

Kennedale Junior High School

Course Description Guide

8th Grade



2020-2021

Required Academic Courses

English Language Arts

English 8

In this course, students refine and master previously learned skills. This course uses textbooks and novels to study various types of literature such as short stories, fiction, non-fiction, poetry, historical, and persuasive. It strongly focuses on writing styles and techniques and proper grammar usage. Some research will be required, and students will present oral and written reports including presentations strengthened by visuals and computer technology.

Honors English 8

In this course, higher-level strategies will be used to expand literature exposure and knowledge. Emphasis on developing critical reading comprehension skills/strategies will be an ongoing component of the program. Students in this course will be expected to work at a quick pace. The novel(s) and story choices will provide in-depth and critical thinking objectives. Using extended vocabulary study, students will be exposed to AP and SAT/ACT writing forms and reading selections.

Students will be responsible for a summer reading list, which will be provided at a later date.

Math

Math 8

This course is the foundation necessary to prepare students to take Algebra 1 in 9th grade. The primary areas of focus are proportionality, expressions, equations, relationships, foundations of functions (Algebra), and measurement and data. Students use algebraic thinking to describe how a change in one quantity in a relationship results in a change in the other. Students connect verbal, numeric, graphic, and symbolic representations of relationships, including equations and inequalities. Students begin to develop an understanding of functional relationships. Students use geometric properties and relationships, as well as spatial reasoning, to model and analyze situations and solve problems. While the use of many types of technology is important, the emphasis on algebra readiness skills necessitates the implementation of graphing technology.

Algebra I

The prerequisite for this course is the completion of the Honors Math 7. In Algebra I, students will build on the foundation provided in grades 6-8 in linear relationships, number operations and proportionality. Students will study linear, quadratic, and exponential functions and their related transformations, equations, and associated solutions. Students will connect functions and their associated solutions in both mathematical and real-world solutions. In addition, students will study polynomials of degree one and two, radical expressions, sequences and laws of exponents. Students will generate and solve linear systems with two equations and two variables and will create new functions through transformations. While the use of many types of technology will be used, the emphasis will be on graphing technology.

Students are expected to maintain an 80% average each 6-week grading periods, or the student may be moved to the 8th grade math class. Students will be expected to take the Texas State End of Course (EOC) exam.

Upon successful completion of this course, students will receive one (1) credit for high school Algebra I and may be recommended to continue with Honors Geometry in the 9th grade. In addition, this credited course will be printed on the student's high school transcript and will be factored in to their high school GPA and class ranking with a maximum grade point of 4.0.

Science

Science 8

The curriculum for 8th grade science is based on the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills and is comprised of two major components: content and processing skills. This class is designed to complement and extend the 6th and 7th grade science curriculum by use of the science lab and classroom assignments. In this overview of astronomy, geology, physics, biology, and chemistry, the students will focus on the dynamic forces behind the many systems of the earth and universe and how these systems relate to one another. In addition, curriculum will cover physical sciences.

Honors Science 8

The topics of study are the same as listed above with the main difference being the expanded content due to the greater complexity and depth of the curriculum. This course will focus on higher-level independent thinking skills. Studying the content in greater depth provides the opportunity for better development of the processing skills through an inquiry-based approach. The level of instruction/curriculum will also focus on preparing students for advanced science courses at the high school level. Students should be extremely dedicated to academic studies.

Social Studies

U.S. History

This course is a study of American history from European exploration to Reconstruction. The major emphasis of this course will include the study of European explorers, the colonial period, the Revolutionary War, War of 1812, Civil War and Reconstruction; Westward expansion and Manifest Destiny will also be emphasized. In addition, major personalities will be covered. Students will work with maps, graphs, and important historical documents.

Honors U.S. History

The Pre-AP U.S. History class (pre-history to 1877) is designed for those students who have a genuine interest in history and who have demonstrated skill and aptitude in history. This class will emphasize higher-level thinking skills, in-depth writing, the study of primary source documents, the interpretations of maps, graphs, and political cartoons, as well as the examination of complex historical issues. Additional work beyond the requirements of the U.S. history class will be assigned, and students should be dedicated to academic studies. In order to participate in this class, students must meet the criteria and guidelines listed on the Pre-AP contract. A STAAR benchmark may be used as a measurement tool for final Pre-AP placement.

Required Elective

Touch Data Systems Entry

In Touch System Data Entry, students apply technical skills to address business applications of emerging technologies. Students enhance reading, writing, computing, communication, and reasoning skills and apply them to the business environment. Students will need to apply touch system data entry skills for production of business documents. **(1 semester)**

Elective Courses

Reading Improvement

Students will automatically be scheduled in this required elective course if they do not meet the state requirements on the 7th grade STAAR Reading test. This course is designed to improve students' basic reading skills and performance on future STAAR Reading tests. It will cover vocabulary development, reading comprehension, and literary concepts. Students will be instructed in drawing conclusions, making inferences and generalizations, comparing and contrasting ideas, using inductive and deductive reasoning, as well as learning to detect style, tone and mood in an authors' piece. The course will also cover identifying genre of texts, using root words, prefixes and suffixes to determine meanings of words, and determining main idea. **(2 semesters)**

Math Lab 8

Students will be scheduled in this required elective course if they did not meet the state requirement on the 7th grade STAAR Math test. This course is designed to improve students' basic math skills and performance on future math STAAR tests. All students will use the program Imagine Math. This program is an individualized learning system which helps students practice skills from previously learned math concepts, pinpoint areas of weakness, and receive immediate feedback on their performance. The Math Lab teacher will provide individualized instruction as students make progress on skills from fundamental math to algebra concepts. In addition, students will use Math Facts in a Flash to develop fluency and automaticity with basic arithmetic facts. Students should expect practice work and/or homework each night. **(2 semesters)**

W4S (Wildcats for Success)

Would you like to have higher grades? Would you like to learn effective strategies for studying and organization? This class prepares students for success in their academic classes. Students receive instruction in inquiry, collaboration and reading strategies in addition to note-taking and organizational skills that are necessary to excel in an academic environment. The skills learned in this class will benefit students in junior high, high school, and college. **(1 semester)**

Spanish I

Students will develop a novice-level of proficiency in Spanish through the practice of listening, speaking, reading and writing skills in class and at home. The main focus will be the acquisition of the basics for oral communication through vocabulary and simple grammar structures in the target language. All four skills: listening, speaking, writing, and reading will be assessed regularly. **(2 semesters)**

Upon successful completion of both semesters, students will receive:

- One (1) credit for high school Foreign Language, which is a graduation requirement

This credited course will be printed on the student's high school transcript and will be factored into their high school GPA and ranking.

It is recommended that the student:

- Maintained an 80 or higher in 7th grade English/Reading
- Possess a strong knowledge of the English language
- Be self-motivated
- Have a history of excellent attendance

Health

Students enrolled in this course will develop knowledge and skills to address adolescent health issues. Students gain a better understanding of the knowledge and behavior they use to safeguard their health, particularly pertaining to health risks. Major areas of study will include fitness, nutrition, mental/emotional health, substance abuse, and interpersonal relationships. Through class participation and research, students explore the correct ways to react in different situations to solve a conflict properly. Emphasis is on classroom discussion, research, and skill practice in critical thinking and problem solving. The course incorporates the use of technology and encourages students to research and use valid and reliable sources of health information. **(1 semester)**

Upon successful completion of both semesters, students will receive:

- ½ (.5) credit for high school high school

This credited course will be printed on the student's high school transcript and will be factored into their high school GPA and ranking.

Concert Choir

This is a mixed 7th and 8th grade course, which is designed for students who wish to develop ability in musical performance and skills. Students will be trained in the fundamentals of music theory as well as individual and ensemble vocal technique. Previous vocal experience is strongly encouraged. Since the KJHS Choir is a UIL performing ensemble, passing grades in all classes and excellent behavior is expected. Attendance at all rehearsals, concerts, and competitions is mandatory and students are expected to follow the UIL guidelines. To ensure integrity and performance level, students who wish to join the KJHS Choir must participate in a brief private singing audition within the first week of school. **(2 semesters)**

MS Art 2 or 3

This is a one or two semester course open to all 8th grade students. If a student does not have prior experience in 7th grade Art, they will sign up for MS Art 2. Students who took Art in 7th grade will sign up for MS Art 3. These art courses allow students the opportunity to develop their artistic skills and awareness. Hands-on projects relate to personal, practical, cultural and historic themes. Students must have a positive attitude and be willing to learn new ideas. Students must take care of equipment, material, tools, and artwork. Throughout the course, students must maintain an art portfolio. **(1 or 2 semesters)**

HS Art I (Advanced Art)

This is an advanced level art course in which students must have prior teacher approval from the art teacher. As a prerequisite for all other art classes at the high school level, Art I gives the student the opportunity to examine a variety of objects, explore art elements, (line value, texture, color, form and space) and apply the principles of art (unity, emphasis, balance, variety, movement, and proportion). Student will explore individual directions through the design, development and creation of original art works and they will gain experience working with a variety of art media including paint, watercolor, pencil, pastels, ceramics. The student will also gain an understanding and appreciation of art history by way of evaluating artwork and applying aesthetic judgments and art criticism.

Since this is a high school credited course, enrollment in Art I can be revoked due to negative performance and classroom grades below an 80. **(2 semesters)**

Upon successful completion of both semesters, students will receive:

- One (1) credit for high school Fine Art Elective, which is a state requirement

This credited course will be printed on the student's high school transcript and will be factored into their high school GPA and ranking.

MS Theater 1 (Beginning Theater)

This is an introductory course in which no previous theater experience is required. The student will develop concepts about self, human relations, and the environment while learning the basic elements of drama and conventions of theater. The student will interpret characters while using the voice and body expressively. Along with presenting projects to the class, students will be expected to perform on a limited basis. Students will gain an appreciation for theater history as well as demonstrate proper theater and audience etiquette. However, this course is not a requirement for students to participate in JTK's (Junior Thespians of Kennedale) after-school theater program. **(1 semester)**

MS Theatre 2 (Advanced Theatre)

The requirements for this course are the successful completion of Theatre I, demonstration of theatre skills, and completion of an entrance evaluation. Students must audition in order to obtain admission into Theatre II. The audition is a monologue, which is prepared in class and performed as their final project in Theatre I. The entrance evaluation will consider grades, citizenship, and participation and eligibility in the JTK after-school productions program throughout their 7th grade year. This class incorporates the elements learned in Theatre I in greater detail and this class requires more performances than the introductory class. Career opportunities in theatre may also be explored throughout the year. **(2 Semesters)**

Concert Band

Admission into this band is determined by an audition with the band director(s). This class is for students with some playing experience and note reading. Students will focus on improving their technical ability and increasing their knowledge of music theory. Performances will include a concert in the fall and one in the spring. This group will not have additional before or after school rehearsals or obligations. Band is a one-year commitment. Schedules will not be changed without band director approval. **(2 semesters)**

Symphonic Band

Admission into this band is determined by an audition with the band director(s). Students will perform at pep rallies, solo/ensemble contest, festivals, winter and spring concerts, as well as UIL events. Attendance is required. All members are required to attend a sectional once a week, before or after school, in the fall and spring and one to two after school rehearsals throughout the year to ensure the success of this group. Students must pass all classes, attend rehearsals and performances as well as exhibit good behavior to maintain membership. Band is a one-year commitment. Schedules will not be changed without band director approval. **(2 semesters)**

Honors Band

Admission into this band is determined by an audition with the band director(s). This is a varsity-level band mostly comprised of students with two years of playing experience. Students will audition for placement in this organization. This band performs at pep rallies, the solo/ensemble contest, festivals, winter and spring concerts, as well as UIL events. Attendance is required. Each member is required to attend a sectional once a week, before or after school, in the fall and spring as well as three to four after school rehearsals in the fall and spring to remain successful. Students must pass all

classes, attend rehearsals and performances as well as exhibit good behavior to maintain membership. Band is a one-year commitment. Schedules will not be changed without band director approval. **(2 semesters)**

Band Instrumental Studies

Students in the Honors Band and Symphonic Bands, with band director approval, may enroll in this course. Students may take this course for one or two semesters. Students will work independently and in small groups on region music, UIL pass offs, and solo/ensembles. **(1 or 2 semesters)**

Investigating Careers

The goal of this course is to create a foundation for success in high school, future studies, and careers such as Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics; Business and Industry; Public Service; Arts and Humanities; and Multidisciplinary Studies. The students research labor market information, learn job-seeking skills, and create documents required for employment. Career and technical education instruction provides content aligned with challenging academic standards and relevant technical knowledge and skills for students to further their education and succeed in current or emerging professions. **(1 semester)**

Journalism/Yearbook

They study the basic principles of print and online **journalism** as they examine the role of printed news media in our society. They learn investigative skills, responsible reporting, and **journalistic** writing techniques as they read, respond to, and write their own news and feature articles.

Students learn and develop the skills needed to produce a yearbook: evaluating news, fact gathering, photography, writing of headlines and captions, graphic design and layout, proofing, editing, advertising, basic publication management skills, and creative writing. This course requires leadership and teamwork abilities. **(2 semesters)**

Leadership

Student Leadership is a course for students who seek opportunities to expand and deepen their group and individual leadership skills to positively impact their own lives and community. Building on collaborative skills and habits of mind, students gain knowledge and expertise in leadership skills including goal setting, effective communication, organization, time management, and collaborative strategies. The course prepares students not only for active participation in school but also in their community. Students solve relevant and current school and community issues by working collaboratively and independently on high-level, real-world tasks such as project proposals, portfolios, and presentations.

The course is adaptable across various student needs and student populations. **The course is customized to meet the needs of formal student organizations such as student council. (2 semesters)**

Lego Robotics

This course provides an introduction to robotics for students with no programming background using LEGO MINDSTORMS EV3 kits. Students will learn to construct, control and program these robots through investigative and exploration activities. Research projects will expose the students to the engineering process. Students will learn to apply science, technology, engineering, and math concepts (STEM), plus a big dose of imagination, to solve a problem. Along their discovery journey, they develop critical thinking and team-building skills, basic STEM applications, and even presentation skills. **(1 semester)**

Fundamentals of Communication

Professional Communications blends written, oral, and graphic communication in a career-based environment. Careers in the global economy require individuals to be creative and have a strong background in computer and technology applications, a strong and solid academic foundation, and a proficiency in professional oral and written communication. Within this context, students will be expected to develop and expand the ability to write, read, edit, speak, listen, apply software applications, manipulate computer graphics, and conduct Internet research. **(1 semester)**

Creative Writing

Unleash your imagination in Creative Writing. In this one-semester course, you will hone your creating writing skills by focusing on characterization and plot development. At the end of the year, student pieces will be published in the KJH Literary Magazine and a field trip to the North Texas Teen Book Festival will be taken to meet authors and attend writing workshops. **(1 semester)**

Outdoor Adventure

This course is one semester and designed to give an introduction to outdoor education. Students are offered education in the areas of fishing, hiking, nature recognition, archery and outdoor cooking. The students will feel safe and positive about their learning environment and demonstrate appropriate life skills that have exemplified proper mentoring in these fields of study. **(1 semester)**

Teacher Aide

Teacher Aide (TA) is a one or two semester course open to 8th grade students who have an overall 80 average in academics, E or S in citizenship for all classes, and very limited discipline referrals. Students will be responsible for various jobs designated by the teacher and will be held accountable to a contract. *Confidentiality is essential*, and breaking confidentiality may result in dismissal as an aide. Students must apply for each semester and must submit an application form to the counselor prior to placement. Teacher recommendation, application, and pre-approval will be required. **(1 or 2 semesters)**

Office Aide

Office Aide (OA) is a one or two semester course open to 8th grade students who are considered role models of the school, have E or S in citizenship for all classes, and very limited discipline referrals. Students will work with the personnel in the main office area. *Confidentiality is crucial*, and breaking confidentiality will result in dismissal. After Semester I, students may reapply for OA; however, returning students will only be scheduled once all qualified students have had the opportunity to serve. Students must turn in an application form to the counselor prior to placement as an office aide. Enrollment as an office aide is limited, and students must sign up for an additional one semester elective course. Teacher recommendation, application, and pre-approval will be required. **(1 or 2 semesters)**

Strength and Development- Boys or Girls

The purpose of this course is to teach each student a variety of sports that can be played at any age level. It is also our goal that each student learns the proper way to run, exercise, stretch, etc. Some of the activities that will be taught include softball, volleyball, flag football, basketball, soccer, archery and kick ball. Students are separated by gender for class. **(1 or 2 semesters)**

Athletics- Girls

This course provides girls with the opportunity to participate in volleyball, basketball, and track. Students must demonstrate a desire to participate in intense activities and training for each sport and be willing to become a team-oriented player. In order to be re-enrolled in athletics as an 8th grader, students must have ended the 7th grade year in good standing according to the expectations stated in the athletic handbook. **All students who enroll in athletics will be required to have a physical by the first day of school will be required to participate in the district approved mandatory drug testing.** All participants should expect to run and condition throughout the duration of the course. Students must be prepared and willing to participate in very warm and cool weather conditions. This course will require extra time after school for team practices and games.

- Girls who desire to play **volleyball only** may sign up for athletics during semester one only. However, if planning to continue to play volleyball in high school, it is strongly recommended to complete a full year of 8th grade athletics if the student's academic schedule allows.
- Girls who desire to participate in **track only** should also consider participating in athletics all year, if the student's academic schedule allows.

This is a UIL activity, and students must be passing in all subjects to participate and must abide by the guidelines and rules in the KISD athletic handbook. Students failing at six weeks or semester could be removed from athletics and placed in strength and development or a different elective. Participation in this course requires desire, discipline, and dedication to the high expectations required of KJHS athletes.

Athletics- Boys

This course provides boys the opportunity to participate in football, basketball, and track. **A student does not need to sign up for athletics to be in cross country or track only, as these sports practice either before or after school.** Students must demonstrate a desire to play a sport and be willing to become a team-oriented person. In order to be re-enrolled in athletics as an 8th grader, students must have ended the 7th grade year in good standing according to the expectations stated in the athletic handbook. **All students enrolled in athletics will be required to have a physical by the first day of school and will be required to participate in the district approved mandatory drug testing.** All participants should expect to run and condition throughout the duration of the course, and students must be prepared to participate in all types of weather conditions. All boys enrolled in athletics for the fall will be required to play football. This course will require extra time after school for team practices and games.

- Boys who desire to play **football only** (no basketball or continued training or conditioning) may sign up for Boys Athletics semester one only.
- Boys who desire to play **basketball only** (NO football), will begin in Strength and Development and then have their schedule changed to athletics **IF** they make the basketball team and will continue in athletics for semester two.

This is a UIL activity and students must be passing all subjects in order to participate and must abide by the guidelines and rules in the KISD athletic handbook. Students failing at six weeks or semester could be removed from athletics and placed in Strength and Development or a different elective. Participation in Boys' Athletics requires desire, discipline, and dedication to the high expectations of KJHS athletes.

CCMR/CTE Courses

College and Career Readiness

Students will use decision-making and problem-solving skills for college and career planning. Students will explore valid, reliable educational and career information to learn more about themselves and their interests and abilities. Students integrate skills from academic subjects, information technology, and interpersonal communication to make informed decisions. This course is designed to guide students through the process of investigation and in the development of a college and career readiness achievement plan. **(1 semester)**

Fundamentals of Computer Science

Fundamentals of Computer Science is intended as a first course for those students just beginning the study of computer science. Students will learn about the computing tools that are used every day. Students will foster their creativity and innovation through opportunities to design, implement, and present solutions to real-world problems. Students will collaborate and use computer science concepts to access, analyze, and evaluate information needed to solve problems. Students will learn the problem-solving and reasoning skills that are the foundation of computer science. By using computer science knowledge and skills that support the work of individuals and groups in solving problems, students will select the technology appropriate for the task, synthesize knowledge, create solutions, and evaluate the results. Students will learn digital citizenship by researching current laws and regulations and by practicing integrity and respect. Students will gain an understanding of the principles of computer science through the study of technology operations and concepts. **(2 semesters)**

Touch Data Systems Entry

In Touch System Data Entry, students apply technical skills to address business applications of emerging technologies. Students enhance reading, writing, computing, communication, and reasoning skills and apply them to the business environment. Students will need to apply touch system data entry skills for production of business documents. **(1 semester)**

Special Education

The Special Education Department offers a wide range of services for students with a category of disability as specified in federal and state law, and educational need for the Special Education program. Services are provided to meet the needs of eligible students. Our focus is for students to receive general education instruction with non-disabled peers to the maximum extent appropriate. The student's schedule of services will be determined by the student's ARD committee and students will be scheduled accordingly.

Schedule Changes

Students are expected to complete courses for which they registered and are enrolled. Schedule/course change requests should be made in writing by completing a KJHS Schedule Change Request Form. This form must be returned to the KJHS counseling office by the deadlines established by the Campus Principal. Returning KJHS students will typically register during the Spring semester (for the upcoming year). KJHS students have until June 5, 2020, to submit requests for course/schedule changes for the Fall Semester (2020).

Honors Schedule changes:

Students may make a level change at the end of the first nine weeks (after grades for those nine weeks are final) and at the end of the first semester. Students wishing to drop an honors level course must have teacher approval as well.

KENNEDALE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

8th Grade Honors Placement Contract

Student Name (please print):

Last

First

MI

Honors classes requested: (please circle all that apply)

English Language Arts/Reading

Science

US History

Please *carefully* read the contract below regarding the guidelines and provisions for 8th grade Honors courses.

- Students must request to be in the Honors class they are interested in. ONLY students who have enrolled will be tested (if applicable) and considered for the Honors placement.
- Students must have passed the previous STAAR test for the subject area in which they requesting enrollment (Writing-7th grade, Science-5th grade, Reading and Math-7th grade).
- Students should have an 80 average at the end of the 6th grade school year in the subject in which they are requesting to enroll.
- *Students must meet the criteria specified in the course description guide for Honors Math.
- This contract is for acceptance into the Honors program. Please note that additional expectations will be projected by individual teachers in order to remain in the program.
- Parent or legal guardian must send written notification to the counseling office by June 5, 2020 to remove their student from any requested Honors class or student schedule will remain as such until end of Semester I of the 2020-2021 school year.

For greatest academic success, we understand the suggested guidelines listed above and strict provisions of this contract and are requesting to be considered for Honors placement in the courses circled above.

Student Signature

Date

Parent Signature

Date