

January 2010

Dear Parent, Guardian, and Caring Adult:

The administration and staff of Brittany Woods Middle School are committed to promoting academic success for all students. This course description book is provided to assist you and your child when selecting courses for the 2010-2011 school year. Please consult this book when completing your child's course selection form. All Brittany Woods students must take the core courses of Communication Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. Physical Education/Health is a required non-core course. Students complete their class schedule with non-core courses in the areas of foreign language, practical arts, visual and performing fine arts. These courses, including P.E., meet all standards for college preparatory courses offered at University City High School. Some core classes require that students be assessed for placement. In these instances, teachers, guidance counselors and administration review a variety of assessment information.

Please do not hesitate to call Ms. Johnson at 290-4288 or Ms. Ramey at 290-4289 if you have a concern or question not addressed in this book.

We look forward to having you as a partner in your child's education and encourage your active involvement during the school year. Thank you for your support and cooperation.

Sincerely,

Jamie Jordan, Ed.D.
Principal

BRITTANY WOODS MIDDLE SCHOOL ACADEMIC POLICIES AFFECTING COURSE WORK

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Team Selection

Students will be placed on teams randomly.

Cross Teaming

Cross Teaming is strongly discouraged. Every effort has been made to provide a master schedule that exhibits the best of middle school practices and what is good for all students. Students will be placed on academic teams randomly. This will allow for students to remain on team for their core classes. However, sometimes due to student need, cross teaming is appropriate and may be allowed at administration discretion.

Class Changes

Necessary changes will be made within the first two weeks of the semester during the period in which the change is necessary. Necessary changes include:

- *Student is not enrolled in all four core classes
- *Student is not enrolled in PE
- *Student assigned to the same class twice
- *Student has not completed prerequisite for an assigned class
- *Student is enrolled in a class not designated for a student's current grade level
- *Or other reasons at counselors' or administrators' discretion.

Arbitrary changes are changes the student would like to make for any reason other than those listed above.

Arbitrary changes will be granted if the classes are available and if the change will enhance the students' academic program.

All changes need parental and grade level administrative approval.

Promotion and Retention Requirements

Seventh and eighth grade students must earn at least twenty-four of the thirty-two possible passing term grades each year. Twelve of the thirty-two possible passing term grades must be in the core subject areas and twelve of the thirty-two possible passing term grades must be in the elective subject areas. Regulation 2530

Core courses include communication arts, science, math and social studies. A term passing grade, is a letter grade of "D" or higher.

Students who receive more than 4 F's in a core subject or more than 8 overall F's will be eligible for retention according to Board of Education Regulation 2530.

If a student does not receive the required number of passing term grades during the school year, the student must attend summer school and make a passing grade of "D" or higher in the assigned/recommended summer school course(s). Eighth grade students will not be allowed to participate in eighth grade promotion exercises, if they are required to attend summer school.

COMMUNICATION ARTS

The Communication Arts Department strives to help students enhance their basic language, reading, and writing skills. Reading and writing will be continuous threads throughout each course.

Communication Arts 7

Year Long

The goal of the Communication Arts 7 course is to ensure that all students achieve independence as readers, and become effective communicators through writing, speaking, discussion, problem-solving, and critical thinking experiences. Students will be expected to express themselves through different types of writing such as narratives, journals, short stories, and poetry. Grammar usage, and mechanics will be taught to reinforce the writing portion of the course. Students will utilize the writing process that includes pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing and publishing. Writing portfolios will be maintained to showcase student writing. This course is also designed to expose students to short stories (fiction and non-fiction), poetry, drama, technical materials, and novels to reinforce reading and study skills. Students will be exposed to strategies that will enable them to practice critical thinking by evaluating and interpreting literature.

Communication Arts 8 **Year Long**

The goal for the Communication Arts 8 course is to ensure that all students achieve independence as readers and become effective communicators through writing, speaking, discussion, problem-solving, and critical thinking experiences. Communication Arts 8 will refine and expand knowledge gained in the Communication Arts 7 course. Students will be introduced to a variety of literature including novels, short stories, drama and biographies/autobiographies. Students will utilize the writing process which includes pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing. Grammar usage and mechanics will be taught in the proofreading stage of the writing process as well as in teacher-designed mini-lessons. Writing portfolios will be maintained to showcase student writing.

SOCIAL STUDIES

The Social Studies Department concentrates on the individual in society, the rights and responsibilities of citizenship as well as the experiences and contributions of diverse cultures.

Social Studies 7 **Year Long**

Seventh grade Social Studies focuses on the study of geography, economics and government, and helps students make sense of the earth and its cultures. It brings understanding of how earth's physical features and the cultural features of its inhabitants are intertwined. A good understanding of the earth and its people living in distinctive physical settings and particular cultures will create a global understanding of today's issues, thus creating a citizen more equipped to function effectively in a diverse world.

Social Studies 8 **Year Long**

Eighth grade Social Studies focuses on American History. This is an in-depth course of study covering the development of United States

history from pre-Columbian to the Reconstruction Period. The content and activities will connect America's rich heritage to students' lives today and to their futures.

SCIENCE

The Science Department strives to help students develop comprehensive skills in the areas of physical and life science. Lab work is integrated to stimulate the problem-solving process and ensure a visual and inquiry-based learning approach.

Life Science 7 **Year Long**

This course is designed to help students develop necessary investigative and processing skills such as inferring, predicting, classifying, and graphing. Hands-on investigations are presented within two units: "Populations and Ecosystems" and "Diversity of Life". "Populations and Ecosystems" builds ecological understanding and makes the whole earth fit into the students' perspectives. Students will be able to see how all organisms depend on the ecosystem for survival. More than that, students will discover the large impact that humans have on the earth's ecosystem.

Physical Science 8 **Year Long**

This course is designed to enhance skills and knowledge through a inquiry-based, hands-on approach to the problem-solving process. Areas of study include physics and chemistry. Investigation topics include mechanics, motion, energy, heat, electricity, matter and its atomic structure, compounds, mixtures, acids and bases.

MATHEMATICS

Mathematics is an integral part of the society we live in today. Therefore, the mathematics department strives to instill in our students an understanding of the basic fundamental operations of mathematics. Students will be provided the opportunity to discover, understand and appreciate mathematical patterns and processes. They will also develop confidence and competency in their own ability to solve mathematical problems in an organized and efficient manner. The goals of the mathematics program are to ensure that the students acquire a working knowledge of algebra and continue to develop their knowledge of geometry, probability, statistics, number systems, and numerical sense.

Mathematics 7 **Year Long**
Students will be expected to investigate, and write about mathematical problems. The class will cover the seventh grade GLE's with an emphasis on problem-solving and applying skills.

Pre-Algebra 7 **Year Long**
Students qualify for this course based on their work in the sixth grade, sixth grade exit exams, and standardized test scores. Students will be expected to investigate and write about mathematical problems. The class will cover the seventh and eighth grade GLE's. The emphasis will be on algebraic and geometric topics. Students draw on statistical knowledge to solve complex problems involving data.

Algebra 7 **Year Long**
This is a traditional algebra class. Students will work on solving linear equations and inequalities, graphing functions, systems of equations, quadratic equations and functions, radical expressions, etc.

Pre-Algebra 8 **Year Long**
Students will be expected to investigate and write about mathematical problems. The class will cover the eighth grade GLE's. The emphasis will be on algebraic and geometric topics. Students draw on statistical knowledge to solve complex problems involving data.

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This is a traditional algebra class. Students will work on solving linear equations and inequalities, graphing functions, systems of equations, quadratic equations and functions, radical expressions, etc.

ELECTIVES

Reading Class 7/8 **Year Long**
Students will engage in explicit direct reading instruction in reading strategies and skills. The class will focus on a variety of genres, including novels and poetry. Informal Reading diagnostic tests will be given to each student upon their enrollment in the course, to assess the student(s) level in reading. The criterion is based upon Map scores, Tungsten Assessments, Teacher Recommendation, and parent recommendations. When the students reach their goal they are given an exit test once they have met their goal within the reading setting.

Gifted and Talented Education (G.A.T.E.)7
Year Long
This non-core course is designed for the self-motivated gifted student who is ready for extra challenges. Students are selected based on aptitude test scores, achievement test scores and a creativity assessment. The course includes more in-depth research, reading, writing and individual responsibility for progress. Enrollment is limited based on state guidelines.

**Gifted and Talented Education (G.A.T.E.)8
Year Long**

This non-core course is designed for the self-motivated gifted student who is ready to continue even more in-depth research, more advanced reading, advanced writing, and more individual projects. Students are selected based on aptitude test scores and achievement test scores, and a creativity assessment. Enrollment is limited based on state guidelines.

Talent Exploration 7/8 Year Long

The Talent Exploration class serves as the talent component of the Gifted and Talented Education program. Its goal is to provide growth and development opportunities for students who are talented in drama, music, art and writing. During this year-long class, students will develop a portfolio of work through disciplined completion of individualized contracts. Students participating in this class must demonstrate promise in their chosen field which is confirmed by work samples, grades in related subjects and both teacher and parent recommendations. A program based on constituency of the class will be presented by students at the end of the year.

**COMPREHENSIVE PHYSICAL
EDUCATION/HEALTH**

Physical activity is an important part of every student’s daily life. The course will focus on physical activity, fitness and wellness, which will include important health issues and proper techniques for sporting activities. Students must have appropriate physical education attire: tennis shoes, white tee shirts, and black shorts or sweats. Denim is not allowed.

Comprehensive P. E./Health 7 Year Long

This course is designed to expose and instruct all 7th grade students in the following activities: physical fitness testing, aerobic endurance, walking and jogging, soccer, volleyball,

basketball, softball, track and field/cross country, recreational games, circuit training, flag football, floor hockey, and speed ball. The total program will assist the student in making healthy decisions, and choosing responsible, active and enjoyable lifestyles.

In Health, students will focus on nutrition, exercise, making healthy decisions, sports/lifetime activities, and injury prevention. Students will study the structure and function of the ten human body systems. A part of this unit will focus on *Sex Education* with parental permission.

Comprehensive P. E./Health 8 Year Long

This course is the continuation of the 7th grade program with emphasis on refining skills, and learning the strategies of the various activities. After reviewing each activity thoroughly in class, the students will evaluate their physical skills and will work to improve techniques and strategies. The students will be able to make choices based on individual interests. The focus will be on the overall feeling of confidence and success.

FOREIGN LANGUAGE

The program focuses on the teaching of vocabulary, grammar, and sentence structure through reading comprehension, writing, and listening skills. By combining a cultural focus with the academic aspects of language study, students will gain a broader understanding of the various foreign cultures. In addition to assignments from the text and various supplemental materials, the students will participate in special projects, songs, games, computer activities, field trips, videos and classroom presentations made by visiting native speakers.

French A (7th grade only) Year Long

This course is the beginning course of a two-year sequence, which introduces basic grammar and vocabulary. Activities will include exercises

from the texts, worksheets, and oral activities designed to increase proficiency, dialogue, and enhance the study of language and culture.

French B (8th grade only) Year Long

This course is the second course of the two-year sequence. Students will continue with French grammar and vocabulary, as well as building their speaking and writing skills. Activities will include exercises from the text, worksheets, the reading of dialogues, oral activities, and the teaming of students to encourage oral proficiency. Students will explore culture through video, discussion, special projects and presentations. **Students must successfully complete French A in order to enroll in this course.**

Latin A (7th grade only) Year Long

Students will complete Cambridge Latin Course Unit I. Students will master Latin grammar and vocabulary, as well as learn about Roman culture, history, mythology and daily life. This course is open to any 7th grade student.

Latin B (8th grade only) Year Long

Students will complete Cambridge Latin Course Unit II. Students will master Latin grammar and vocabulary, as well as learn about Roman culture, history, mythology and daily life. This course is open to any 8th grade student.

Students must successfully complete French A in order to enroll in this course.

Spanish A (7th grade only) Year Long

This course is a first year course for students who have no previous formal instruction in the language. The course focuses on the teaching of basic sentence structure and vocabulary and developing listening, speaking, writing and reading skills. There are also special projects and activities, songs, games, sampling of Hispanic foods and classroom presentations made by visiting native speakers.

Spanish B (8th grade only) Year Long

This is a second year Spanish course, which continues the studies and activities introduced in Spanish A. There is increased emphasis on the spoken language and exercises using structure and vocabulary. **Students must have successfully completed Spanish A in order to enroll in this course.**

PERFORMING/FINE ARTS

The Fine Arts Department strives to have students learn the relationship of music, drama, and art to every aspect of humanity. Fine Arts enables students to develop an awareness of aesthetic values, express feelings, ideas, interest and aptitudes, as well as acquire a knowledge and understanding of culture in relation to other times and places.

Music Appreciation 7/8 Semester Long

This course is designed for students who do not desire to sing, but enjoy learning how to read music in both the treble and bass clefs. In addition, students will learn basic piano playing skills, which will give them the foundation to do advanced study on a keyboard instrument. This course will also survey the various musical cultures represented in the United States. The course will cover the history of music beginning with the Baroque Period and ending with music of the 21st Century. Such musicians as Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Chopin, Debussy, Stravinsky, The Beatles, Muddy Waters, Elvis Presley, Louis Armstrong, Aretha Franklin, Michael Jackson, and selected artists of the early 2000's will also be discussed in the course.

Piano Laboratory 7/8 Semester Long

This course is designed for the serious student musician. The course will cover the basic fundamentals of piano playing, i.e. all major and minor scales, arpeggios, and selected piano literature from the Baroque to the late Nineteenth Century. Also, emphasis will be placed on learning the language of music. **Students must own or have access to a piano for practice outside of school time.**

Concert Choir 7/8 Year Long

This course is for the student who has a good singing voice, a good ear for music and who enjoys singing. The class will cover various periods in music history. Emphasis will be placed on music reading, rhythmic counting, key scale relationship and the relationship of students' cultures to the learned music. This course will also prepare students for public performances both at school and in the community.

Band students must be committed to performances at Brittany Woods as well as performances away from Brittany Woods. Band students will perform in band uniforms. Jackets, hats and spats will be issued to band students for a \$15.00 non-refundable usage fee. Students will be responsible for the care of the uniform and for making sure all pieces of the uniform are returned in good condition. Students will be financially responsible for any lost or damaged pieces of the uniform. Students/parents must sign a contract agreement in regards to the return of the uniform. Brittany Woods Band Motto: *Precision in Marching, Quality in Character, and Excellence in Musicianship.*

Jazz Band 7/8 Year Long

This is an advanced course which is designed to teach jazz playing techniques using blues, swing ballads and funk within the big band element.

The course will cover historical periods in music from the origins of blues, ragtime and New Orleans jazz to present time. Music developed and learned will include major, minor, pentatonic, blues scales, and arpeggios. Students will play and perform the music chosen by the director. Professional big band charts and jazz standards will be used. Students will play in the style of the composer's written piece. **Students must have an instrument in order to participate.**

Beginning Band 7/8 Year Long

This course is designed to teach basic music theory, skills and techniques on woodwind, brass and percussion instruments. **Parents must rent or purchase the instrument, purchase a methods book and other necessary equipment,** prior to the first day of band class for the school year. Skills developed will include playing whole, half, quarter, eighth, and rest notes. The students will perform duets, songs and major scales.

Advanced Band 7/8 Year Long

This course is designed to use basic music theory, skills and techniques on woodwind, brass and percussion instruments to produce Marching and Concert Band concepts for performance. Students will perform all styles of music for various parades, concerts, school assemblies and festivals. **Percussionist must be able to play several essential rudiments. Students must have an instrument in order to participate.**

VISUAL FINE ARTS

The students will utilize art media and elements towards solving problems presented in each lesson. The problems will be technical, aesthetic, or thematic and will require use of artistic skills. Students will explore methods of visual design that will challenge their imagination and guide them toward a personal method of expression.

Some artistic expressions will be based on investigation of multicultural and historical references. The students will develop and expand their visual repertoire. On all grade levels, areas of concentration will be line, shape, patterns, texture, color, value, form, space, composition, crafts, and basic skills, as well as the use of materials and critical thinking in all areas.

Visual Arts 7/8 Semester Long
Visual Arts at the middle school level is designed to help students develop their higher level thinking skills. Each lesson will contain an assessment tool to help the students master the elements and principles of Visual Arts. Creativity and production drive the grading process.

Elements of Art

- Line** – the path of a moving mark
- Shape** – the area enclosed by line
- Value** – lightness or darkness
- Form** – a three dimensional object
- Space** – Positive; that space occupied by a person or object
 - Negative; the area surrounding a person or object
- Color** – Hue; pigment in its purest form
- Texture** – the tactile (by touch) qualities of a surface either actual, simulated or invented

Principles of Art

- Balance** – the arrangement of objects is a composition
- Proportion** – size relationship of elements
- Unity** – to tie together in a visual way
- Rhythm** – a feeling of movement achieved by repetition
- Emphasis** – predominance of one area of element in a composition
- Contrast** – a change of the difference between elements in a work of art

PRACTICAL ARTS

The students will explore the relationship between technology and our lives today while constructing a variety of group and individual inquiry-based projects. Computer technology will be used to enhance instruction.

Industrial Technology A Semester Long

This 7th and 8th grade course covers safety, basic tools, and woodworking technology. These classes require the student to work with and around wood. This will result in the exposure to dust and other air born particles. Students with extreme allergies should check with their physician before taking this class. Safety instruction is a major part of this class (state mandated). Students must be present for the entire first three weeks of the class. Students must be able to read an inch ruler. Students are required to keep a Technology Lab notebook in which they will do their daily ‘DO NOWs’ as well as notes on the work they do each day. This is a hands-on class so regular attendance is a must. There is one major safety test and several project-related assessments.

Industrial Technology B Semester Long

The 8th grade course is for students who have taken and passed Industrial Technology I. Classes will cover safety as well as up to five techniques. These classes require the student to work with and around wood and/or plastic materials. This will result in the exposure to dust and other air- born particles. Students with extreme allergies should check with their physician before taking this class. Safety instruction is a major part of this class (state mandated). Students must be present for the entire first three weeks of the class. Students are required to keep a Technology Lab notebook in which they will do their daily ‘DO NOWs’ as well as notes on the work they do each day. To cover these areas students will work in small groups. Each group will explore a different topic

for a portion of the class before rotating to a new assignment. Projects may include a wooden key chain, toothpick bridge, electricity, custom woodwork, drafting, and silkscreen printing. This is an inquiry-based class so regular attendance is a must. No project will be considered complete without a complete set of student written instructions for creating it. There is a major safety test and several project-related assessments.

FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCE
The aim of the Family and Consumer Science courses is to increase the students' ability to act responsibly and productively, work cooperatively, apply concepts of balancing school work and family, create solutions to critical and emergent issues, utilize technology effectively in personal and family settings and maintain healthy lifestyles. Family and Consumer Science provide the bridges needed by all students to help deal with life issues.

Family and Consumer Sciences A (F.A.C.S.)
7th and 8th Grade Semester Long
Family and Consumer Science at the middle school level prepare students to begin a journey toward becoming independent and productive citizens. The curriculum includes five units of study that are essential for all students: Life and Careers, Financial Literacy, Nutrition and Wellness, Human Development and Relationships.

Family and Consumer Sciences B
(F.A.C.S.) 8th Grade Semester Long
This course will further develop Family and Consumer Science related skills for 8th grade students. The course will advance their skills in meal planning, nutrition, food preparation, consumerism and human development. Emphasis will be placed on budgeting and personal money management.

Keyboarding A (7th & 8th Grade)

Semester Long

Keyboarding is designed for students to learn keyboarding skills using the Herzog Method of typing. Students will learn basic word processing skills such as formatting, editing, graphics, etc., as well as basic computer vocabulary.

Key Boarding B (7th & 8th Grade)

Semester Long

This class is open to 8th graders who have taken Key Boarding I. Key Boarding II is designed to focus on the major uses of computers in the "real world." Keyboarding skills will be emphasized. Students will work with word processing documents, graphics, databases, spreadsheets, and desktop publishing to create school and personal files. Students will have timed typing quizzes to help improve their speed and accuracy while using the computer.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Brittany Woods Middle School provides a continuum of services to support the learning, behavioral and social/emotional needs of identified students. A Planning and Placement Team is responsible for developing individualized education plans which are delivered by the general education, special education and support staff to meet the specific needs of each child. Parents are an integral part of this important educational process. If you have any questions, please contact Pablo Flinn, Supervisor of Special Education, and Grades 7-12 at (314)989-8289.

GUIDANCE

The Brittany Woods Guidance Program is a comprehensive program that includes classroom lessons, small group sessions and individual counseling. Each child participates in a series of classroom lessons that deliver a developmentally appropriate curriculum. The curriculum focuses on issues of respect, bullying, self-esteem, peer pressure, decision-making skills, and positive interactions with others, personal goal setting, self-interest inventories, academic achievement and career exploration.

All guidance classes are structured with interactive activities and discussions which promote open discussion as well as personal reflection.

The Guidance Department also offers support group counseling to students who need assistance in academics, dealing with family issues, peer pressure, stress management, anger management, and conflict resolution, and developing healthy relationships.

Please contact our counselors whenever you have questions or concerns and encourage your child to do the same.