



# Ellington Public Schools Curriculum Guide

## Grade 8

The Ellington Public Schools elementary curriculum is designed to enhance children's intellectual, social, emotional, and physical development, while supporting students in acquiring the skills needed to become collaborative and independent learners.

This document provides you with an overview of the skills, topics, and concepts that form the core curriculum at this grade level. The curriculum is aligned with the Common Core State Standards and other state and national standards in each content area.



Each child is viewed as a unique person with an individual pattern and pace of growth. Different approaches to learning and skill levels are expected, accepted, and used to design curriculum and instruction.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Students apply their knowledge of basic skills and concepts while working on meaningful and challenging tasks. The goal of mathematics instruction is to understand and apply mathematical concepts and develop reasoning and problem solving skills. The Illustrative Mathematics 6-8 math program, by Open Up Resources, is used for instruction and provides a variety of differentiated and challenging problems to support learning.



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## **KEY EIGHTH GRADE MATH SKILLS**

- Develop understanding of proportionality to solve single- and multi-step problems;
- Extend understanding of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division to all rational numbers;
- Solve problems involving the area and circumference of a circle and surface area of 3-dimensional objects;
- Compare two data distributions and address questions about differences between populations.

## **LANGUAGE ARTS**

Our language arts curriculum is aligned with the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and continues to spiral the skills students need in reading, writing, speaking, and listening. We approach the teaching of literacy through a balanced instructional approach that supports students through both reading workshop and writing workshop. Through this model, students have opportunities to apply learned strategies independently. Our reading and writing units of study are closely intertwined to allow our reading work to support our writing work.

## **READING**

In eighth grade, students apply strategies to analyze, compare, and evaluate ideas when reading grade level fiction and nonfiction texts. Students are supported through instruction, mentor texts, and book clubs, as they work to comprehend longer, more challenging books. As readers, they will be expected to read closely and question an author's assumptions.

## **WRITING**

Our eighth graders will use a writing process to improve their writing skills in narrative, argumentative, and informational writing. Eighth graders will develop the ability to clearly report findings from their own research and analysis of texts in both speaking and writing. Students will learn and apply the rules of grammar in their own writing.



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## **KEY EIGHTH GRADE LITERACY SKILLS**

- Cite the evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of a text;
- Learn how authors support their ideas through word choice and style;
- Analyze the different points of views within materials of the same topic;
- Develop writing around central ideas that are supported with sound reasoning, specific evidence, precise word choices, and clear sentences;
- Communicate effectively through collaborative discussions about texts.

## **SCIENCE**

This year in science students will work toward formulating explanations to complex phenomenon such as, “How can a huge sequoia tree grow from such a small seed?”, “How can offspring have traits unlike that of their parents?”, “How can a species change over time?”, and “Will satellites orbit in space forever?” This year there is a great emphasis placed on students driving the learning and working as scientists to develop questions and design their own investigations to figure out real-world phenomena. Together, we will engage in science and engineering practices in order to construct explanations for complex scientific ideas and develop solutions to problems.

## **SOCIAL STUDIES**

Students explore the foundations of the United States government, its leaders, and policies from the Constitution to Reconstruction. They also discover how the U.S. transformed in the 18th and 19th centuries geographically, politically, socially, and economically. Using an inquiry process, students strengthen skills in developing an informed historical opinion, analyzing and evaluating sources, and communicating their views orally and in writing.



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## **TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION**

The technology education program provides hands-on learning that allows students to explore technology. Students learn problem solving techniques while integrating math, science and technology by completing the following projects: Robotics, Woodworking, and 3D Modeling.

## **COMPUTERS**

In eighth grade, students continue to learn how to use a variety of programs, including Microsoft Office Suite, develop speed in their keyboarding, and learn to use the Internet efficiently, effectively, and with good citizenship.

## **WORLD LANGUAGE**

Students continue to learn how to communicate effectively (through speaking, listening, writing, and reading) in Spanish or French. Students ability to communicate is expected to increase gradually in complexity and accuracy. Students will continue to develop an understanding of multicultural aspects of their second language. Students take who take both levels 1A and 1B at the middle school over two years can earn high school credit for the course.

## **ART**

The art program develops an appreciation of art, introduces design elements, and gives opportunities to create art in a variety of media. Content is based on art appreciation, art history, art criticism, and art creation.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

The physical education program engages students in carefully planned and sequenced activities. Students develop a variety of motor skills and learn aspects of anatomy and physiology.



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## **MUSIC**

The general music program gives your child an opportunity to create, perform, and respond. Eighth graders will create a melody, listen and respond to Blues and Jazz music, and learn to play simple melodies on the guitar.

## **Chorus**

This program engages students in singing songs in a variety of musical styles and encourages proper vocal techniques. The ensemble meets twice per cycle and performs at least two concerts per year.

## **Beginning Band**

This program continues the evolution of the instrumental student's skills. Intermediate band meets twice a week with rotating instrumental lessons given twice a month. Continued home practice is encouraged. At least two concerts are held each year.

## **HOMEWORK**

Ellington Public Schools defines "homework" as independent practice and learning that happens outside the classroom. Reading continues to be a priority in the middle school. Ideally, students should read outside of school on a daily basis, in addition to any other homework assigned. In eighth grade the expected length of time for independent reading at home is 30 minutes each day, or 150 minutes or more across a week. Families are encouraged to support this goal by setting aside time for reading.

Students may also be expected to complete other independent practice assignments and long-term projects in addition to daily reading. Other independent practice assignments and work on long-term projects should not exceed an average of 15-20 minutes daily across courses. Some students may require less or more time than that which is indicated for a grade level. Teachers are not expected to assign homework every day.



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## **TESTING**

In 8th grade students participate in standardized testing as required by state and federal guidelines. This includes Smarter Balanced Assessments for Literacy & Mathematics and the Next Generation Science Assessment in Science.