**COURSE DESCRIPTIONS**

**CHORUS**

**Available for grades 7 - 8 only**

Students apply correct singing technique and various elements of musical expression through developmentally appropriate and historic vocal literature. Students learn how to use traditional notation in order to learn music, and to respond correctly to conductors’ gestures both in rehearsal and public performance. Students will study vocal music and its relationship to other cultures, eras and geographical locations.

**CONCERT CHORUS**

**Available for grade 8 only**

Students will continue to apply correct singing technique, study vocal health issues and various elements of musical expression through developmentally appropriate and historic vocal literature. Students will use traditional notation in order to learn music, and to respond correctly to conductors’ gestures both in rehearsal and public performance. Students in this class may be asked to represent the school in public performances.

**PAINTING**

**Available for grade 7 only**

This course introduces basic painting skills and concepts, and presents the painting process as a problem-solving exercise designed to promote fluency, flexibility, and elaboration. In addition, students will learn to think and write critically about master work as well as their own.

**POTTERY/SCULPTURE**

**Available for grade 8 only**

Students will create their own work with a wide variety of media such as paper, wood, clay, paste, or fabric. Students explore various cultures, art history and learn to think and write critically about master work as well as their own.

**DRAMATICS**

**Available for grades 7 - 8 only**

Students develop specific skills that allow them to study and create characters for the stage. Activities

include stage directions, simple set and costume design, prop collection, and play production. Students

should anticipate some after--‐school practices and evening performances.

**COMPUTER SKILLS AND APPLICATIONS I**

Available for grades 6-8

This middle school course is composed of instructional modules designed to allow students to learn the touch method of keyboarding, basic digital literacy and computer knowledge, and basic word processing and document formatting skills. English language arts and mathematics are reinforced. Work-based learning strategies appropriate for this course include mentorship, service learning, and job shadowing. Competitive events, community service, and leadership activities provide the opportunity to apply essential standards and workplace readiness skills through authentic experiences.

**COMPUTER SKILLS AND APPLICATIONS II**

**Grades: 7, 8**

This middle school course is composed of instructional modules designed to provide hands-on instruction in digital literacy and software applications. The software applications include word processing, desktop publishing, presentation software, spreadsheets, and databases. English language arts and mathematics are reinforced. Work-based learning strategies appropriate for this course include mentorship, service learning, and job shadowing. Competitive events, community service, and leadership activities provide the opportunity to apply essential standards and workplace readiness skills through authentic experiences.

**EXPLORING BUSINESS, MARKETING AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

**Grade: 8 only**

Prerequisite: Computer Skills and Applications II. This middle school course is designed to explore the nature of business in an international economy and to study related careers in fields such as entrepreneurship, financial services, information technology, marketing, office systems technology, public relations, and promotion, and travel and tourism. Emphasis is on using the computer while studying applications in these careers along with problem solving and thinking skills. This course contributes to the development of a career development plan. English language arts, mathematics, and social studies are reinforced. Work-based learning strategies appropriate for this course include service learning and job shadowing. Apprenticeship and cooperative education are not available for this course. Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) competitive events, community service, and leadership activities provide the opportunity to apply essential standards and workplace readiness skills through authentic experiences.

EXPLORING CAREER DECISIONS

**Grades: 7, 8**

Prerequisite: None. This middle school course provides an orientation to the world of work. Emphasis is placed on self-awareness, understanding the world of work, and the career planning process. Based on the National Career Development Guidelines, skills learned in this course include, but are not limited to, communication, personal management, and teamwork. English language arts are reinforced. Work-based learning strategies appropriate for this course include business/industry field trips and job shadowing. Student participation in Career and Technical Student Organization (CTSO) competitive events, community service, and leadership activities provide the opportunity to apply essential standards and workplace readiness skills through authentic experiences. F

**TECHNOLOGY SYSTEMS**

**Grades: 7, 8**

This middle school course focuses on students’ understanding how technological systems work together to solve problems and capture opportunities. As technology becomes more integrated and systems become dependent upon each other, this course gives students a general background on the different types of systems, with specific concentration on the connections between these systems. Art, English language arts, mathematics and science are reinforced. Work-based learning strategies appropriate for this course include mentorship, school-based enterprise, service learning, and job shadowing. Apprenticeship and cooperative education are not available for this course. Technology Student Association (TSA) competitive events, community service, and leadership activities provide the opportunity to apply essential standards and workplace readiness skills through authentic experiences. Technology Design and Innovation is recommended as preparation for this course.

TECHNOLOGY DESIGN AND INNOVATIONS

**Grade: 6th Only**

Prerequisite: None. This middle school course focuses on applying the design process in the invention or innovation of a new product, process, or system. Through engaging activities and hands-on projects, students focus on understanding how criteria, constraints, and processes affect designs. Emphasis is placed on brainstorming, visualizing, modeling, testing, and refining designs. Students develop skills in researching information, communicating design information, and reporting results. Activities are structured to integrate physical and social sciences, mathematics, English language arts, and art. Work-based learning strategies appropriate for this course include mentorship, school-based enterprise, service learning, and job shadowing. Apprenticeship and cooperative education are not available for this course. Technology Student Association (TSA) competitive events, community service, and leadership activities provide the opportunity to apply essential standards and workplace readiness skills through authentic experiences.

**BEGINNING SPANISH (semester long)**

**Grades: 6-8**

This course is an introduction to Spanish language and culture. Major topics include greetings, numbers, telling time, calendar, weather expressions, holidays, hobbies/pastimes, school vocabulary, and personality traits. Students who complete this course successfully should next take Intermediate Spanish.

INTERMEDIATE SPANISH (semester long)

***Prerequisite: Beginning Spanish***

This course continues the study of the Spanish language and culture. Major topics include the present tense of verbs, the future tense, adverbs, prepositions, interrogatives, food, healthy habits, and locations in a city. Students who complete this course successfully (with a C or higher) should next take Advanced Spanish.

**ADVANCED SPANISH (semester long)**

***Prerequisite: Intermediate Spanish***

This course continues the study of the Spanish language and culture, refining grammatical and vocabulary topics. Major topics include irregular present tense verbs, ser/estar, preterit tense, present progressive, object pronouns, demonstrative adjectives, sports, family, parties, restaurant vocabulary, physical descriptions, house and chore vocabulary, clothing and shopping, and more. Students who complete this course successfully and pass a county developed exit exam will receive credit for High School Spanish I and may take Spanish II at the high school level.

**COLLEGE PREPARATORY SUCCESS (CPS) 8TH GRADE ONLY**

An instructional program focusing on the methodologies that will help students prepare for- and participate- in a rigorous college preparatory curriculum has been initiated in some Wake County middle schools.

# Course Overview – This course is designed for students that have been identified as having the potential to attend college with the right instruction and motivation provided at an early age. They have scored as passing on standardized tests for the state of North Carolina.

At FVMS, we are proud to offer the CPS Program to our sixth (second semester only), seventh and eighth grades, as a means to support active learning and planning for the future.

Tutoring is an essential part of the CPS program. The curriculum will usually have tutorial sessions 2 times each week. Other class time is spent reviewing core class materials, focusing on organization, reading, writing, math and character building. We are excited that Wake County has agreed to provide this needed service to our students as they attempt to reach their goals, and attend college after high school.

All this talk about college…What is it all about? Fieldtrips to colleges in NC have proven very beneficial as students can see, hear and “experience” a college campus.

Exploring FACS- Family Focus

**Grade: 6, 7, 8**

Prerequisite: None. This 18 week middle school course is composed of instructional modules designed to explore basic Family and Consumer Sciences foundations and skill sets. The modules that are covered in this course are: interpersonal relationships, nutrition and wellness, early child care and education, and interior design. Students are eligible to receive the American Red Cross® Babysitter certification. English language arts and mathematics are reinforced. Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) competitive events, community service and leadership activities provide the opportunity to apply essential standards and workplace readiness through authentic experiences.

Exploring FACS- Consumer Focus

**Grade: 6, 7, 8**

Prerequisite: None. This 18 week middle school course is composed of instructional modules designed to explore basic Family and Consumer Sciences foundations and skill sets. The modules that are covered in this course are: personal finance and resource management, food service and hospitality, and apparel. Students are eligible to receive EverFi’s Vault™ and the NC eFoodhandler™ certifications. English language arts and mathematics are reinforced. Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) competitive events, community service and leadership activities provide the opportunity to apply essential standards and workplace readiness through authentic experiences.

**INTERMEDIATE BAND (year-long course)**

This class is a continuation of the skills taught in Beginning Band with further development of tone production, breath support, and music reading. Students are introduced to performance skills and techniques. They are encouraged to perform as individuals and as members of an ensemble. Students should anticipate some afterschool practices and evening performances.

**ADVANCED BAND (year-long course)**

Technical drills, scale studies, rhythm studies, and sight reading exercises are used to advance the student's skills, knowledge, and reading ability in music. A wide variety of band literature is studied to give the students experience in various musical styles. Students should anticipate some after-school practices and evening performances.

**LANGUAGE ARTS ELECTIVES**

***Elective offerings vary by school; therefore, each school prepares a registration sheet that lists the electives it will offer. The availability of electives depends on student interest, an appropriate facility, and staffing.***

READING ENRICHMENT AND EXTENSION

Available for grades 6, 7, and 8, this course is designed for grade level or above readers. Students will have the opportunity to read from all genres to further increase their reading comprehension, vocabulary, and high order thinking skills. There will be opportunities for students to self-select reading materials, both fiction and nonfiction; set individual reading goals; engage in author and genre studies; and read collaboratively in literature circles, reader’s theater, or Paideia seminar formats.

READING ACCELERATION AND SUPPORT

Available for grades 6, 7, and 8, this course is designed for students who need additional instruction and support in comprehension building, vocabulary building, and reading skills. Direct strategy instruction will occur with extended opportunities for guided reading practice with both fiction and nonfiction text. Students will have the opportunity to self-select texts and set individual reading goals. Instructional strategies will include teacher read alouds, paired reading, guided reading, literature circles, and building of independent reading time.

PUBLIC SPEAKING AND DEBATE (7th-8th)

Students explore the production and reception of oral language through writing, delivering, and critiquing informal and formal speeches. Informational and argumentative public speaking is emphasized as students learn to consider both sides of an issue and move into formal debate. A variety of instructional strategies and resources will be utilized for this course.

YEARBOOK (8th Grade Only)

This course allows students to examine journalistic writing and publishing. Students learn the fundamentals of yearbook design from theme development to marketing and distribution. Communication skills are developed through the use of oral language, written language, and other media/technology to complete activities including: interviewing, organizing information, writing various journalistic pieces such as feature stories, sports stories, student and faculty profiles, etc. Additionally, students refine their revision, editing, and proofreading skills and learn the basics of page layout and design. Collaborative work efforts, the use of technology as a publishing tool, and development of responsibility are emphasized. This course may be taught in combination with Newspaper.

MATHEMATICS ELECTIVES

***Elective offerings vary by school; therefore, each school prepares a registration sheet that lists the electives it will offer. The availability of electives depends on student interest, an appropriate facility, and staffing.***

MATH ACCELERATION AND SUPPORT (6th-8th)

This course is designed for students who need additional instruction and support in gaining grade level mathematics skills, problem-solving strategies, test-taking skills, and mathematical thinking in authentic contexts. Activities will focus on the use of manipulatives to build understanding of mathematical concepts and the use of cooperative and individual activities that practice and strengthen grade level skills and ability in mathematics. Technology, reading and writing for greater understanding in mathematics will be incorporated where appropriate.

**MATH COUNTS (7th and 8th)**

MATHCOUNTS is for 7th and 8th grade students who have a special interest in mathematics and who wish to extend their problem-solving skills. Students use MATHCOUNTS materials provided by the Professional Engineers of North Carolina. Activities include speed drills, power drills, and simulated competitions. The emphasis is on developing and applying analytical skills to the solutions of complex problems. Both individual and team performance are developed. Students may have the opportunity to compete in local, regional, state, and national competitions.

These elective courses are designed to support students in choosing a more rigorous course of study with their mathematics instruction. In this course, students may reinforce foundational concepts critical to demonstrating mastery in their current math course, preview new concepts before there are presented in class, and/or providing additional support. The goal of the course is to provide support for students in a more rigorous class in an effort to have them ultimately be able to sustain growth and progress with the course content and skills without the support of this class.

SCIENCE ELECTIVES

***Elective offerings vary by school; therefore, each school prepares a registration sheet that lists the electives it will offer. The availability of electives depends on student interest, an appropriate facility, and staffing.***

ANIMAL SCIENCE (7th and 8th)

***Available for grades 7 - 8 only.*** This study of reptiles, amphibians, mammals, and birds emphasizes habitats, interdependence, domestications, diseases, and treatment. Students learn to prepare environments that simulate the natural habitats of the animals. Ecological concepts, including man's ability to manipulate environments, are highlighted. Students study zoo species and wild animals as well as livestock and pets. The effects of humans and animals upon their environments are stressed. A goal of this course is to develop responsibility for the conservation of our natural resources.

OLYMPICS OF SCIENCE AND MATH (7th and 8th)

***Available for grades 7 - 8 only.*** This course enables students to apply science and mathematics concepts and principles in innovative situations that enhance problem-solving skills. Independent and group projects are completed under the guidelines of the National Science Olympiad. Students may have the opportunity to compete in local, regional, state, and national Science Olympiads.

THE MARINE ECOSYSTEM (7th and 8th)

***Available for grades 7 - 8 only.*** In this course, students will be introduced to the study of oceanography through the examination of the structure and function of marine life with special emphasis on organism interactions and specific ecosystems such as coral reefs, estuaries, and lagoons. Students study the structure and function of marine life, compare and contrast organisms, and study ecosystems.

SOCIAL STUDIES ELECTIVES

***Elective offerings vary by school; therefore, each school prepares a registration sheet that lists the electives it will offer. The availability of electives depends on student interest, an appropriate facility, and staffing.***

AFRICAN-AMERICAN HISTORY (7th and 8th)

***Available for grades 7 - 8 only.*** The history and culture of African-Americans are examined. Students will investigate the changing events, people, politics, and economics that have shaped African-American history.

AMERICAN HISTORY THEMES AND DREAMS (7th and 8th)

***Available for grades 7 - 8 only.*** This course focuses on twentieth century themes in the American nation. Selections from the series, *A History of US* (Author Joy Hakim), will be used to energize and engage students in American History as they study the significant people, places, and events that impacted our nation in the twentieth century. A curriculum guide is available for this class. This elective is highly recommended for all students as excellent preparation for high school social studies.

TAR HEEL JUNIOR HISTORIANS AT WORK (7th and 8th)

***Available for grades 7 - 8 only.*** This course focuses on the history of North Carolina with activities sponsored by the Tar Heel Junior Historian (THJH) programs. Opportunities are provided to research and write articles for the THJH magazine. Enrichment tours to historic sites may be offered. Close ties with the North Carolina Museum of History are maintained as students learn firsthand the history of their city, county, and state. History comes alive with research leading to imaginative projects, original performances, artifact searching, and media presentations. Resource speakers help students develop a sense of history and understand their role in the life of the community.

WE THE PEOPLE: PROJECT CITIZEN (7th and 8th)

***Available for grades 7 - 8 only.*** Students examine the process of making local, state, and federal laws. Classes focus on the role of state and local governments in the U.S. federal system. The curriculum involves an entire class of middle grade students in a series of structured, cooperative learning activities that are guided by teachers, organization leaders, and others. The students learn to interact with their government. This course is part of a nationwide program, a project of the Center for Civic Education, funded by the US Department of Education.

**Reminder: Students will not be able to make request to change electives at the beginning of semesters as in years past. . Students should make their selections carefully. Once forms are returned, selections are final. We will do our best to grant students their first two selections. Please make sure your student is eligible to sign up for a course, for example, you must have computer applications 1 before signing up for computer applications 2.**