

# Aledo Middle School



## 2020-2021 Course Handbook

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## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **PRE-ADVANCED PLACEMENT / PRE-AP**

The open enrollment policy for Aledo Middle School allows any student, who has an interest in a more challenging approach designed to prepare students for college, to enroll in a Pre-AP course. Students must have successfully completed the proper prerequisite course and passed the corresponding STAAR or EOC assessment(s).

Pre-AP courses are designed for self-disciplined, highly motivated students. Excellent class attendance and good organizational skills are preferable to predict success. Opportunities for creative, productive thinking are provided with stress on cognitive concepts and processes.

Students must assume responsibility for considerable out-of-class reading/homework assignments and have well-developed reading, writing, and/or math skills.

Advanced level and G/T students are served through Pre-Advanced Placement.

#### **Entering and exiting:**

Students may change from a Pre-AP course to the on-level version of the same course AFTER creating and submitting an Academic Action Plan. The Academic Action Plan is a document used to denote a student's good faith effort to complete class assignments, maintain good attendance, participate in tutorials, etc. indicating a genuine attempt to be successful prior to leaving the higher level course. Once completed and signed by the student, teacher, and parent, the Academic Action Plan can be submitted and a withdrawal form can be obtained. Students who move from a Pre-AP course to an on-level version of the same course will be held responsible for making up all knowledge and skills covered in the on-level class prior to the move.

### **WITHDRAWN COURSES**

Students cannot withdraw from a course after the second marking period of each semester without principal approval.

### **SCHEDULE CHANGES**

A student may add or drop courses **WHICH ARE NOT** Pre-AP courses during the first four school days of the fall semester. For changes to Pre-AP courses, see section regarding Pre-AP. All schedule changes require administrative approval.

## **UIL REQUIREMENTS**

### **Eligibility for all extracurricular participants after the first six weeks of the school year.**

A student who receives, at the end of any grading period (beginning at the conclusion of the first six weeks of the school year), a grade below 70 in any academic class, or a student with disabilities who fails to meet the standards in the Individual Education Plan (IEP), may not participate in extracurricular activities for at least three school weeks. An ineligible student may practice or rehearse, however. The student regains eligibility when the principal and teachers determine that he or she has: (1) earned a passing grade (70 or above) in all academic classes, and (2) completed the three school weeks of ineligibility. During the first six weeks of the school year, students are considered eligible if they were promoted from the previous grade. For more information, consult [www.uil.utexas.edu](http://www.uil.utexas.edu).

## **STATE TESTING REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATION**

**As a prerequisite to a high school diploma, students in Texas public high schools must demonstrate satisfactory performance on statewide assessments.** Students must meet state requirements on the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness End-of-Course (STAAR EOC) exams to be eligible to receive a diploma from a Texas public high school. Current legislation requires that End-of-Course exams be taken in English I, English II, Algebra I, Biology, and US History. Performance standards for these exams are set to measure in-depth instruction, broad and deep ideas, and college and career readiness. Students enrolled in Algebra I in middle school will take the STAAR EOC in the spring semester as determined by the Texas Education Agency.

## **CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION (CTE)**

Aledo ISD is proud to offer a wide variety of Career and Technical Education courses and pathways. Many of the CTE courses available have the opportunity to take a certification test at the conclusion of the course that would enable the student to become certified in a related field. Certification could be beneficial in future employment opportunities, prospective college degree plans or both.

## **EXAMINATION FOR ACCELERATION**

A student will be permitted to take an examination to earn credit for an academic course for which the student has no prior instruction. AISD will provide Credit by Examination without prior instruction on dates to be determined and released at the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year. Note: Credit By Exams for acceleration for English I, Algebra I, and English II are not available at this time due to TEA rulings. A student planning to take an examination for acceleration (or the student's parent) must register with the counselor. Scores on exams for high school credit are not included in the Grade Point Average used for class ranking. The District may not honor a request by a parent to administer, on some other date, a test purchased by the parent from a State Board-approved university. A score of 80 is necessary to receive credit by exam without prior instruction.

## **ENROLLMENT**

A student enrolling in the district for the first time must be accompanied by his/her parent(s) or legal guardian and must provide satisfactory evidence of required immunization, proof of residence (utility bill or lease agreement), copy of birth certificate, and a withdrawal form from the previous school. To complete admission, the following demographic information is necessary: home address, home phone, mother's name, place of business and work phone, father's name, place of business and work phone, and a friend or relative's name and number in case of emergency.

## **IMMUNIZATIONS**

State law requires that all students entering seventh grade show proof of current immunizations. There are 4 immunizations which may be new for your child and are required for incoming 7<sup>th</sup> graders:

**Tdap** – required within 5 years of entering 7<sup>th</sup> grade

**Meningococcal** – one dose required to enter 7<sup>th</sup> grade

**Varicella #2** – second dose required to enter 7<sup>th</sup> grade

**Hepatitis A** – two doses required to enter 7<sup>th</sup> grade

Students will **NOT** be allowed to enter seventh grade without these immunizations. If your student has received these prior to this notice PLEASE provide a copy of the most current immunization records to your school nurse **NOW** in order to update all records and ensure your student can begin school in August without delay. Students will not be allowed to pick up their schedule at orientation if they have not provided AMS with an up to date immunization record.

## 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Course Descriptions and Requirements

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS AND READING

The primary areas of focus for Aledo ELAR classes include vocabulary development, reading comprehension in various genres, writing in several forms for specific purposes, listening and speaking skills, and the research process. From year to year, the skills in focus grow in rigor and depth, as do the texts read and analyzed.

#### Pre-AP Language Arts

This course will include reading a variety of types of literature and annotating for different literary skills. It establishes the foundation for success in the Advanced Placement curriculum. Pre-AP students have a strong work ethic and are self-starters. Pre-AP students typically make A's or B's in 6th grade and score well above passing on the reading STAAR.

<u>Language Arts</u>	<u>Pre-AP Language Arts</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Comprehensive examination-literary elements</li><li>• Study and review grade-level grammar and mechanics</li><li>• 1-2 novel studies</li><li>• 3-4 various writing assignments including personal narrative and expository</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Novel/writing projects due each six weeks</li><li>• 3 extensive in-class novel studies</li><li>• Increased writing demand</li><li>• Detailed studies of literary elements with higher-level thinking</li></ul>

### MATH

#### Pre-AP Math

This course is for the student who loves math, wants more, and is willing to take personal initiative for their learning. This course is more advanced than on-level 7th grade math, with regards to pace, workload, and assessment expectations. It is highly recommended that you consult with your current math teacher to see if this is the right placement for your child.

<u>Math</u>	<u>Pre-AP Math</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Concentration of TEKS mastery of the course description above.</li><li>• Mastery Learning Applied to Assessment</li><li>• Average Paced Curriculum</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Extension of TEKS (Both 7th &amp; 8th )</li><li>• Independent Motivation of Assessments</li><li>• In-Class Practice in Conjunction with Out-of-Class Application</li><li>• Advanced Rigor</li><li>• Focus on Critical Thinking Skills</li></ul>

**Recommendations for Pre-AP Math:**

- STAAR score for 6th grade math should be at or near Masters Level.
- 6th grade consistent math average of 90 or higher.

**Things to consider:**

- There is an expectation for deeper understanding and application of concepts.
- Designed for students who quickly grasp new concepts and demonstrate the ability to apply these concepts.
- Willingness to work hard - effort can be just as important as test scores.
- Students who did not take the 6th grade STAAR math test will often take a pre-assessment during the registration process to determine the best placement

**SCIENCE**

This course focuses on life on planet Earth. It stresses the interrelationships and interdependence between living organisms and the physical, chemical, and earth science world. Curriculum follows a coordinated thematic approach. To develop a rich knowledge of science and the natural world, students must 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.

**Pre-AP Science** is designed to meet the needs of gifted and advanced students. Learning in each of these topics will be accomplished through the presentation of complex concepts and explanations of science related phenomena and additional laboratory activities. The majority of grades are based on the ability to draw conclusions based on evidence provided, collaborative work, and content-driven projects completed independently. **Homework** will consist of preparing for quizzes and exams, completing lab reports, analysis questions, and additional projects.

<u>Science</u>	<u>Pre-AP Science</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Concentration of TEKS development and mastery</li><li>• Work collaboratively with peers</li><li>• Mastery Learning Applied to Assessment</li><li>• Uses Argument Driven Inquiry to support claims, evidence, and justification, with additional support from teacher</li><li>• Flexibility to meet all learner's needs</li><li>• Average Paced curriculum</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Extension of TEKS at a greater depth for mastery</li><li>• Work collaboratively with peers</li><li>• Independent motivation of assessments</li><li>• Uses Argument Driven Inquiry to support claims, evidence, and justification</li><li>• Focus on critical thinking and analysis</li><li>• Independent content-driven projects</li><li>• Fast paced curriculum with advanced rigor</li></ul>

**Recommendations for Pre-AP Science:**

- Self-motivated, hardworking, organized, and committed to completing work within the timeframe allotted.
- 6th grade consistent science average of 90 or higher.

**Things to consider:**

- This course assists in preparing students for the challenges offered by the Advanced Placement program through sustained habits necessary for success in the College Board’s AP Program.
- There is an expectation for deeper understanding and applications of concepts.
- Designed for students who quickly grasp new concepts and demonstrate the ability to apply these concepts.

**SOCIAL STUDIES**

In Grade 7, students study the history of Texas from early times to the present. Students examine the full scope of Texas history, including Natural Texas and its People; Age of Contact; Spanish Colonial; Mexican National; Revolution and Republic; Early Statehood; Texas in the Civil War and Reconstruction; Cotton, Cattle, and Railroads; Age of Oil; Texas in the Great Depression and World War II; Civil Rights and Conservatism; and Contemporary Texas eras. The focus in each era is on key individuals, events, and issues and their impact. The study strains include: citizenship, economics, technology and political structures.

<u>Texas History</u>	<u>Pre-AP Texas History</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Concentration of TEKS mastery of the course description above.</li><li>• Mastery Learning Applied to Assessment</li><li>• Average Paced Curriculum</li><li>• Document-Based Question Essay Writing with more assistance</li><li>• In-class application of concept</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Extension of TEKS of the course description above.</li><li>• In-Class Practice in Conjunction with Out-of-Class Application</li><li>• Advanced Rigor</li><li>• Focus on Historical Thinking Skills</li><li>• Document-Based Question Essay Writing</li><li>• Increased independent application of concepts which may require work outside of class</li><li>• See additional recommendations <i>below</i></li></ul>

**Recommendations for Pre-Texas History Registration:**

- Sixth grade consistent social studies average of 90 or higher.

**Things to consider:**

- There is an expectation for deeper understanding and application of concepts.
- Pre-AP Texas History is designed for students who quickly grasp new concepts and demonstrate the ability to apply these concepts.
- A solid work ethic and organizational skills are the most important characteristics of a Pre-AP student.
- This course is designed to be the first course that will help students continue on the Advanced Placement path.



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

**ART** - This class gives students an opportunity to enjoy hands-on projects, such as: drawing, painting, metalworking, printmaking, sculpture and design. Students will have the opportunity to learn about various art techniques, famous artists, and historical art periods. Those students who feel they have little artistic talents can greatly improve their art skills in this class.

**BAND** - (Audition required) AMS has a dynamic, state and nationally recognized, band program featuring three ability-based concert ensembles. Musicians are auditioned in the spring, and placement is determined by the student's current playing ability and musical aptitude. All three bands are active in the community and have the opportunity to perform at pep rallies. Students enrolled in band can also qualify for one of AMS band's auxiliary groups, such as Jazz Band or Drumline. All bands compete at UIL in the spring and have the opportunity to participate in invitational festivals throughout the year. Optional trips and social activities are also a feature of the band program.

**CHOIR** - This course allows all students who enjoy singing several opportunities to perform throughout the school year. Voice training, correct singing posture, tone production, and learning sight-reading skills are important parts of the course. Students may choose to enter individual and small group singing competitions. All eligible students will enter UIL choir contests and perform in invitational choir festivals. Choir provides an excellent experience to achieve success in middle school performances, extracurricular activities, and everyday learning in the classroom environment.

### **GATEWAY TO TECHNOLOGY 1 - Project Lead the Way (Semester Long/½ H.S. Credit)**

This course will allow students to discover computer science concepts and skills by creating personally relevant, tangible, and shareable projects. Throughout the course, students will learn about programming for the physical world by blending hardware design and software development. They will design and develop a physical computing device, interactive art installation, or wearable, and plan and develop code for microcontrollers that bring their physical designs to life. Physical computing projects will promote student awareness of interactive systems, including Internet of Things (IoT) devices, and broaden their understanding of abstract computer science concepts through meaningful and authentic applications.

*The high school course listed above will count as a high school credit; therefore, in order to receive credit students must meet the 90% attendance requirement set forth by the State of Texas.*

**JOURNALISM INTERNSHIP**- This full year course is designed for 7<sup>th</sup> grade students who are interested in a pathway to the fields of Journalism and Print Media. A student in this course will be self-driven and motivated with an interest in writing about current affairs, photography and photo editing as well as computer-aided design and layout. Journalism Internship students will learn about the history of news (print and digital) and participate in the writing and production of a newspaper, becoming familiar with on-line programs such as Adobe In-Design. Also, Journalism Internship students will learn about the history of photojournalism and learn basic photography skills and digital editing through Adobe Photoshop as well as other digital editing programs. Students will also learn basic layout design, marketing, and production of a yearbook.

**P.E.** – This course is for students who need to fulfill their middle school P.E. requirement and do not desire to be in athletics.

**STUDENT AIDE/CLASS AIDE** - This selection will allow the student to assist in the front office, library, counselor's office, assistant principal's office, or as a classroom aide. Student Aides must complete an application and must also meet the following requirements in order to be selected as a student aide. To apply for a student aide position, the student must have all A/B's, good citizenship, and good attendance on the previous year's report card. There will be a limited number of student aide positions available.

**TECHNOLOGY APPLICATIONS** - This one semester course in Technology Applications will focus on the understanding and usage of computer hardware and software. The student will learn how to create a variety of computer documents to convey information through word processing, desktop publishing, spreadsheets, databases, multimedia presentations (such as PowerPoint), and web pages. Other projects include the study of ethical digital citizenship, responsible use of Internet resources, and the creation of digital animation. Parental authorization for Internet usage is a requirement.

**THEATRE ARTS** – Students are introduced to basic acting skills, such as improvisation, characterization, pantomime, role preparation, and stage movement. Specialized vocabulary of the theatre, theatre traditions, audience etiquette, and performance evaluation criteria will also be an integral part of the course. Throughout the year students will have multiple opportunities to perform their talents in front of an audience. This course also offers students the opportunity to learn how to speak more effectively in front of an audience, in addition to developing excellent communication skills.

## **8<sup>th</sup> Grade Course Descriptions and Requirements**

### **ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS AND READING**

The primary areas of focus for Aledo ELAR classes include vocabulary development, reading comprehension in various genres, writing in several forms for specific purposes, listening and speaking skills, and the research process. From year to year, the skills in focus grow in rigor and depth, as do the texts read and analyzed.

#### **Language Arts**

- Students will further develop their reading skills and hone in on becoming an active reader.
- Will read a variety of genres to improve independent reading skills.
- The study of grammar and the mechanics of writing-including sentence analysis, sentence combining, usage, and punctuation-will be approached primarily through mini-lessons and targeted study of language in context of student work and literature.
- Opportunity for cooperative learning is used to develop their skills for reading while collaborating with peers and exchanging ideas. This helps students become proactive in their learning

#### **Pre-AP Language Arts**

- Prepare for the Advanced Placement track in high school
- Focus on higher order thinking skills such as synthesis and development of evaluative qualities to ensure students can answer complex questions thoroughly.
- Will read both level and higher level texts and complete assessments at a higher level.
- Responses and papers will be expected to have depth and complexity to them supported by solid implicit and explicit text evidence.
- Opportunity for cooperative learning is used to develop their skills for reading while collaborating with peers and exchanging ideas. This helps students become proactive in their learning.
- SAT intensive vocabulary study
- Identify parts of speech and transfer what is learned in mini lessons to writing assignments

#### **Recommendations for Enrollment in Pre-AP Language Arts**

- Average of 85 or higher in 7<sup>th</sup> grade Language Arts
- Passed both STAAR Reading and Writing
- Outside reading and assignments required
- Desire to read and write

## MATH

In Grade 8 math, the primary focal areas are proportionality; expressions, equations, relationships, the foundation of functions; measurement and data. Students will use properties of real numbers and concepts of proportionality to explore, and communicate mathematical relationships.

### Algebra I

Algebra I in 8<sup>th</sup> grade is designed for students interested in taking 5 or more high school math courses (Algebra I in 8<sup>th</sup> grade would be the first of the five). Students need to show high achievement in their current math class.

<u>Math</u>	<u>Algebra I</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Concentration of TEKS Mastery (8<sup>th</sup>)</li><li>• Mastery of Learning Applied to Assessment</li><li>• Average Paced Curriculum</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Criteria for admittance (see below)</li><li>• Students <i>possibly</i> take 8<sup>th</sup> grade STAAR test</li><li>• Students take the EOC Algebra test</li><li>• <b>Grade is applied to high school GPA</b></li><li>• <b>90% attendance requirement</b></li><li>• Students will not be allowed to drop after the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> grading cycle</li><li>• Significant out of class commitment</li></ul>

The requirements for entry into Algebra I are as follows:

A score of **65 or higher** on the **8<sup>th</sup> grade skills test** given in May of 7<sup>th</sup> grade.

Additionally, students must meet **2 of the 3 criteria** listed below:

1. A score of **81 or higher** on **computation test** given in May of 7<sup>th</sup> grade.
2. A score at **Masters Level** on the **7<sup>th</sup> grade STAAR –Math test**.
3.
  - a. If your child is in on-level Math 7, they must have a **final yearly average** that is **90 or higher** on their final report card.
  - b. If your child is in PAP Math 7, they must have a **final yearly average** that is **85 or higher** on their final report card.

## SCIENCE

Focuses on a study of the Earth and solar system and how living systems, chemistry, and physics interact to form our exosphere. The sequence of the course follows a coordinated thematic approach. To develop a rich knowledge of science and the natural world, students must 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.

**Pre-AP Science** is designed to meet the needs of gifted and advanced students. Curriculum follows a coordinated thematic approach. Learning in each of these topics will be accomplished through the presentation of complex concepts and explanations of science related phenomena and additional laboratory activities. Pre-AP Science class will move through the basic objectives very quickly in order to provide students the opportunity to learn concepts at a greater depth to form a solid foundation for high school level PAP sciences. The majority of grades are based on the ability to draw conclusions based on evidence provided, collaborative work, and content-driven projects completed independently. **Homework** will consist of preparing for quizzes and exams, completing lab reports or analysis questions.

<u>Science</u>	<u>Pre-AP Science</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Concentration of TEKS development and mastery</li><li>• Work collaboratively with peers</li><li>• Mastery Learning Applied to Assessment</li><li>• Uses Argument Driven Inquiry to support claims, evidence, and justification, with additional support from teacher</li><li>• Flexibility to meet all learner's needs</li><li>• Average Paced curriculum</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Extension of TEKS at a greater depth for mastery</li><li>• Work collaboratively with peers</li><li>• Independent motivation of assessments</li><li>• Uses more complex Argument Driven Inquiry to support claims, evidence, and justification</li><li>• Focus on critical thinking and analysis</li><li>• Independent content-driven projects</li><li>• Fast paced curriculum with advanced rigor</li></ul>

### **Recommendations for Pre-AP Science:**

- Self-motivated, hardworking, organized, and committed to completing work within the timeframe allotted.
- Consistently demonstrated a 90% average or greater in 7th grade science or an 85% average or higher in seventh grade PAP Science.

### **Things to consider:**

- This course assists in preparing students for the challenges offered by the Advanced Placement program through sustained habits necessary for success in the College Board's AP Program.
- There is an expectation for deeper understanding and applications of concepts.
- Designed for students who quickly grasp new concepts and demonstrate the ability to apply these concepts.
- Students wishing to take PAP Biology as a freshman must pass the Grade 8 Science STAAR in the spring.

## **SOCIAL STUDIES**

In Grade 8, students study the history of the United States from the early colonial period through Reconstruction. Students will take United States History since 1877 to the present in their 11th grade year. The second part, comprising U.S. history from Reconstruction to the present, is provided in student's 11th grade year. Historical content focuses on the political, economic, religious, 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, the Age of Jackson, westward expansion, sectionalism, Civil War, and Reconstruction. The focus in each era is on key individuals, events, and issues and their impact.

<b><u>United States History</u></b>	<b><u>Pre-AP United States History</u></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Concentration of TEKS mastery of the course description above.</li><li>• Mastery Learning Applied to Assessment</li><li>• Average Paced Curriculum</li><li>• Document-Based Question Essay Writing with more assistance</li><li>• In-class application of concept</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Extension of TEKS of the course description above.</li><li>• In-Class Practice in Conjunction with Out-of-Class Application</li><li>• Advanced Rigor</li><li>• Focus on Historical Thinking Skills</li><li>• Document-Based Question Essay Writing</li><li>• Increased independent application of concepts which may require work outside of class</li><li>• See additional recommendations <i>below</i></li></ul>

### **Recommendations for Pre-Texas History Registration:**

- Successful completion of Pre-AP Texas History average of 85 or higher.

### **Things to consider:**

- There is an expectation for deeper understanding and application of concepts.
- Pre-AP United States History is designed for students who quickly grasp new concepts and demonstrate the ability to apply these concepts.
- A solid work ethic and organizational skills are the most important characteristics of a Pre-AP student.
- This course is designed to be help students continue on the Advanced Placement path.

## **8th GRADE ELECTIVE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS**

**ART** - This class gives students an opportunity to enjoy hands-on projects, such as: drawing, painting, metalworking, printmaking, sculpture and design. Students will have the opportunity to learn about various art techniques, famous artists, and historical art periods. Those students who feel they have little artistic talents can greatly improve their art skills in this class. This class is NOT for high school credit.

**ART/INTRO TO TECHNICAL DRAWING** – This course is intended to provide an introduction to technical drawing and product design using both traditional methods and computer software . During the first semester students will learn the fundamentals of linear perspective and rendering 3 dimensional objects on a 2 dimensional surface using a variety of media. In the second semester students will learn how to use computer technology to communicate their ideas visually and present finished products. This course will support STEAM curriculum objectives by integrating Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math. Students will participate in meaningful, hands-on projects that stimulate creativity and problem solving skills. This course provides an introduction for students interested in the Engineering and Visual Design pathways offered at the High School.

**ATHLETICS** – Students should only sign up for this course if they made a team last school year. If a student was in Athletics or PE last year they are not required to sign up for this course again. If your student was successful in athletics last year, then most likely, they will want to sign up for this elective again this year. Students will be required to have a physical on file BEFORE they can begin practice.

**BAND** - (Audition required) AMS has a dynamic, state and nationally recognized, band program featuring three ability-based concert ensembles. Musicians are auditioned in the spring, and placement is determined by the student’s current playing ability and musical aptitude. All three bands are active in the community and have the opportunity to perform at pep rallies. Students enrolled in band can also qualify for one of AMS band’s auxiliary groups, such as Jazz Band or Drumline. All bands compete at UIL in the spring and have the opportunity to participate in invitational festivals throughout the year. Optional trips and social activities are also a feature of the band program.

**CHOIR** - This course allows all students who enjoy singing several opportunities to perform throughout the school year. Voice training, correct singing posture, tone production, and learning sight-reading skills are important parts of the course. Students may choose to enter individual and small group singing competitions. All eligible students will enter UIL choir contests and perform in invitational choir festivals. Choir provides an excellent experience to achieve success in middle school performances, extracurricular activities, and everyday learning in the classroom environment.

**EXPLORING COLLEGE & CAREERS** – In this one semester course students will be introduced to the Family Connection College and Career Readiness Curriculum, created to help students achieve their aspirations. The Family Connection Curriculum takes students through the process of understanding what it takes to graduate college and be career ready.

Lessons in the Curriculum cover a broad range of topics designed to guide students at each grade level through the steps they need to take to be ready for transitioning from middle school to high school,

and planning for life after high school. Students will learn about critical topics related to self-discovery, developing success skills, building a network, exploring career options, and planning for college - academically, socially, emotionally and financially. (This course is required for 8<sup>th</sup> grade students new to Aledo ISD who have not previously taken a course in alignment with Texas Education Code 28.016)

**FILM AS A LITERARY GENRE** – Lights – Camera – Action! Movies are the 21<sup>st</sup> century’s most important storytelling medium. Movies capture our interest and provoke our senses; movies are expressions of the imagination and objects of artistic design; movies introduce us to characters we cannot forget and present plots we want to experience over and over again. Be a part of this rare opportunity to experience storytelling in an exciting and engaging approach. *Film as a Literary Genre* will take students on a journey of visual analysis, focusing on narration, characters, setting, imagery, camera composition and framing, costumes, sound effects, lighting, music, and more. Students will use critical thinking skills to compare similarities and determine differences across time periods and film genres. In addition, students will understand the nature and process of film production and will learn how to develop, write, and revise workable screenplays to produce an original short film. This course is recommended for students who possess a strong interest in film as a storytelling medium – its history; its theories; its social, political, philosophical, and aesthetic impact; and its nature and process. Let’s all go to the movies!

**P.E.** – This course is for students who need to fulfill their middle school P.E. requirement and do not desire to be in athletics.

**STUDENT AIDE/CLASS AIDE** - This selection will allow the student to assist in the front office, library, counselor’s office, assistant principal’s office, or as a classroom aide. Student Aides must complete an application and must also meet the following requirements in order to be selected as a student aide. To apply for a student aide position, the student must have all A/B’s, good citizenship, and good attendance on the previous year’s report card. There will be a limited number of student aide positions available.

**TECHNOLOGY APPLICATIONS** - This one semester course in Technology Applications will focus on the understanding and usage of computer hardware and software. The student will learn how to create a variety of computer documents to convey information through word processing, desktop publishing, spreadsheets, databases, multimedia presentations (such as PowerPoint), and web pages. Other projects include the study of ethical digital citizenship, responsible use of Internet resources, and the creation of digital animation. Parental authorization for Internet usage is a requirement. This course is for students who did not take this course in 7<sup>th</sup> grade.

**THEATRE ARTS** – Students will be introduced to basic acting skills, such as improvisation, characterization, pantomime, role preparation, and stage movement. Specialized vocabulary of the theatre, theatre traditions, audience etiquette, and performance evaluation criteria will also be an integral part of the course. Throughout the year students will have multiple opportunities to perform their talents in front of an audience. This course is for students who did not take this course in 7<sup>th</sup> grade.



## HIGH SCHOOL CREDIT COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

If successfully completed, the following courses count as high school credit and will count toward the student's high school *Grade Point Average* and *Class Rank (except P.E. – Adventure/Outdoor Education)*.

**AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE I (Year Long/1 H.S. Credit)** – Acquiring ASL incorporates expressive and receptive communication skills. Students develop these communication skills by using knowledge of the language including; grammar, culture, communication and learning strategies, technology and content from other subject areas to socialize, to 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.

**ART I (Year Long/1 H.S. Credit)** - Art I is the foundation of all other art courses. Art I enables students to gain a broad understanding of art. Students participate in a variety of learning experiences, including: vocabulary review, two- and three-dimensional art-making, exploration of historical and cultural heritage, and evaluation of techniques. Students are introduced to a wide range of areas and techniques to encourage them to take advanced art courses in more than one media. Students use direct observation, imagination, and personal experiences as inspiration for art works. Throughout the year-long course, students maintain both a portfolio and a sketchbook documenting what they have learned about the elements of art and the principles of design.

**DANCE I (Year Long/1 H.S. Credit)** – Dance I is a broad overview of dance as an art form. This course introduces students to practices, philosophies, terminologies and various styles of dance through movement. Students will study basic choreographic elements and principles and will increase their understanding of the four basic strands of dance: Foundations – perception, creative expression – the artistic process, creative expression – performance, historical and cultural relevance, and critical evaluation and response. Dance I will be a prep course for Dance II, III, and IV.

**DIGGING UP THE PAST: UNCOVERING THE STORY OF US (Year Long/1 H.S.Credit)** - This research based social studies elective course is designed to help students develop advanced college readiness skills in an era or theme in history through extensive research. Students will create an original work as part of the National History Day Competition. Students will conduct advanced research on a selected topic in history by using qualitative and quantitative methods of inquiry. Students will collect information from a variety of sources including primary, secondary, interviews, questionnaires, and library research. Students will use current technology to build the foundation of proper research, practice the skill of analysis, establish credibility of evidence, cite sources properly, and experience topics through virtual and real life field trips, all while creating an original project. Students will present their work in the Aledo Middle School History Fair and the top entries will advance to the next round in the Texas History Day Competition as part of the National History Day Competition. More information for National History Day can be found at [www.nhd.org](http://www.nhd.org).

**HEALTH (1 semester/½ H.S. Credit)** - Students will gain a greater knowledge and understanding of the following areas: lifetime fitness, communicable diseases, mental health, drugs, alcohol and tobacco, body systems, suicide prevention and environmental health.

**JOURNALISM I (Year Long/1 H.S Credit)** – AMS Journalism focuses on the theory and practice of gathering, processing, and delivering news as both journalists and photo-journalists. In addition, it allows students the opportunity to explore print journalism, news editing, and news managing, Students will receive instruction in news writing and editing; reporting; photo-journalism (newspaper as well as yearbook); layout and graphic design (newspaper as well as yearbook); professional standards and ethics; and research methods. This course is for highly motivated writers who are interested in becoming active members of the newspaper, newsletter, and yearbook staff. Interested students must have maintained at least an 85 average in Language Arts during 7<sup>th</sup> grade and must also fill out an application. Applications are available in the front office.

**GATEWAY TO TECHNOLOGY 2 (Year Long/1 H.S. Credit)** – Students use the design process to solve problems and understand the influence that creative and innovative design has on our lives. Students use modeling software to create a virtual image of their designs and produce a portfolio to showcase their creative solutions. Additionally, students trace the history, development, and influence of automation and robotics. They learn about mechanical system, energy transfer, machine automations and computer control systems.

**LATIN I (Year Long/1 HS Credit)** – Latin has given us 60% of the English language. Students will cover Roman culture, mythology, architecture, and intrigue. While listening to and speaking, reading, and writing Latin, students will be expanding their knowledge of the practices, products, and perspectives of classical civilization, the matrix of our own. At the same time, they will gain insight into such current fields of study as English, science, law, medicine, and modern foreign languages.

**P.E. – ADVENTURE/OUTDOOR EDUCATION (Year Long/1 H.S Credit)** – The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department developed the Outdoor Education course to enhance, and educate students in outdoor activities and wildlife conservation. The curriculum includes: The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department’s Hunter Education, Boater Education, and Angler Education courses. Wilderness Survival, Trip planning, Wildlife conservation, camping, backpacking, orienteering, archery and tackle crafts, are also areas of exploration for the student. Emphasis is placed on ethics, safety, conservation, laws, responsibilities, and physical fitness. Student participation in many activities creates the appreciation of the outdoors as well as an opportunity to find a particular activity that may lead to a lifetime of enjoyment. There will be fees associated with this course. The State of Texas has mandatory hunting and boating laws that require the student to successfully complete a course in these disciplines should they desire to engage in that activity. The fee for Hunter Education is \$15.00 and the fee for Boater Education is \$20.00. At present, there is no fee for Angler Education. There will also be an activity fee to cover disposables related to outdoor cooking and ropes course fees.

**P.E. – FOUNDATIONS OF PERSONAL FITNESS (Year Long/1 H.S. Credit)**

Introduce and teach students the Foundations of Personal Fitness. Introduce basic movement, mobility, stability, strength, and fitness concepts and techniques to students of all ability levels. Utilize the weight room in the field house, as well as the track and athletic fields. Teach students to properly and safely execute the basic movements of strength and fitness and to progress at an appropriate rate (i.e. Squat/Pressing/Pulling/Plyometrics/Conditioning). The beginning of the year will consist of a Movement Screen and Baseline testing to determine appropriate levels of training. Each week will consist of pre-planned strength and fitness training at the appropriate level for each student. This will also provide an alternative option to students who would like a physical activity class with more than games of a typical P.E. class, but do not want to be in athletics.

**PRINCIPLES OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD & NATURAL RESOURCES (Year Long/1 H.S Credit)** - This full year introductory course emphasizes the importance of the Agricultural industry and how it influences each of our daily lives. Career development, historical, current, and future significance of the agricultural industry, leadership skills, food and fiber, communication skills, agricultural research methods, breeds of livestock, livestock selection and evaluation, plant growth, soil fertility testing, soil conservation, and basic woodworking are all topics covered in the class.

**PRINCIPLES OF ARCHITECTURE (Year Long/1 H.S. Credit)** - Provides students an overview to the various fields of architecture, interior design, and construction management. Classroom studies include topics such as safety, work ethics, communication, information technology applications, systems, health, environment, leadership, teamwork, ethical and legal responsibility, employability, and career development and include skills such as problem solving, critical thinking, and reading technical drawings.

**PRINCIPLES OF LAW, PUBLIC SAFETY, CORRECTIONS, AND SECURITY (Year Long/1 H.S Credit)** – Students will be introduced to professions in law enforcement, security, corrections, and fire and emergency management services. Students will examine the roles and responsibilities of police, courts, corrections, private security, and protective agencies of fire and emergency services. This course provides students with an overview of the skills and knowledge, such as ethics, origins of law, constitutionality, jurisdiction, courtroom procedures, and responsibilities of first responders, necessary for careers in law enforcement, fire service, security, and corrections.

**SPANISH I (Year Long/1 H.S. Credit)** – This class is designed to introduce Spanish vocabulary and grammar to students. Students will learn how to speak and write basic sentences in Spanish, as well as studying various traditional aspects of the Spanish culture. In order to be successful in this class, it is highly recommended that the student meet the following criteria: have maintained an 80 or higher in 7<sup>th</sup> grade Language Arts, have a strong knowledge of the English language, have excellent attendance, and be self-motivated and self-disciplined.

**THEATRE I (Year Long/1 H.S. Credit)** – Available to students who took Theatre Arts in 7<sup>th</sup> grade, high-school Theatre I will develop improvisation skills, develop preparation and warm-up techniques, employ stage movement and pantomime consistently to express thoughts and feelings, develop and practice effective voice and diction, define and give examples of theatrical conventions, analyze and describe interdependence of all theatrical elements, interpret characters, create characterizations, apply design, directing, and theatre production skills, relate theatre to other subjects, and respond and evaluate theatre and theatrical performances by seeing live performances at AHS and beyond.

*The high school courses listed above count as high school credits; therefore, in order to receive credit students must meet the 90% attendance requirement set forth by the State of Texas.*

# Aledo Middle School

Phone: 817-441-5198

Fax: 817-441-5133

January 2020

Dear Parent or Guardian:

If your child is going to select Algebra I for his or her eighth grade math class, he or she **must make a 65 or higher on the 8<sup>th</sup> grade skills test and meet two of the three other criteria listed below.** *Students enrolled in Algebra I will be required to take the Algebra I End of Course Exam. While the grade is not counted toward high school Grade Point Average (GPA), credit is awarded upon successful completion.* Therefore, please note the course and credit will be reflected on your student's high school transcript.

**Students will not be allowed to drop this course after the end of the second grading cycle.**

Algebra I is a high school course; therefore, students must meet the 90% attendance requirement set forth by Aledo High School in order to receive credit.

**The requirements are as follows:**

A score of **65 or higher** on the **8<sup>th</sup> grade skills test** given in May of 7<sup>th</sup> Grade.

**Additionally, students must meet 2 of the 3 criteria listed below:**

1. A score of **81 or higher** on **computation test** given in May of 7<sup>th</sup> Grade.
2. A score at **Masters Level** on the **7<sup>th</sup> grade STAAR –Math test.**
3.
  - a. If your child is in on-level Math 7, they must have a **final yearly average** of **90 or higher** on their final report card.
  - b. If your child is in PAP Math 7, they must have a **final yearly average** of **85 or higher** on their final report card.

My signature below indicates that I have read and am aware of the Algebra I criteria, attendance requirements, and the requirements for dropping the course.

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Parent or Guardian's Signature

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Please print

Thank you,



Mandy Musselwhite  
AMS Principal

# Student Aide/Class Aide Application

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

To apply for student aide/class aide, you must be an A/B student and have good citizenship and attendance for the entire year.

Please check: A/B Student (every cycle) \_\_\_\_\_

Good Citizenship (all year) \_\_\_\_\_

Good Attendance (all year) \_\_\_\_\_

Please remember this is a full year commitment. Your placement as a student aide/class aide will be in one of the following areas: front office, assistant principal's office, library, or in a teacher's classroom.

Please explain why you want to be a student aide and the reasons why you should be selected.

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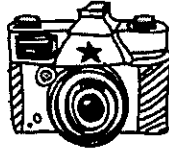


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Name two teachers we can ask for information about your work ethic. Please do not ask for a teacher's signature. We will speak to the teachers that you list below:

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\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent or Guardian's Signature



oh Snap.

## JOURNALISM I APPLICATION (NEWSPAPER AND YEARBOOK)

Please be aware that you need an ELAR (English Language Arts and Reading) average of 85 or above to apply for the AMS Journalism I class. To add, you must be a self-driven, motivated student who has an interest in writing about current affairs, photography and photo editing as well as computer-aided design and layout. Journalism (print and digital media and its history) and photojournalism (the “pioneers” and their history), photography (basic skills and digital editing) and yearbook production (design and marketing) are all included in the curriculum. Please note that for the class, you may utilize your own, personal camera if you already have one, but it is ***not*** mandatory that you purchase one for the class. If you do not have a camera, one will be provided to you during the school year. In addition, journalism students may be asked to attend various AMS activities as part of the production of the yearbook (sporting events, concerts, plays, etc.).

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Current Grade Level: (Please circle) 6th Grade 7<sup>th</sup> Grade

Current ELAR Average (Semester 1 average): \_\_\_\_\_

Do you own your own digital camera? (Please circle) Yes No

If YES, what kind? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have access to a home computer with Internet? (Please circle) Yes No

If YES, my home-based computer is a -- (Please circle) PC Mac

ELAR Teacher Recommendation:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date