

A Parent's Guide to Curriculum

Eighth Grade

Bensenville School District 2 Mission Statement

The purpose of Bensenville Elementary School District 2 is to prepare each student for a world of opportunities as a responsible citizen.

The Primary Goal of District 2 is:

To have staff members who each and every day work to give children a foundation for success so that they may achieve academic excellence and reach their full potential as responsible citizens.

Strategies

- 1) Create a safe, trusting, secure and orderly school learning environment.
- 2) Achieve a greater understanding of each other and the world around us.
- 3) Teach children and adults to manage conflict in a responsible manner.
- 4) Build partnerships to unite schools, families, community members and businesses that create a community of life-long learners who support and take pride in District 2.
- 5) Establish recognition for all members of the learning community - students, parents, teachers, volunteers, staff members and community partners - so that excellence is recognized and rewarded.

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Curriculum Overview

Language Arts

The District 2 Language Arts program reflects the belief that literacy is a communication process that includes the academic areas of reading, writing, spelling, listening and speaking. Program goals are based on the Illinois State Standards and Goals for Learning Language Arts and what current research in the area of language arts recommends for effective curriculum and instruction.

The goal of the Language Arts program is to develop high achieving students who will:

- read, comprehend, interpret and use written materials.
- experience a variety of different forms of literature.
- understand how and why language functions and evolves.
- apply the writing process to communicate effectively for various purposes and audiences.
- listen critically and analytically for understanding and to gain information.
- utilize spoken language effectively in formal and informal situations to communicate ideas.

Eighth Grade Language Arts Overview

The K-8 curriculum is designed to promote each child's development and progress toward mastery of the skills and knowledge expected as students advance through the grades. The eighth grade curriculum is designed to:

- Develop and apply appropriate strategies to read with understanding and fluency. Learning experiences include: previewing reading materials; making predictions; relating reading to information from other sources; making inferences; drawing conclusions; summarizing and retelling; checking and clarifying for understanding; comparing, contrasting, and evaluating ideas; using information to form, explain and support questions and predictions; and applying appropriate strategies to self-correct errors while reading.
- Develop and apply a functional system for word study and identification. Learning experiences include: reading and comprehending unfamiliar words using root words, synonyms, antonyms, word origins and derivations; clarifying word meaning using context clues and a variety of resources including glossaries, dictionaries and thesauruses.
- Develop and apply reading to a variety of literature. Learning experiences include: choosing material from a variety of genre to read and enjoy; selecting and reading material to access information; identifying and analyzing a variety of literary techniques such as figurative language, dialogue, description in a variety of genres; identifying characteristics of various literary forms including short stories, novels, drama, biographies, poetry and science fiction.
- Develop written work for a variety of purposes and audiences using a process for organizing thoughts, ideas and/or information. Learning experiences include: composing narrative, expository, and persuasive written work; producing writing that conveys a clear understanding of ideas and information displaying focus, organization, elaboration, and coherence; and writing compositions that contain complete sentences and effective paragraphs.
- Develop active listening and speaking skills to use in a variety of situations. Learning experiences include: developing speaking and listening to promote effective communications and applying these skills to individual and group experiences.

(Standards Updated and Revised 7-14-2004)

Mathematics

Purpose: To apply mathematical knowledge and use appropriate strategies to analyze data, develop solutions to a variety of problems, and evaluate and communicate results.

The District's Mathematics program is based on the Illinois Standards for Learning and the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics Standards. Mathematics is taught as a separate subject. The study of mathematics is also integrated into the ongoing daily routines of the classroom and other subjects.

The goal of the curriculum is to develop high-achieving students. The focus of the program is to develop problem-solving strategies and mathematical concepts built on a strong computational skill base. Emphasis is given to establishing links from past experience, action with concrete materials, pictures, verbal statements, and symbolic arithmetic statements.

The mathematical goals addressed throughout the K-8 program are:

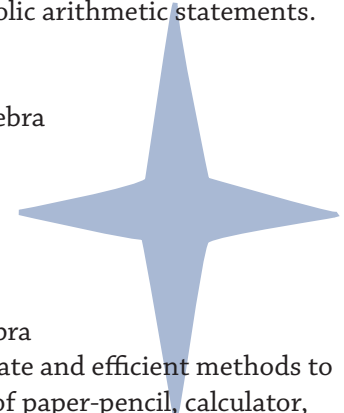
Numeration and Computation

Measurement Systems

Algebra

Geometry and Spatial Sense

Data Collection and Analysis



Eighth Grade Mathematics Overview

Pre-Algebra

- Evaluate and select appropriate and efficient methods to solve problems, such as use of paper/ pencil, calculator, and mental math
- Communicate mathematically
- Make generalizations using variables
- Write algebraic expressions to represent situations and patterns
- Develop and use formulas to solve problems
- Understand and apply formulas of volume and surface area
- Use the distance formula
- Recognize and represent linear relationships
- Evaluate expressions using positive and negative exponents
- Understand proportional and non-proportional relationships
- Add, subtract, multiply, and divide using positive and negative integers
- Understand ratios, rates, and proportion

Algebra

- Evaluate and select appropriate and efficient methods to solve problems, such as use of paper-pencil, calculator, and mental math
- Communicate mathematically
- Make generalizations using variables
- Solve linear inequalities and linear systems
- Solve quadratic equations by graphing, formula, or factoring
- Solve simple equations involving rational and rotational symmetry
- Use combinations to calculate outcomes
- Solve systems of equations by graphing, using matrices, and subtraction
- Graph linear equations
- Graph inequalities on a coordinate plane and use graphs to solve problems
- Understand concepts of relations, functions, and functions notation
- Multiply and factor polynomials
- Understand proportions and their properties
- Use algebra to solve geometric problems

(Standards Updated and Revised 7-14-2004)

Science

Purpose: All students will know and be able to apply the scientific method to learn scientific concepts and vocabulary and investigate scientific principles as they apply to a contemporary technological society.

The District's Science program is based on the Illinois State Goals and Standards for Learning and the National Science Education Standards.

The goal of the curriculum is to develop high-achieving students in the area of science. The focus of the program is to develop students who have an understanding of the process of scientific inquiry; the key concepts and principles of life science, physical science, and earth science; and understand the relationship among science, technology, and society. The science units are also designed to be integrated with math and reading strategies.

The scientific process skills addressed throughout the K-8 program are:

Observing

Classifying

Inferring

Predicting

Communicating

Measuring

Using numbers

Creating models

Identifying variables

Recording data

Interpreting data

Drawing conclusions

Formulating hypothesis

Eighth Grade Science Overview

Disease

In this unit students will differentiate between infectious and noninfectious diseases. They will discover how the body protects itself against disease. Students will also identify factors and conditions that contribute to disease and what steps they can take to keep themselves healthy. This unit will end with a simulation that will provide students with the opportunity to learn about cause, transmission, symptoms, and treatment of various infectious diseases. They will trace the course of an epidemic and investigate the role of the Centers for Disease Control in containing epidemics.

Chemistry

Students will focus on compounds and how they are formed. Through experimentation, students will be taught to identify the reactants and products in a chemical reaction, show evidence that such a reaction has taken place, and identify factors that affect the rate of a reaction. Students will understand the importance that compounds and chemical reactions play in everyday life.

Animals and Habitats

Students will study animal adaptations in a variety of habitats. Students will choose an animal and use various resources to gather information about the animal. From their research, students will generate both oral and written work. In this unit, students will understand the many aspects of biodiversity and how it affects their lives.

Weather

In 8th grade students will study weather. They will use weather instruments to measure, collect and analyze weather data. Students will use scientific inquiry to discover the properties of air and water and their relationship to weather patterns. Students will also familiarize themselves with safety procedures during severe weather.

(Standards Updated and Revised 5-24-2007)

Social Science



Purpose: To apply social scientific knowledge and use appropriate strategies to analyze data, develop solutions to problems, evaluate, and communicate results.

The District's Social Sciences program is based on the Illinois State Goals and Standards for Learning and the National Council for Social Studies' recommended themes. Across the curriculum, social sciences will be integrated with all subjects.

The goal of the curriculum is to develop high-achieving students in the area of social studies. The focus of the program is to develop students who can access, process, and present information. Emphasis is on establishing links from the past to the present.

The social sciences goals and themes addressed throughout the K-8 program are:

Politics	Economics	History	Geography	Sociology	Reasoning
Culture	Technology	Civics			

Eighth Grade Social Science Overview

The Eighth Grade Social Sciences Curriculum is a continuation of the seventh grade curriculum. The scope of study will start with the Reconstruction Period and conclude with Post World War II America. The first trimester will include some review of the seventh grade curriculum. Emphasis will be placed on the increasing global involvement of the United States. Topics that will be studied include the two world wars, the Great Depression, industrial development, and American leadership during the Atomic Age. In the third trimester focus will be on Illinois and the Illinois Constitution Assessment will be given.

- The Scope and Sequence is as follows:
 - Unit 1: Reconstruction
 - Unit 2: The West
 - Unit 3: Industry, Invention and Immigration
 - Unit 4: Progressive Era
 - Unit 5: Age of Imperialism
 - Unit 6: World War I
 - Unit 7: The 1920s
 - Unit 8: World War II
 - Unit 9: Cold War
 - Unit 10: Civil rights Era
 - Unit 11: Post World War America
- Current Events: Taught regularly throughout the year, and reinforced at home with Newsweek.
- Politics: Comparative political systems of the world, U.S. and Illinois governments, leaders, how rules are made

- and enforced.
- Economics: Consumers, producers, types of economies around the world, trade, global interdependence.
- History: Famous world leaders, U.S. leaders.
- Geography: Application throughout the course.
- Sociology: Different social groups in the U.S., historical relationships among groups.
- Reasoning: Ability to make clear, well-supported decisions.
- Culture: U.S. multi-culturalism, past and present.
- Technology: Applications world-wide, implications of instant global communication, effects on U.S. economy and culture.
- Civics: Citizenship, democratic values, U.S. system.

(Standards Updated and Revised 7-20-2005)

Physical Development and Health

The District's Physical Development and Health program is based on the Illinois State Goals and Standards for Learning.

The program is designed to develop in students the desire to acquire and maintain a strong and healthy body. Students are taught to realize that a strong body and good health are basic to their future lives.

The District believes effective human functioning depends upon optimum physical development and health. In District 2, physical education provides students with the knowledge and attitudes necessary to achieve healthful living throughout their lives and to acquire physical fitness, coordination and leisure skills.

The Physical Development and Health program in District 2 is one phase of the total educational program which enables students to safely develop physically, mentally, socially, and emotionally to their maximum capacity according to their individual abilities.

Middle School Physical Development and Health Overview (Grades 6,7,8)

At the Middle School level, students meet daily to participate in a variety of physical activities. Emphasis is placed on safety, fitness, skill development, good sportsmanship, and active participation.

The activities the students will be involved in include:

Soccer	Ping-pong
Flag football	Aerobics
Speed ball	Badminton
Basketball	Fitness activities
Volleyball	Floor hockey
Softball	Track and field

In cooperation with the Village of Bensenville, District 2 is offering classes at the Redmond Recreation Center to provide additional high-quality physical education activities for students. Student activities will include ice skating, roller blading, cross-country skiing, wall climbing, orienteering, and fitness lab.

An intramural program is available to all sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students.

Health education is also taught to all students. Topics include nutrition, exercise-fitness, muscular and skeletal systems, first aid, and wellness.

In addition, an extracurricular program is available to all seventh and eighth grade boys and girls. Activities include cross-country, girls basketball, boys basketball, cheerleading/dance, girls volleyball, boys volleyball, and track and field.

Physical fitness is assessed throughout the year with the Presidential Physical Fitness test administered in the spring.

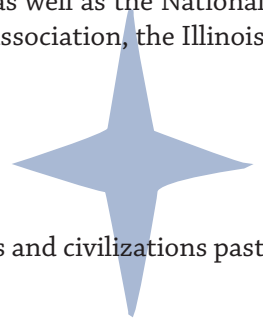
(Standards Updated and Revised 7-20-2005)

Fine Arts

The District 2 Fine Arts program is based on the Illinois State Goals and Standards for Learning as well as the National Standards established by the Music Educators National Conference, the Illinois Music Educators Association, the Illinois Art Education Association, and the Illinois Theater Association.

The goal of the Fine Arts program is to develop high achieving students who will:

- understand the elements, processes, tools, and the unique qualities of the arts.
- demonstrate and apply the skills and knowledge necessary to create and perform in the arts.
- know and be able to recognize significant works in the arts and how they reflect various cultures and civilizations past and present.
- nurture talents and abilities that will continue throughout their lives.



The K-8 discipline-based curriculum is designed to build upon the knowledge, understanding, and skill development from the previous year(s). It contributes to creative development, self-discipline, critical thinking, and self-esteem of every child. Whenever possible, the arts are integrated into the other areas of learning.

Eighth Grade Fine Arts Overview

Students will receive six weeks of instruction in music, visual art, and drama/video communications.

Music

Elements: Study of the development of music.

Performance: Creation of various pieces of music, critique of musical pieces as well as a student-made portfolio where connections between historical contexts, musical and artistic ideas will be made.

Visual Arts

Elements: Builds on the visual arts skills developed in the sixth and seventh grade through drawing, painting and calligraphy.

Performance: Completion of a portrait of the students choosing, the creation of a proverb written and illustrated in a calligraphic alphabet, and the completion of a painting.

History and Culture: Study of historical portraits and paintings.

Drama/Video Communications

Students will work on projects and public service announcements which build on the basic skills learned in other classes. The projects will incorporate technical knowledge in drama/video as well as other fine art skills. Methods and techniques used will be script writing, story boards, production, direction, and the utilization of video cameras.

Instrumental Music

Students in grades 5-8 may participate in the District's Instrumental Music program. Participation in band provides students with an opportunity to develop, enrich, and refine instrumental performing skills.

Seventh and Eighth Grade Bands

The seventh and eighth grade bands at Blackhawk Middle School rehearse every day after school. Band students will receive one sectional rehearsal a week during the regular school day on a rotating basis. Students enrolled in the seventh and eighth grade bands will focus on the development and refinement of their instrumental skills in an ensemble setting. Attention will be given to tone production, balance within an ensemble, individual technique, musicality, music history, notation, and rhythm. Extracurricular opportunities in the band program include Jazz Band, and solo and small ensemble performances.

Technology Education

Students will receive instruction for six weeks. They will select two modules to investigate and study. Each module is approximately 12 - 15 days in length.

The goals are to develop students who will:

- Be able to utilize computers, tools and machines in solving problems, creating products and in applying principles of physical science.
- Develop an understanding of the relationship that science, math, language arts and social studies have in our everyday lives.
- Be able to better select career paths based on the exploration of technical areas.

Practical Life Skills Education

Each student will work on an eighth grade project which will showcase their life journey to this time. As eighth grade students prepare for high school years, we want to take time to help them celebrate their accomplishments and talents at this point in their educational years.

Geometry Skills Extension

Eighth graders will apply their knowledge of bi- and tri-dimensional geometry to irregular and composite shapes; find unknown dimensions by using geometric formulas as equations, i.e. determining the leg and hypotenuse of a right triangle using the Pythagorean Theorem. Through the algebraic application of geometry, students will use linear and quadratic equations with reference to transformation and coordinate geometry.

(Standards Updated and Revised 7-20-2005)



Foreign Language/Literacy

Purpose: The District's Foreign Language program is designed to:

- provide children with both the knowledge and opportunity to communicate using another language.
- establish a solid basis for pronunciation and intonation in the foreign language.
- establish a favorable attitude toward language learning.
- support the student's intellectual and cultural growth/awareness.

The Foreign Language program is based on the Illinois Standards for Foreign Languages.

Students in grades 6-8 have the option of studying Spanish as part of their school program. Students may elect to take Spanish as an exploratory course of study.

The benefits of foreign language instruction focus on the role the individual plays in a multilingual, global society. According to the Illinois State Standards, research indicates the study of a foreign language provides students the 'edge' needed to succeed at higher levels in other subjects.

Library Media Centers

The purpose of the K-8 Library Media Center program is to support all areas of the curriculum by:

- providing students and staff members with quality print, electronic, and telecommunications resources and providing guided access and instruction in their use.
- assisting classroom teachers in planning and implementing expanded curriculum opportunities for identified gifted students.
- supporting and connecting with other community resources, e.g. the Bensenville Community Public Library.
- teaching students to select, evaluate, interpret, record, and organize information.
- supporting the development of life-long reading and learning in all students by exposing them to a variety of literature, authors, and illustrators.

