities; however, students will work at least 20 extracurricular hours per semester. This is generally the final two weeks before a scheduled performance. Students will produce at least one after school production per semester. The class may also perform in competition events such as duet acting, solo acting, record mime, and oral interpretation.

**There is no upfront fee; however, students may incur individual costs per show (No more than \$10).**

## **Foreign Language**

### **Spanish I (One High School Credit) (Full Year Course)**

**Grade 8**

Prerequisite: None

Spanish I is a course for High School credit. Acquiring another language incorporates communication skills such as listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing, and showing. Students develop these communication skills by using knowledge of the language, including grammar, culture, communication and learning strategies, technology, content from other subject areas to socialize, acquire and provide information, to express feelings and opinions, and to get others to adopt a course of action. While knowledge of other cultures, connections to other disciplines, comparisons between languages and cultures, and community interaction all contribute to and enhance the communicative language learning experience, communication skills are the primary focus of language acquisition.

Students of languages other than English gain the knowledge to understand cultural practices (what people do) and products (what people create) and to increase their understanding of other cultures as well as to interact with members of those cultures. Through the learning of languages other than English, students obtain the tools and develop the context needed to connect with other subject areas and to use the language to acquire information and reinforce other areas of study. Students of languages other than English develop an understanding of the nature of language, including grammar and culture and use this knowledge to compare languages and cultures and to expand insight into their own language and culture. Students enhance their personal and public lives and meet the career demands of the 21st century by using languages other than English to participate in communities in Texas, in other states, and around the world.

Using age-appropriate activities, students develop the ability to perform the tasks of the novice language learner. The novice language learner, when dealing with familiar topics, should:

In this course students will:

- Learn the foundation for Spanish pronunciation and standard grammar
- Engage in oral, aural, and written exchanges of learned materials.
- Acquire basic vocabulary such as likes, dislikes, chores, sports, etc.
- Read short inserts from newspapers, magazines, etc.
- Learn the present tense of regular and irregular verbs.
- Give commands to peers as well as to adults.
- Compare the Spanish language and Hispanic cultures to student's own language and culture.

Students of classical languages use the skills of listening, speaking, and writing to reinforce the skill of reading.

**Students are expected to use as much Spanish in class as possible (a minimum of 40% is expected in Spanish I). Department recommends an 85% average or better for students who are planning on enrolling in Pre – AP Spanish classes.**

**Students enrolling in grade 8 Spanish I courses need to understand from the onset that the expectations and demands in this course go beyond that of other classes.**

**Please refer to page 1 regarding high school credit course expectations.**

## *Career and Technology Education*

### **Career Investigations (Semester Course)**

**Grade 7 & 8**

Career Investigations is an 18-week course, which prepares students to be “career investigators”. Students will assess their roles in society, identify their roles as workers, analyze their personal assets, complete a basic exploration of career clusters and select career fields or occupations for further study.

This course will engage students in the world of work beyond high school, educate students on graduation endorsement options, and expose students to emerging workplace and postsecondary education opportunities. Mathematics, Science, English, Social Science and technology are integrated throughout the course.

### **Touch System Data Entry (One Half High School Credit) (Semester Course)**

**Grade 7 & 8**

Touch System Data Entry is a course for High School credit. This course prepares students to operate the keyboard by touch and begin development of acceptable speed and accuracy levels. Formatting of basic documents is also included. The purpose of the keyboarding class is to teach the “touch system” for developing keyboarding skill and to learn proper formatting of documents for personal and business use. Students enrolling in grade 7 and 8 intensive Touch System Data Entry courses need to understand from the onset that the expectations and demands in these courses go beyond that of other classes.

### **Introduction to Building Trades (Semester Course)**

**Grade 7 & 8**

This course is a comprehensive course introducing students to the study of manufacturing and construction technology with emphasis being placed on design process and practical applications. Students learn to make working drawings, construct new designs, test materials, analyze construction costs and manufacture products. Students are responsible for purchasing their project supplies for their personal projects

Students are taught the proper and safe way to use hand and stationary wood working tools and machines. Student are introduced to CNC programming and applications.

**A \$25.00 shop fee is required.**

### **Building Trades (Semester Course)**

**Grade 8**

Prerequisite: Introduction to Building Trades

This course is designed to give students the opportunity to expand upon the skills they acquired in the Introduction to Building Trades class. Students work on projects of a more advanced nature.

**A shop fee is required for this class. The amount of this fee will be determined on an individual basis for some materials based on the size/type of project chosen by the student.**

**A \$10.00 shop fee is required.**

### **Clerical Practice (Semester or Full Year Course)**

**Grade 6, 7, & 8**

Prerequisite: Academic record and the equivalent of commended performance on state assessment plus no discipline referrals the previous year. Preference will be given to upperclassman.

Clerical practice is designed to provide the student with opportunities to learn concepts and skills related to successful employment, including organization, clerical skills, effective communication and positive work habits and attitudes. In keeping the developing successful employment skills, clerical practice students are expected to maintain a standard of confidentiality.

## **General Electives**

### **Health Education (One Half High School Credit) (Semester Course)**

**Grade 7 & 8**

Health I is a course for High School credit. The student will study the principles of good grooming, physical fitness, nutrition and weight control, mental health and behavior, systems of the body, prevention and control of diseases, drug and alcohol abuse, tobacco use, First Aid and CPR. A unit of Self -Responsibility focuses on Parenting and Paternity Awareness is also taught.

### **Journalism (Full Year Course)**

**Grades 7 & 8**

Students in this class will be producing content for the **GPMS Gazette** (the official school newsletter), the school yearbook, and the school website, while learning the basic principles and practices of journalism. The concepts of journalism include a variety of aspects, including (but not limited to): Associated Press style, journalistic integrity, headlines, captions, revising & editing, the interview process, features, editorials, libel, plagiarism, photography, commercial art, design, layout, publishing tools & software, and (most importantly) meeting deadlines.

Work ethic plays a large factor in grades for this course, so students enrolling in journalism need to have already cultivated the maturity and willingness to take assignments and meet deadlines.

Standards of excellence will be high, as Journalism students will be representing all aspects of our school to the general public. Failing at any grade reporting period may result in course removal and a schedule change.

### **Destination Imagination (Full Year Course)**

**Grade 6, 7, & 8**

**Prerequisite: Must have met the passing standard on all previous academic year's STAAR tests or on a Campus Approved Reading and Math Assessment if the student was not enrolled in a public school in Texas the previous academic year.**

“The Destination Imagination Challenge Program is a fun, hands-on system of learning that fosters students’ creativity, curiosity and courage through academic Challenges. Our Challenges blend STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) education with the arts and social entrepreneurship. Students who participate learn invaluable 21st century skills as well as patience, flexibility, persistence, ethics, respect for others and their ideas, and the collaborative problem solving process.”

Destination Imagination serves the needs of students with higher levels of creativity, thinking skills, and talents of fine art.

- Teams work to solve the season's challenge to compete at the Regional DI Tournament at the end of February. Teams which place first at the regional tournament will advance to the State DI Affiliate Tournament held in Texas. Final teams are then selected to compete at Global Finals.
- Students will be placed in problem solving teams of 3-7 members who are challenged to solve one of six DI Challenges that include the following areas: physics, technology, mechanics, engineering, theater arts, team building, time and project management, goal setting, and much more.
- Teams must also prepare to solve an “Instant Challenge” at the DI tournament. They will be given materials to perform an improvisational challenge or an engineering challenge in front of a panel of judges. Instant Challenges are to be solved in 4-6 minutes by the team without previous knowledge of what the challenge will be.

- All ideas and solutions to the team challenge MUST be that of the team. ALL ideas given to the team by others is considered INTERFERENCE and will result in team penalties.
- Additional costs may occur if teams advance to state or global finals.
- Team members and parents need to expect additional after school or Saturday rehearsals to prepare for competition. Other Saturday workshops may occur for regional teams.
- Destination Imagination

**Course Fee: \$20 to cover materials used to solve the team challenge**

**Speech Communications (One Half High School Credit) (Semester Course)**

**Grade 8**

This course is an introduction into the basic principles of public speaking. It includes the study of the use of body and voice, the speaker-listener relationship, introduction to delivering a speech, storytelling, manuscript readings, interview skills, and improvisation. This course also blends written, oral, and graphic communication in career-based, business environment with building confidence in public speaking through a variety of presentations that use communication and theatrical techniques.

***Grand Central Station***

**Grand Central Station (GCS) Learning Lab**

**Grade 6, 7, & 8**

**Prerequisite:** Student grades lower than a 75 average in core subjects, teacher and/or parent nomination, and Focused Intervention Team (FIT) committee consensus. Students may also qualify for placement in the GCS Learning Lab by a recommendation of the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC).

This learning lab is a Response to Intervention (RtI) for any student in need of additional academic support. There are three levels of services provided with this instruction, as determined by a student's performance and need.

**Level One** provides GSC lab support as needed in collaboration with the student's core subject teacher. Students at this level may be pulled from their regular core class after teacher instruction to the GCS lab as needed.

**Level Two**, in addition to level one support, provides services for an entire class period to address study skills, pre-teaching, subject preview, and review. This class period replaces an elective in the student's schedule.

**Level three**, in addition to level one and two, is an after school lab that provides additional instructional support.

Grades are assigned by the core subject teacher at level one. A GCS lab grade is assigned at level two. GCS support will decrease as student academic success increases and stabilizes.

Students placed in GCS by the LPAC will receive daily instruction utilizing linguistic software. Once sufficient progress has been made by the student, the LPAC shall reconvene and determine if exiting out of the GCS Lab is warranted.

## ***Physical Education/Athletics***

In Physical Education, students acquire the knowledge and skills for movement that provide the foundation for enjoyment, continued social development through physical activity, and access to a physically-active lifestyle. The student exhibits a physically-active lifestyle and understands the relationship between physical activity and health throughout the life span.

### **Physical Education (Co Ed) (full year course)**

**Grade 6**

**Prerequisite:** None

Sixth grade students apply similar concepts from one sport or movement setting to another. Students can observe another individual's performance and notice key elements for success. At this grade level, students participate in physical activity both in and out of school while maintaining a healthy level of fitness as their bodies grow and change. Their knowledge of safety and the ability to manage their own behavior is reinforced. Instruction is directed more toward encouraging the incorporation of physical activity into a daily routine and less toward fundamental skill development.

### **Boys' Pre-Athletics (PE Credit) (Full Year Course)**

**Grade 6**

**Prerequisite: Current UIL medical physical on file**

The Gregory-Portland Middle School 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Pre-Athletic Class is a physical education class designed to prepare 6<sup>th</sup> grade students for the athletic programs offered in the 7<sup>th</sup> Grade. Students choosing to participate in the Pre-Athletics class should expect to dress out in proper workout attire, and understand that daily workouts during the class period will be significantly more physically and mentally demanding than that of a regular physical education course. Students will focus on athletic conditioning, strength and agility training, and proper weightlifting technique. The course will also focus on sport specific skills including football, basketball, track and field, and tennis. During the spring semester, intramural sports will be offered after school to those students in pre-athletics. Regular physical education students will not be allowed to participate in intramural sports.

### **Girls' Pre-Athletics (PE Credit) (Full Year Course)**

**Grade 6**

**Prerequisite: Current UIL medical physical on file**

The Gregory-Portland Middle School 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Pre-Athletic Class is a physical education class designed to prepare 6<sup>th</sup> grade students for the athletic programs offered in the 7<sup>th</sup> Grade. Students choosing to participate in the Pre-Athletics class should expect to dress out in proper workout attire, and understand that daily workouts during the class period will be significantly more physically and mentally demanding than that of a regular physical education course. Students will focus on athletic conditioning, strength and agility training, and proper weightlifting technique. The course will also focus on sport specific skills including volleyball, basketball, track and field, and tennis. During the spring semester, intramural sports will be offered after school to those students in pre-athletics. Regular physical education students will not be allowed to participate in intramural sports.

**Physical Education (Co Ed) (full year course)****Grade 7**

Prerequisite: None

Seventh grade students apply similar concepts from one sport or movement setting to another. Students can observe another individual's performance and notice key elements for success. At this grade level, students participate in physical activity both in and out of school while maintaining a healthy level of fitness as their bodies grow and change. Their knowledge of safety and the ability to manage their own behavior is reinforced. Instruction is directed more toward encouraging the incorporation of physical activity into a daily routine and less toward fundamental skill development.

**\$25.00 uniform fee required**

**Boys' Athletics (PE Credit) (Full Year Course)****Grade 7**

**Prerequisite: Coach's Approval, one complete year of 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Pre-Athletics classes, and a current UIL medical physical on file.**

This course is designed for all boys seriously interested in UIL 7<sup>th</sup> grade football, basketball, cross country, or track teams. It is required that all students remain in the class all year.

Students enrolled in boys' athletics may try out for football, basketball, cross country, or track. Students who do not wish to participate in the in-season sport or do not make the team for the in-season sport will participate in off-season conditioning.

**Girls' Athletics (PE Credit) (Full Year Course)****Grade 7**

**Prerequisite: Coach's Approval, one complete year of 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Pre-Athletics classes, and a current UIL medical physical on file.**

This course is designed for all girls seriously interested in UIL 7<sup>th</sup> grade cross country, volleyball, basketball, or track teams. It is required that all students remain in the class all year.

Students enrolled in girls' athletics may try out for volleyball, basketball, cross country, or track. Students who do not wish to participate in the in-season sport or do not make the team for the in-season sport will participate in off-season conditioning.

**Physical Education (Co Ed) (Semester or Full Year Course)****Grade 8**

Prerequisite: None

Eighth grade P.E. is for those students who did not earn a P.E. credit in the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade.

**\$25.00 uniform fee required**

**Boys' Athletics (PE Credit) (Semester or Full Year Course)****Grade 8**

**Prerequisite: Coach's Approval, one complete year of 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Athletics classes, and a current UIL medical physical on file.**

This course is designed for those students who are athletes. This class is for participation in UIL sponsored sports: football, basketball, cross country, and track.

Students enrolled in boys' athletics may try out for football, basketball, cross country, or track. Students who do not wish to participate in the in-season sport or do not make the team for the in-season sport will participate in off-season conditioning.

**Girls' Athletics (PE Credit) (Semester or Full Year Course)** **Grade 8**

**Prerequisite: Coach's Approval, one complete year of 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Athletics classes, and a current UIL medical physical on file.**

This Course is designed for all girls who are seriously interested in participating in UIL sponsored basketball, volleyball, track, and cross country.

Students enrolled in girls' athletics may try out for volleyball, basketball, cross country, or track. Students who do not wish to participate in the in-season sport or do not make the team for the in-season sport will participate in off-season conditioning.

**Tennis Co Ed (PE Credit) (Full Year Course)** **Grade 7**

**Prerequisite: Coach's Approval, one complete year of 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Pre-Athletics classes, student meeting selection/eligibility criteria, and a current UIL medical physical on file.**

This course is designed for athletes intending on participating in Middle School tennis year round. An emphasis is placed on skills that will help the athlete in a competitive environment. Student Selection is done through 6<sup>th</sup> grade Pre-athletic year.

**Tennis Co Ed (PE Credit) (Full Year Course)** **Grade 8**

**Prerequisite: Coach's Approval, one complete year of the 7<sup>th</sup> Tennis course, student meeting selection/eligibility criteria, and a current UIL medical physical on file.**

This course is designed for athletes intending on participating in Middle School tennis year round. An emphasis is placed on skills that will help the athlete in a competitive environment.

**\*\*\*Exceptions to prerequisite requirements will be done on a case by case basis. Parents should contact that sport's individual head coach for details.\*\*\***