



# ELKHORN

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

---

## 2020 -2021

# Grade 8 Curriculum Handbook



**Elkhorn Grandview Middle School  
Elkhorn Middle School  
Elkhorn Ridge Middle School  
Elkhorn Valley View Middle School**

# WELCOME

We welcome you and your children to Elkhorn Public Schools (EPS) middle schools. Our middle school curriculum is designed to meet the needs of a special group of students; the 10-14 year olds. It is academic, but also exploratory. While basic skills are emphasized in core areas, exploratory experiences expose students to additional areas to help them develop new interests, to appreciate the fine and applied arts, and to expand their talents.

We look forward to working with you to help your children move successfully and happily through these transitional years. Adolescents require understanding, love, and patience from their parents, teachers, and other adults in their lives. This handbook is designed to acquaint you with the middle school curriculum and activities. We hope it will answer your questions about our program and give you insight as you join us in helping your children make the incredible journey from childhood to adolescence.

## TEAM CONCEPT

The EPS Middle School program is designed to promote success. Students are assigned to an academic team in the 6th, 7th and 8th grade. The team serves several purposes. Team teachers are responsible for teaching Language Arts, Reading, Math, Science and Social Studies. The team affords flexibility in scheduling. In addition, the team provides a small unit within the school to allow for more personalized instruction and interaction between teachers and students.

The team teachers, because of their common planning time, are able to work closely to plan appropriate instructional and social strategies for students. Planning time also provides a time to conference with parents and/or resource personnel regarding special learning and behavior needs of individual students.

Through a total team effort, the EPS middle schools will work to provide each student with opportunities to grow in knowledge of the academic subjects, performance of life skills and the ability to accept and follow through with responsibilities. Self-discipline is probably the most important aspect to student success. Our team work is focused on helping each student develop that sense of self-responsibility.

## GRADING

Grades during middle school determine which classes students may be eligible for in high school. Regular attendance is essential, as daily grades are taken in class. Due to the participation and class interactions, grades reflect academic knowledge, attendance, and responsibility. Students are encouraged to do their best and to prepare all work in the best possible manner. All subject areas use the 1-5 grading system, unless otherwise stated.

The grading scale is:

- 1 = 93%-100%
- 2 = 85%-92%
- 3 = 78%-84%
- 4 = 70%-77%
- 5 = 0%-69%

- IN = Work Incomplete
- P = Pass
- F = Fail

## **LANGUAGE ARTS - 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE** **(CORE CLASS)**

**PREREQUISITES:** None

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** 8th grade Language Arts continues to emphasize the importance of oral and written communication skills. It is a grammar and writing program which exposes students to a wide variety of opportunities which include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Composition (a 6 trait writing model will be the primary tool for writing instruction: organization, conventions, ideas, word choice, sentence fluency, and voice). Writing includes descriptive (for state assessment), expository, narrative and persuasive.
2. Oral Communication (may include class discussions and informative speeches)
3. Grammar, mechanics, and usage
4. Library/Research Skills

**TEXTS:** Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Into Literature: 2020 Into Literature Student Edition plus Online Resources Grade 8

## **READING 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE** **(CORE CLASS)**

**PREREQUISITES:** None

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course focuses on various genres, including fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and drama. These genres are covered through such texts as an anthology of literature, excerpts, articles, and a whole class novel and play. In addition, students will continue with Accelerated Reader (AR), in which students independently read books to grow their literacy skills. All AR goals and goal deadlines are set as per district parameters. Another component of this course includes vocabulary study through twenty units of Greek and Latin roots. Lastly, in addition to class quizzes and tests, there are five total District Common Assessments throughout the year. These five DCAs are as follows: Comprehension and Analysis of Fiction, Comprehension and Analysis of Nonfiction, Literary Devices and Figurative Language, Greek and Latin Roots (cumulative), and a Text Dependent Analysis that is given in both Reading and Language Arts.

**THE CORE TEXT FOR READING IN 8<sup>th</sup> GRADE:**

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Into Literature: 2020 Into Literature Student Edition plus Online Resources Grade 8

**PREREQUISITES:** None

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** 8th grade reading is divided into four skill sets: vocabulary and word study, reading workshops, literature circles, and independent reading. Vocabulary and word study consists of daily practice with and assessment of a student's knowledge of word families (roots and prefixes) and application of this knowledge to authentic reading situations. Word study also includes vocabulary acquisition strategies for the engaged reader, including how to use context clues to comprehend a difficult reading passage. Figurative language comprehension, analysis, and application (idioms, hyperboles, analogies, metaphors, and similes) will also be included in our word study. Reading workshops are a time for 8<sup>th</sup> graders to be exposed to multiple genres of text while practicing the skills necessary to be a competent reader. These 5-6 week units consist of mini-lessons designed to introduce, practice, and assess the essential reading skills as outlined by the Nebraska Department of Education and assessed by the Elkhorn Public Schools (8.1.6 a-o). An anthology used during these mini-lessons, while current authentic and high interest texts are also brought in and discussed during the units. Literature circles are 3-4 week units centered on student needs and reading interests. These circles, while literature based, allow the teacher to work with students in small group and individual settings. The circles are discussion centered, emphasizing proper discussion techniques for comprehending and analysis of text. Finally, independent reading practice throughout the year is expected of all 8<sup>th</sup> graders. EPS middle schools use the learning information and

management system called Accelerated Reader (AR) to assist in the testing, recording, and reporting of student independent reading progress.

**THE CORE TEXT FOR READING IN 8<sup>th</sup> GRADE:**

In addition to the Anthology, the teacher may add other reading as needed or desired.

**Other skills covered in this course will be:**

1. Reading fluency practice
2. Individual and group presentations
3. Vocabulary – including quizzes and daily recording of a vocabulary log
4. Recognizing and explaining the meaning of figurative language
5. Daily written responses to reading
6. Independent reading, practice to include genre study & author study
7. Recording daily reading log

**PRE-ALGEBRA - 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE**  
**(CORE CLASS)**

**PREREQUISITES:** Mastery of 7th Grade Math curriculum.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

**NUMBER:** Students will communicate number sense, concepts using multiple representations to reason, solve problems, and make connections within mathematics and across disciplines.

**ALGEBRA:** Students will communicate algebraic concepts using multiple representations to reason, solve problems, and make connections within mathematics and across disciplines.

**GEOMETRY:** Students will communicate geometric concepts and measurement concepts using multiple representations to reason, solve problems, and make connections within mathematics and across disciplines.

**DATA:** Students will communicate data analysis/probability concepts using multiple representations to reason, solve problems, and make connections within mathematics and across disciplines.

**TEXT:** Pre-Algebra, McGraw-Hill, 2015.National Glencoe Math, Course 3

**WEB:** [www.connected.mcgraw-hill.com](http://www.connected.mcgraw-hill.com)

**ALGEBRA - 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE**  
**(CORE CLASS)**

**PREREQUISITES:** Teacher recommendation based on MAP scores, NSCAS math scores, placement test and previous year's Math performance.

\* A 7th grader is eligible for this course with a teacher recommendation, successful completion of 7th grade Pre-Algebra and exceptional performance on the placement test, the MAP test and NSCAS math test.

\* An 8th grader could take Honors Geometry with teacher recommendation, successful completion of Algebra, exceptional performance on the MAP test and the NSCAS math test.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** Topics studied include:

1. Real Numbers
2. Algebraic Expressions
3. Equations in one Variable
4. Inequalities in one Variable
5. Polynomials
8. Linear Equations
9. Relations, Functions, and Variation
10. Systems of Linear Equations and inequalities
11. Radicals
12. Quadratic Equations and Functions

- 6. Factoring Polynomials
- 7. Rational Expressions

- 13. Statistics and Probability

**TEXT:** Algebra I, McGraw-Hill 2014, Algebra I.

**WEB:** [www.connected.mcgraw-hill.com](http://www.connected.mcgraw-hill.com)

### **AMERICAN HISTORY - 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE** (CORE CLASS)

**PREREQUISITES:** None

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course will identify the major themes in American history and explain the importance of the development of the nation. Some topics we will be discussing include: English colonies, American Revolution, the Constitution and Bill of Rights, Westward Expansion, Civil War, Reconstruction, and The Progressive Era. Emphasis will be placed on the development of social studies skills.

**TEXT:** Middle Grades American History 2019 Survey Student Edition plus Digital Courseware

### **INTEGRATED SCIENCE - 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE** (CORE CLASS)

**PREREQUISITES:** None

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course is an integrated science course covering topics in Chemistry, Biology, Physics and Earth Science. Units covered will include: Measurement, Form and Transfer of Energy, Earth's History, Scientific Inquiry, the Nature of Science, Cell Reproduction & Heredity, Properties of Matter and introductory Chemistry, and the link between Science and Technology.

**TEXT:** Science Glencoe short course series, McGraw-Hill, 2012

### **EXPLORATORY BLOCKS** (6 Weeks) All eighth grade students rotate through each program

### **EXPLORATORY FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCE – 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE** (EXPLORATORY BLOCK - 6 WEEKS)

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** The Middle School Family and Consumer Science Program will be delivered in a student-centered, modular education classroom setting. The course involves an applied approach to a curriculum focus around the following areas: Making healthy meals, Consumer Skills, and sewing a zippered bag using a sewing machine.. Students will be involved in challenging hands-on activities, experiments, problem solving practices and group work.

**GRADING:** A student's grade is based on points earned from classroom participation and modular work.

### **ART – 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE** (EXPLORATORY BLOCK - 6 WEEKS)

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** Students will explore various mediums through painting and or drawing units. A pottery unit will also be included that will further explore 3-D forms and techniques.

**ADVANCED COMPUTER APPLICATIONS – 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE**  
**(EXPLORATORY BLOCK - 6 WEEKS)**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course allows students to learn advanced techniques as well as new computer technology to solve problems, create products, utilize information and increase academic and personal productivity.

**PERFORMANCE STANDARDS:** Students will demonstrate the ability to use and understand Multimedia Technology including:

1. Learn to properly use functions and graphs in Excel
2. Learn to properly use breaks, tables and sections in Word
3. Explore the basics of database software in Access
4. Explore internet safety
5. Proper use of the internet for research
6. Explore career options in computers
7. Exploring computer ethics and piracy

**GRADING:** Students will be evaluated based on their participation, performance and quality of projects.

**TEXT:** Illustrated Microsoft Office 365 & Office 2016: Introductory

**INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGY – 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE**  
**(EXPLORATORY BLOCK - 6 WEEKS)**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course involves an applied approach to curriculum focused around four areas of Industrial Technology: Manufacturing Technology, Communication Technology, Construction Technology and Transportation Technology. Learning will take place in a modular setting along with thought provoking, problem solving practices with groups of students.

**TEXT:** Technology - Delmar Pub. Inc.

**HEALTH – 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE**  
**(EXPLORATORY BLOCK – 6 WEEKS)**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course will explore many aspects of health. A variety of topics will be included, but not limited to: wellness, stress management, nutrition, physical fitness, eating disorders, prevention and control of diseases, avoidance of drugs, violence prevention, relationships, consequences of teenage sexual activity, consumer health, and bullying. Methods of instruction may include any combination of the following: lecture, group activities, videos, class discussion, and hands-on activities.

**GRADING:** Writing assignments, projects, presentations, quizzes, tests, and class participation.

\*Classroom resources are available for parent review. See the health teacher.

**SPEECH & DRAMA – 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE**  
**(EXPLORATORY BLOCK – 6 WEEKS)**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** In this exploratory class students will explore debate and Shakespeare. The purpose of this class will be to introduce students to persuasive communication and presentation, including research, analysis and the understanding of multiple sides to a debatable topic. Students will also be performing an adapted melodramatic-version of a Shakespeare play production. All the elements of set, costume, lights, and sound will be incorporated in this performance. Students will also continue developing the ability to critique live performances with constructional feedback.

**PHYSICAL EDUCATION – 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE**  
**(REQUIRED CLASS)**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** As a part of the total school curriculum, Physical Education offers an organized, sequential progression of activities which provide for the social, physical, intellectual, and emotional development of children through the medium of physical activity.

**ACTIVITIES:**

Soccer	Indoor Hockey	Basketball	Archery
Cross Country	Physical Fitness test	Badminton/Ping Pong	Softball
Volleyball	Track & Field	Bowling	Jump Rope
Weight Training	Ultimate Frisbee	Wrestling	Flag Football

**DAILY ROUTINE:** Class period 45 minutes  
- 5 minutes - dress  
- 35 minutes - exercise  
- 5 minutes - dress

**UNIFORM:**  
Tee shirt, shorts, tennis shoes

**GRADING:** 1-5 (1=Excellent; 2=Good; 3=Average; 4=Pass, and 5=Fail)

Grades are determined using a demerit system based on three areas: Skill-Improvement, Attitude/Dress and Written Test.

**LOCKS:** All lockers in the locker room will come with a lock. There is a \$5 fine for any lost lock.

**BAND – 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE**  
**(ADDITIONAL OFFERING)**

**PREREQUISITES:** 6th through 7th grade bands or permission of the instructor.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** 8th grade band has as its goals the learning of classical and popular music scored for band. Rehearsal procedures and increased musical awareness, as well as solo and ensemble work are stressed. Students will perform in three concerts and one middle school music contest in the spring. Preparatory material for high school tryouts is fully covered. There may also be a performance with the high school pep band at a football game and a basketball game depending on the scheduling between middle and high school directors.

**Band is a semester course with a semester commitment.** Students enrolled must complete the full term of each semester. There is a one week period at the beginning of each semester during which a student may drop band. Before a student is dropped from this course, there **must** be a written or verbal request from the parent to the band director.

**TEXT:** **Rubank Intermediate Method Book.** Supplementary texts provided by the instructors.

**CONCERT DRESS:** Students will wear black pants, black socks, solid black shoes, and a middle school music shirt available for purchase from the director.

**GRADING:** Grades will be determined by attitude, effort, and participation in class, individual playing skills, such as rhythms and scales, fingerings, vocabulary, home practice, and attendance at events.

**\*Parents will need to make their own arrangements for instruments. A limited number of secondary instruments are available for rent from the school.**

**CHORUS – 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE**  
**(ADDITIONAL OFFERING)**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course is designed to establish proper vocal technique and musical style by reinforcing what was learned in 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> grade chorus and to gain knowledge through singing choral music and vocal exercises. Skills are developed in 3-part singing, as well as 4-part, if voices are available. A variety of musical experiences and performances are covered throughout the year with three concerts. Eighth grade chorus students may audition for Show Choir.

**Chorus is a semester course with a semester commitment.** Students enrolled must complete the full term of each semester. There is a one week period at the beginning of each semester during which a student may drop chorus. Students are asked to provide the director with a written note from the parent making this request.

**TEXT:** Sing From Octavos

**CONCERT DRESS:** Students will wear black pants, black socks, black shoes, and a middle school “Noteworthy” t-shirt, cost \$10.

**WORLD LANGUAGE – SPANISH – 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE**  
**(ADDITIONAL OFFERING)**  
**(EVERY OTHER DAY)**

**PREREQUISITE:** World Language – Spanish – 7<sup>th</sup> Grade

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This class is a year-long class designed to focus on communication, culture, connections, comparisons and communities. Students will continue their study of grammar, writing, and speaking, and will develop an even greater understanding of the Spanish language and culture. Students who successfully complete Spanish 7 and Spanish 8 will be able to enroll in Spanish II in high school, allowing those students who choose to continue to take Spanish for a total of 5 years including an AP class in the 5<sup>th</sup> year.

**TEXT:** Autentico: Pearson 2017

**SPECIAL EDUCATION – 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE**  
**(Life Skills Program) - (Additional Class)**

**PREREQUISITES:** Student’s IEP Team Recommendation

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** The Life Skills Program is an integration of functional academic, community living and personal/social skills. Students will work on prevocational, recreation/leisure, and home living skills. Students also work on specific curricula to assist them in becoming active participants in the community.

**SPECIAL EDUCATION – 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE**  
**(Resource Room) - (Additional Class)**

**PREREQUISITES:** Students must first be referred by a teacher or parent. Screening of student’s records will determine if individual psychological tests are necessary. Placement is dependent on test results.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** The resource program provides collaborative support for students in the regular classroom. Adaptations of assignments and tests, study guides, oral reading of tests and use of technology to support students in a collaborative classroom. Individual resource supports are offered when inclusion within the regular classroom is not conducive to student’s needs and learning. Each student’s program will be designed to meet individual academic, behavioral, social and emotional needs.

**HIGH ABILITY LEARNER EDUCATION-8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE**  
**(H.A.L.E.) - (Additional Class)**

**PREREQUISITES:** In order to be considered for identification into the HALE program, students must first have qualifying scores and a teacher recommendation. The next step is for the student’s scores, teacher evaluation and sample work to



be entered into a matrix to determine identification into the program.

1. Student must achieve 125 or above on a Scholastic Aptitude Measure
2. Achievement level total composite of 96% or higher on a standardized achievement test
3. Achievement level of 96% or higher on any sub test of a standardized achievement test in the areas of total reading, language arts, or mathematics
4. Nomination by teacher or parent using a specific list of characteristics

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** The middle school program primarily employs interest based seminars and independent study to achieve program goals. Appropriate pacing of curriculum ensures that the rapid learner is challenged. Curriculum compacting is available for those students able to demonstrate mastery of skills.

## SUPPORT CLASSES

### Support Math (Grade 6, 7 and 8):

**PREREQUISITES:** Students are selected for Support Math based upon MAP scores, NSCAS Math results and teacher recommendation.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course is designed to increase the time for mathematics instruction. Students will receive additional classroom instruction and support to supplement the grade level mathematics curriculum. The student will strengthen knowledge of math procedures and computation along with problem solving techniques.

### Support Reading (Grade 6, 7 and 8):

**PREREQUISITES:** Students are selected for Support Reading based upon MAP scores, NSCAS Reading results, Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test and teacher recommendation.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course is designed to increase the time for reading instruction. Students receive additional classroom instruction and support to supplement the grade level reading curriculum. Students will strengthen knowledge in fluency, decoding, comprehension and vocabulary development using both fiction and non-fiction texts.

## **ACTIVITIES AT THE MIDDLE SCHOOL**

### Athletics:

#### **Boys Athletics:**

<b>Sport</b>	<b>Season</b>	<b>Grade Level</b>	<b>Interscholastic/Intramural</b>
Football	Fall	7 <sup>th</sup> & 8 <sup>th</sup>	Interscholastic
Basketball	Winter (Nov. – Jan.)	7 <sup>th</sup> & 8 <sup>th</sup>	Interscholastic & Intramural
Wrestling	Winter (Jan. – March)	7 <sup>th</sup> & 8 <sup>th</sup>	Interscholastic
Track	Spring	7 <sup>th</sup> & 8 <sup>th</sup>	Interscholastic

#### **Girls Athletics:**

<b>Sport</b>	<b>Season</b>	<b>Grade Level</b>	<b>Interscholastic/Intramural</b>
Volleyball	Fall	7 <sup>th</sup> & 8 <sup>th</sup>	Interscholastic & Intramural
Basketball	Winter (Jan. – March)	7 <sup>th</sup> & 8 <sup>th</sup>	Interscholastic & Intramural
Track	Spring	7 <sup>th</sup> & 8 <sup>th</sup>	Interscholastic

### Non-Athletics:

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Season</b>	<b>Grade Level</b>
Science Bowl	Fall – Winter	All

Math Counts	Fall – Winter	All
Computer Club	Fall – Spring	All
Yearbook	Fall – Spring	All
Student Council	Fall – Spring	All
Chess Club	Fall – Spring	All
Science Olympiad	Fall – Spring	All
Jazz Band	Fall - Spring	All