

Huron School District

Eighth Grade Curriculum Handbook For Parents



Mission Statement

Huron Schools: Completely Committed to Kids!

Dear Parents and Guardians:

The relationship between a child and their parents is the most important bond in the world. There isn't anything that rivals the love between a parent and a child. In the Huron School District, it is our goal to respect that bond and to form a partnership between the home and the school. When schools and parents share the same vision and goal for each child, anything is possible.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide families with information about grade level curriculum and student outcomes in their middle school. In the Huron School District, we have placed the highest priority on having set grade appropriate standards and creating the framework to reach those standards. The curriculum is simply a road map to a better education. Like all road maps, it is only as good as the person reading it.

For parents, an important component of this guide is the "You can help by..." section. I strongly suggest that parents read this section and ask their son's or daughter's teacher about additional activities that can be done at home to reinforce the lessons being taught in class.

Like you, it is our goal to have every child achieve academically to their fullest potential; and have no child left behind. This is only possible when parents and the schools work together to create a strong academic foundation that will serve in the years to come as a strong base for the future success of all students.

Best wishes and have a great school year.

Sincerely,

Richard Naughton
Superintendent

Development of an Eighth Grade Child

It is important to remember that each child is unique and that a wide range of individual differences will be apparent with any group of children. Although there is diversity, there is also consistency. A child's development is organized and directed. Age characteristics are broad guidelines to help us know what may be expected from children of a certain age.

The Fourteen Year Old: Growth Patterns

Physical

- High energy continues
- Generally healthy age - pushes through illness in desire to participate with peers
- Loud
- High need for physical exercise and snacking

Social

- Likes to do as much as possible - cram as much into the day as they can
- More of their own adult personality evident
- Often embarrassed to be seen with their parents; critical of parental dress, habits, friends, ideas
- Can be a pain at home and a star at school

Language

- Will engage in more group discussions
- Interested in the meaning of words, developing a broader vocabulary
- Loud

Cognitive

- Interested in technology and how things work
- Very aware of problems in larger world and generally still interested in finding solutions
- More willing to admit an error, revise their work or try something a second or third time
- Easily "bored"

Developmental information listed above was taken from, *Yardsticks: Children in the Classroom Ages 4-14: A Resource for Parents and Teachers* by, Chip Wood ©1994

Language Arts - Curriculum

The primary goal is for students to communicate effectively at home, school and in the community by reading, writing, speaking, listening and viewing. The Language Arts Grade Level Content Expectations (GLCE) are taught throughout the school year.

By the end of eighth grade year, most students should be able to do the following:

READING

Word Study

Use word structure and sentence structure to aid in decoding and understanding the meaning of words encountered in context.

Recognize and know the meaning of frequently encountered words in written and oral context.

Apply strategies to construct meaning to identify unknown words.

Read eighth grade text fluently.

Use prior knowledge and text features to determine the meaning of words and phrases in context.

Narrative Text

Using classic and contemporary literature and discuss examples of distortion and stereotypes associated with gender, race, culture, age, class, religion, and other individual differences.

Analyze elements and style of various types of fiction.

Informational Text

Analyze elements and style of informational text.

Explain how authors use text features to enhance the understanding of central, key, and supporting ideas.

Analyze organizational patterns of text.

Comprehension

Connect personal knowledge, experience and understanding of the world to themes and perspectives in the text.

Read, retell and summarize grade level appropriate narrative and informational texts.

State global themes and principles within and across texts to create a deeper understanding.

Have the ability to apply knowledge in relationship to all other subject areas and life experiences.

Parents Can Help By...

Model and discuss reading strategies you use at home.

Read the newspaper and discuss some of the articles.

Read instructional pamphlets and help your child with directions.

WRITING

Writing Genres

Write a cohesive, narrative piece that includes appropriate literary and plot devices.

Write a historical expository piece such as a journal or biography that includes appropriate organization, illustrations, marginal notes, and/or annotations.

Writing Process

Set a purpose, consider audience and replicate the authors' style and patterns when writing.

Apply a variety of pre-writing strategies for narrative and informational text.

Experiment with various ways of sequencing information.

Review and revise their compositions for coherence and consistency regarding word choice, cause & effect, and style.

Edit their writing using proofreaders' checklists both individually and in a peer editing group.

Grammar and Usage

In the context of their writing, use style conventions (Modern Language Association – MLA) and a variety of grammatical structures including infinitives, gerunds, participial phrases, and dashes or ellipses.

Spelling

Use correct spelling conventions in the context of their own writing.

All work needs to be neat and legible.

Parents Can Help By...

Encouraging students to share his/her work with others.

Ask to read your child's school assignments.

Encourage students to write our everyday tasks.

LISTENING & SPEAKING

Parents Can Help By...

Model appropriate behaviors at home.

Encourage students to ask questions when they need clarification.

LIBRARY INSTRUCTION

Eighth Grade Students Will...

Students will refine research skills to improve judgment of information found for assignments in both print and web based resources. Students will be able to find fiction books, non-fiction books, and magazines that they will enjoy reading for pleasure.

Mathematics – Curriculum

Mathematics is the science of patterns and relationships. It is the language and logic of our technological world. Students should be able to reason and communicate mathematically; problem solve and makes connections to the real world. The Mathematics Grade Level Content Expectations (GLCE) are taught throughout the school year.

By the end of the eighth grade year, most students should be able to do the following:

Numeration

Understand square roots

Fractions, Decimals, Ratio and Percent

Understand connection between fractions, decimals and percent
Calculate percent of increase and decrease

Measurement

Calculate weighted averages
Understand percent increase and decrease

Geometry

Understand and use the Pythagorean Theorem
Understand the area of circle, rectangle, and parallelogram
Understand the concepts of volume and apply formulas
Visualize three dimensional solids

Statistics and Probability

Determine median, mean and mode
Understand concept of probability
Compare theoretical and experimental probability

Algebraic Ideas

Identify functions: show how change in one variable affects another variable
Understand solutions to equations
Graph solutions to equations

Problem Solving and Logical Reasoning

Create and interpret circle graphs, stem and leaf plots, histograms, and box & whisker plots
Solve problems relating to ratio (such as miles per hour, dollar per pound, etc.)
Solve problems relating to areas

Parents Can Help By...

Working with your child at home
Promoting school attendance
See that your child completes their homework
Promoting responsibility of make-up work

Websites for additional mathematics support:

www.edhelper.com
www.askjeeves.com
www.phschool.com
www.nctm.org

Science - Curriculum

The middle school science program provides students with a science curriculum that includes using the scientific method, constructing knowledge, reflecting on scientific knowledge, life science, physical science, and earth science.

By the end of the eighth grade year, most students should be able to understand the following:

The Nature of Science

- Scientific method
- Designing experiments
- Writing in science

Life Science

- Foundations of Life - carbon chemistry, plant processes, plant reproduction
- Ecology - living and nonliving environment, matter and energy, ecosystems, resources in the environment, conservation

Physical Science

- Chemistry - atom, Periodic Table, chemical bonds, chemical reactions
- Forces and Motion - motion, momentum, energy, Newton's Law

Earth Science

- Earth's Interior - earthquakes, volcanoes, plate tectonics
- Changes Through Time - fossils, geologic time scale
- Theories of Life's Beginnings, Theory of Evolution, Theory of Intelligent Design/Creation
- Astronomy - early space missions, the sun-moon system, the solar system, stars and galaxies

Parents Can Help By . . .

- Studying notes with students
- Helping your child see how science relates to his/her everyday world.

Health - Curriculum

The eighth grade health curriculum focuses on . . .

- Violence prevention
- Drug prevention
- Physical Activity
- Nutrition
- Puberty: The Wonder Years
- Michigan Model: HIV/AIDS and other STD's

Parent Can Help By . . .

- Discussing daily class activities
- Discuss family worksheet

Social Studies - Curriculum

The eighth grade Social Studies curriculum is the United States History 1763-1877

By the end of the eighth grade year, most students should be able to do the following:

Historical Perspective

- Understand the American Revolution and the concept of freedom
- Relate the purpose of the Constitution and the growth of the American landscape
- Understand slavery issues and the Civil War
- Recognize cause and effect of historical events

Geographic Perspective

- Draw a world map from memory
- Explain the development of the United States from Atlantic to Pacific
- Use the 5 themes of geography

Civic Perspective

- Understand the basic documents of American History (Declaration of Independence, Bill of Rights) and be able to use them to explain the Core Democratic Values.
- Explain the development and growth of political parties.
- Understand forms of capitalism, socialism, communism, etc., and their theories of government

Economic Perspective

- Students will understand - stock market, personal finance, supply & demand, and economic theories

Inquiry

- Civic Writing - including use of Core Democratic Values as well as stating an opinion
- Investigate information using a variety of sources.

Citizen Involvement

- Civic writing
- Understand voting and participation in government (jury duty)
- Volunteerism

Parent Can Help By . . .

- Discuss current events with their children including geography
- Help students understand their opinion on public affairs

Physical Education – Curriculum

The K-12 Physical Education curriculum emphasizes the development of body control, fitness, and personal, social and teamwork skills. Healthy lifestyles, good nutrition, self-understanding, and respect for individual differences in growth and development are essential learning outcomes in our physical education program.

By the end of the eighth grade year, most students should be able to do the following:

- Understand that physical activity promotes a healthy lifestyle
- Take basic physical skills and apply them to sports
- Demonstrate appropriate personal and social skills

The following units will be covered in physical education:

- Basketball
- Volleyball
- Floor Hockey
- Soccer
- Softball
- Kickball
- Touch Football
- Track

Other possible activities could include:

- Team Handball
- Swimming
- Dodge Ball
- Table Tennis
- Tennis

Eighth Grade Focus

The focus of eighth grade physical education is building individual skills that will lead to team play. The importance of daily physical fitness will be taught to the students of all grade levels.



Fine Arts - Curriculum

The primary aim of fine arts education is to provide students with a means for aesthetic expression, communication and cultural awareness. An organized set of experiences gives students the opportunity to convey emotions and ideas, portray images, and explore through creative expression. These musical and artistic experiences all require creative and critical higher level thinking skills.

By the end of the eighth grade year, most students will be able to do the following:

- Read musical notation in both treble and bass clefs
- Read and perform basic rhythms
- Show a basic understanding of composers and their styles of music
- Create and perform an original composition

Parents Can Help By . . .

- Listening to a variety of music
- Take your child (children) to live performances
- Discuss how music is used in everyday media
- Provide the opportunity to study a musical instrument



ART

Skills are organized around the Arts Education Content Standards & Working Draft Benchmarks for Middle School which in short includes:

All students will:

Apply skills and knowledge to perform in and create in art

Analyze, describe and evaluate works of art understand, analyze, and describe the arts in their historical, social, and cultural contexts

Recognize, analyze, and describe connections among the arts; between the arts and other disciplines; between the arts and everyday life



Technology – Curriculum

By the end of the eighth grade year, most students should be able to do the following:

Michigan Technology Standards:

Basic Operations

- Students are proficient in the use of technology.
- Students use proper keyboarding posture, finger position, and touch-typing techniques to improve accuracy, speed, and general efficiency in operating a computer.
- Students use accurate technology terminology.
- Students use a variety of technology tools (e.g., dictionary, thesaurus, grammar-checker, calculator) to maximize the accuracy of technology-produced products.

Social, Ethical, and Human Issues

- Students understand the ethical, cultural, and societal issues related to technology.
- Students understand the potential risks and dangers associated with on-line communications.
- Students identify security issues related to e-commerce.
- Students describe possible consequences and costs related to unethical use of information and communication technologies.
- Students discuss the societal impact of technology in the future.

Technology Productivity Tools

Students use technology tools to enhance learning, increase productivity, and promote creativity.

- Students apply common software features (e.g., thesaurus, formulas, charts, graphics, sounds) to enhance communication and to support creativity.
- Students use a variety of resources, including the internet, to increase learning and productivity.
- Students explore basic applications that promote creativity (e.g., graphics, presentation, photo-editing, programming, video-editing).
- Students use available utilities for editing pictures, images, or charts.

Technology Communication Tools

- Students use productivity tools to collaborate in constructing technology-enhanced models, prepare publications, and produce other creative works.
- Students use collaborative tools to design, develop, and enhance materials, publications, and presentations.
- Students use a variety of media and formats to communicate information and ideas effectively to multiple audiences.
- Students create a project (e.g., presentation, web page, newsletter, information brochure) using a variety of media and formats (e.g., graphs, charts, audio, graphics, video) to present content information to an audience.

Technology Research Tools

- Students use technology to locate, evaluate, and collect information from a variety of sources.
- Student use a variety of web search engines to locate information.
- Students evaluate information from various on-line resources for accuracy, bias, appropriateness, and comprehensiveness.
- Students can identify types of internet sites based on their domain names (e.g., edu, com, org, gov, au)
- Students use technology tools to process data and report results.
- Students know how to create and populate a database.
- Students can perform queries on existing databases.
- Students know how to create and modify a simple database report.
- Students evaluate and select new information resources and technology innovations based on the appropriateness to specific tasks.
- Students evaluate new technology tools and resources and determine the most appropriate tool to use for accomplishing a specific task.

Technology Problem-solving and Decision -making Tools

- Students use technology resources for solving problems and making informed decisions.
- Students use database or spreadsheet information to make predictions, develop strategies, and evaluate decisions to assist them with solving a basic problem.
- Students employ technology in the development of strategies for solving problems in the real world.
- Students describe the information and communication technology tools to use for collecting information from different sources, analyze their findings, and draw conclusions for addressing real-world problems.

Student Progress

The middle school reporting system reflects current curriculum and practice, communicates grade level expectations, and reports student progress four times a year. Our goal is that by the end of the school year, students will achieve the learning outcomes listed on the report card. The report card evaluation codes are as follows:

Report Card Codes	
Grades	Comments
A+	a Does outstanding work
A	b Cooperative, positive attitude
A-	c Shows academic improvement
B+	d Works hard
B	e Helpful to other students
B-	f Uses class time effectively
C+	g Pleasure to have in class
C	h Shows interest and desire to improve
C-	i Has the potential to do better
D+	j Grade based on students own level
D	m Excessive talking during class time
D-	n Low quiz or test scores
E	o Does not bring materials needed for class
G	p Absences/Tardies affecting grade
H	q Does not use class/lab time productively
I	r Assignments not turned in or incomplete
S+	s Little or no class participation
S	t Needs to be disciplined frequently
S-	u Needs to improve organizational skills
U	v Please contact teacher for conference
W	

Every student is expected to make progress toward achievement of the core curriculum performance standards.

Students are assessed by many methods to measure their progress, including teacher observation, checklists, projects, rubrics, work samples, tests and demonstrations. Teachers use the report card to document student learning four times a year. Teachers also communicate student progress through a variety of other ways. Fall conferences provide all parents with direct communications with the teacher.

Parents are our partners in promoting student success. Attending conferences, open houses, and maintaining ongoing communication with the teacher, the school and your child, positively impact student learning. Students benefit when school and parents work together.

The Huron School District complies with all Federal laws and U.S. Department of Education requirements prohibiting discrimination and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, marital status or disability.



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