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*By Thomas McIntyre*

*Grade 8*
Thoreau Middle School Directory

Thoreau Middle School
2505 Cedar Lane
Vienna, VA 22180
703-846-8000

Administrative Staff

Gregory S. Hood, Principal
GSHood@fcps.edu

Mike Parker, Director of Student Services
GMParker@fcps.edu

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EMCalvert@fcps.edu

Fran Furr, Assistant Principal Grade 7
FCFurr1@fcps.edu

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JKGriffin@fcps.edu

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SElkalban@fcps.edu

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Tracey Albert, Counselor 703-846-8052
TRAAlbert@fcps.edu

Denise Schwandt, Student Services Assistant 703-846-8003
DSchwandt@fcps.edu

Important Telephone numbers
Transportation 703-249-7000
Attendance Line 703-846-8080
Clinic 703-846-8010
Cafeteria 703-846-8063
Library 703-846-8057

Website: www.fcps.edu/ThoreauMS/
Blackboard: http://fcps.blackboard.com
Welcome to Thoreau Middle School

Dear Parents and Students,

We welcome you to Thoreau Middle School! We are a Professional Learning Community (PLC) where our primary focus is learning for all children. We believe in providing a rich and diverse educational experience for students as we work to create the same sense of belonging within Thoreau that is found in the Vienna Community.

Every Thoreau Middle School student is part of an interdisciplinary team comprised of core academic teachers working with approximately 135 students. As our philosophy is one of community and sharing, Thoreau students are placed on teams that include standard education, special-needs, and honors students. This model helps to create community and team spirit that embraces all children. The middle-school team concept provides core teachers with a common period to plan and organize instructional activities, discuss the needs of their students, and conference with parents and students.

This booklet includes descriptions of all seventh and eighth -grade courses offered at Thoreau as well as general information about our school. Information about the high-school program has been included to assist you with long-term planning.

All students are scheduled for seven class periods a day. Students are required to take a full year of English, math, science, social studies, and health and physical education. Students will select two additional classes as their electives. These elective classes may be two full year; a full year and two semester-long classes; or four semester-long classes. All elective course offerings are subject to adequate enrollment and staffing. Additionally we offer Eagle Time, a twenty-five minute block of time where students can get help from a teacher, complete homework, read, conduct research in the library, or have some collaboration and social time with their peers.

At Thoreau Middle School, we pride ourselves on delivering the highest level of instruction to all students and helping them reach their full potential. All seventh and eighth grade students, with a few exceptions, will be placed in honors science and honors social studies classes. It is our belief that all our students can benefit from the enriched lessons that our honors classes provide. We have created appropriate support mechanisms to ensure success and have found this philosophy to be very successful and rewarding for all students.

We appreciate and encourage parental participation in the PTA and ask that you volunteer to assist with the many initiatives we plan for our students. We look forward to working with you. Should you have any questions regarding the information presented in this booklet or any other questions regarding school, please call the Student Services Office at 703-846-8003. We wish you a successful school year.

Respectfully,

Gregory S. Hood, Principal
Mike Parker, Director of Student Services
Liz Calvert, Assistant Principal Grade 8
Fran Furr, Assistant Principal Grade 7
Shannon Campbell, After-School Specialist
The Mission of Thoreau Middle School

At Thoreau Middle School, we are committed to cultivating and attaining student success through the philosophy that failure is not an option. We have a strong shared vision that every student is capable of high achievement, and we provide all of our students with a variety of opportunities to thrive academically. Through the collaboration of the entire staff, a safe, nurturing, and conducive atmosphere is created to foster mastery and to promote an appreciation for learning. Thoreau is a results-driven community where teachers are skilled in Best Practices and generate and administer self-created formative and summative assessments which are used to analyze data for student support and enrichment. Thoreau staff members also proudly forge an essential partnership with parents to maintain open and on-going communication to help meet all of our students’ individual needs. Overall, Thoreau has a strong dedication to making sure that all students have the skills needed to ensure life-long learning and enduring achievement throughout their academic career and lives.
Thoreau Middle School Organization and Structure

At Thoreau the foundational goal is to meet the academic needs of all students while encouraging them to develop independence and responsibility. The following components are essential elements of the Thoreau instructional organization and structure.

Each grade level has been organized into smaller units called interdisciplinary teams. These teams consist of four core teachers, an assistant principal and a school counselor. Each of the teams has a common planning period that allows the team to coordinate instruction, collaborate on issues relating to students, and meet with parents. Teaming for instruction provides students with consistent discipline and common expectations, structure, and learning opportunities.

In addition to team planning periods, the teachers meet at least twice a week as a CLT (Collaborative Learning Team) to discuss instructional strategies and plan common assessments for the content area.

All students are assigned to a counselor who assists them with their emotional, social, physical, and academic development. Counselors work with the students to help them understand their choices and how to make the best of their abilities and independence. At the same time, the counselors work with the team teachers and parents to discuss student achievement or any issue related to the school experience. Working with a support team including teachers, an assistant principal, school psychologist, social worker, and instructional specialists, counselors establish a network of support to ensure that each student receives the best assistance available.

Thoreau Middle School embraces a collaborative approach to decision making. The Thoreau Leadership Council, which is made up of representatives from the faculty and staff, works in collaboration with the PTA to provide significant input and guidance to all aspects of the school operation.

As part of the middle school philosophy, after-school activities allow our students opportunities to participate in clubs and activities including, but not limited to Student Government, Yearbook, Open-Art Studio, Drama Club, Arts and Crafts Club, Board Games Club, Math Counts, Science Olympiad, Film Club, Technology Student Association, Green Eagle Environmental Club, and World Language Club.

By Isabelle Bellegarde
Grade 8
What to Expect at Middle School

After-School Activities

Thoreau Middle School provides an after-school program on Monday through Friday. Late buses are provided on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. Late bus stops will differ from regular bus stops as there are fewer buses. Any students who stay on Tuesday/Friday must either live within walking distance of the school or have parent pick-up. The after-school program includes a blend of homework assistance, academic review and enrichment, sports/fitness activities, community service opportunities, leadership, etc. Students are encouraged to participate in a variety of clubs and activities. Most clubs have an open attendance policy in which students can attend as often as their schedule permits. Studies have shown that students who take advantage of these opportunities are more likely to develop positive attitudes towards school and achieve their full academic potential. Our students are highly encouraged to maintain a balance between their academic studies, after-school activities, and other interests. All activities are listed on Thoreau’s website and an updated weekly list and announcements are posted on the “Thoreau Activities” page on the FCPS 24-7 Learning (Blackboard) site.

Agenda Book

Each student will receive an Agenda Book at the beginning of the school year. Students are required to carry their book with them throughout the school day. Besides using the Agenda Book to keep track of assignments, students use the book as a hall pass when excused to the rest room or another place in the school building while classes are in session. To replace an Agenda Book, a charge of $5.00 will be assessed.

Attendance

Regular attendance is required for success in any school situation. In order to maximize classroom learning, Thoreau Middle School requires that students be punctual to school in the morning and to all classes throughout the day. Students who arrive late must bring a written note from the parent/guardian to the school office explaining why the student is late. Emails cannot be accepted. An attendance secretary will issue a pass to class that indicates whether the tardy is excused or unexcused. We request that parents call the school attendance line at 703-846-8080 to report a student absence.

If a parent wishes for his/her child to be dismissed for an appointment, the student should bring a note to the school office from the parent/guardian stating the reason and time of dismissal. This note should be presented to the attendance secretary before 9AM. Parents/guardians must come into the front office and sign the student out.

Buses

Regular bus schedules will be sent home in August listing all stops and pick-up times. Late buses will correspond to the after-school activities schedule. Since the late-bus stops do not correspond to the regular-bus stops, students are sometimes confused as to which late-bus stop is closest to home. In light of this, please assist your student in identifying his/her late-bus stop.

Classes

All students are scheduled for seven classes a day. Most classes will be for the entire year; some classes are only for a semester. Enrollment and budget restrictions may impact elective choices. If a course must be cancelled, has more requests than seats available, or cannot be scheduled around a student’s core academic needs, an alternative elective will be selected, giving consideration to the student’s preferences indicated on the course selection sheet.
Clinic

Students are not permitted to bring any prescribed or over-the-counter medication to school or take it during the school day unless a parent/guardian has signed a medical release form available from the clinic. All medication must be stored and administered in the clinic. Forms numbers are SS/SE 63, SS/SE 64, and SS/SE 65 and can be found on the FCPS website, http://www.fcps.edu/DIT/forms/.

Grades

Students will receive grade reports at the end of each nine-week marking period. In addition, progress reports, interim reports, and effort and behavior reports will be issued at regular intervals during each quarter. Parents/guardians are encouraged to communicate on an ongoing basis with their child and their child’s teachers about academic progress. Parents/guardians should contact their child’s counselor to schedule a conference if a student is not being successful. All teachers and staff at Thoreau are committed to providing whatever support is necessary to ensure academic success for all students.

Homework

Students can expect on average 60 to 90 minutes of homework each night. They can keep track of homework by maintaining an up-to-date Agenda Book and by checking their Blackboard account. Parents can also check the student’s Blackboard account to see assignments that have been posted by the classroom teachers, http://fcps.blackboard.com.

Library

The library is open to students during the school day and until 3:30PM on late bus days. They may stay after school to use the library on late bus days with parent/guardian permission. Students may check out four books at a time with a loan time of three weeks. Unless there is a hold reserve by another student on the book, a student may renew a book for an additional three weeks by bringing the book to the library. Students may choose to Soar in the library on their grade-level Eagle Time days or with a pass from their teachers.

Lockers

Each student is assigned a hall locker and a gym locker. Locker combinations should not be shared with other students. Lockers will be issued during the first week of school.

Lunch

The school cafeteria serves a complete lunch daily as well as a variety of a la carte items. The cost for lunch will be publicized in the Opening School Packet that will be made available to parents/guardians in August. Checks made payable to Thoreau Food Services can be brought to the food service manager’s office at the beginning of any school day to be placed in a student’s account. Parents who do not want their students to purchase items such as ice cream, cookies, or chips should write FOR MEALS ONLY on their check or tell the food service manager. A detailed printout of student purchases is available upon request. Parents can use the food-services’ vendor website (for a service charge) to create an account for a child, www.mylunchmoney.com. This website has multiple note-worthy features such as the option to pay by credit card, to monitor your child’s food selections up to the last seven days, and to receive email notification when your child’s account is low. Students may also bring a lunch from home. The lunch period is thirty minutes. Students are assigned to lunch periods based on their 5th period class. Glass containers are prohibited.
Moving/Transferring

Please notify the Student Services Office immediately if you plan to move (703-846-8003). Proof of residency is required for students transferring into Thoreau Middle School. Thoreau Middle School is CLOSED to new pupil placement requests for the 2015-2016 school year.

Student Conduct

FCPS Regulation 2601.25P entitled Students Rights and Responsibilities, Grades 4-12 (SR&R), defines students’ rights and responsibilities and establishes the rules to be followed by students within the school system. Every student will be given a copy of the SR&R, and will receive in-school instructions as to its content and meaning. During the first month of school both parents/guardians and students are required to sign the SR&R Parent or Guardian and Student Signature Sheet confirming they have received the SR&R book. Assistant Principals will meet with students again at the beginning of second semester to review the Students Responsibilities and Rights.

Eagle Time

Our Eagle Time program (ET), meets daily for twenty-five minutes. During this time, students can do homework, collaborate or socialize with peers, study for tests, read a book, or get help from their teachers. Students who maintain a grade of C or better in every class may have free time in the cafeteria, library, courtyard, or on the blacktop during the Eagle Time period. Any student who does not maintain a grade of C or better in a particular content area is required to meet with the teacher during Eagle Time to obtain remediation/intervention assistance until the grade is improved. If the student, has an F, D, or D+ in more than one course, the student’s counselor and teachers will devise a plan that enables all his/her teachers to have access to the student in order to provide remediation/intervention services. Depending on the circumstances, a student may also be asked to stay after school on a late bus day/s to work with a teacher.

Use of Portable Communication Devices

The Fairfax County Public Schools Department of Information Technology has recently recommended to principals that students be allowed to bring their personally owned computing devices (PODs) to school to use for instructional purposes. PODs include laptops, eReaders, netbooks, tablets (such as iPad, Xoom, etc.), and Smartphones. *Cellular phones without data/internet capability are not considered a personally owned computing device and are not included in this initiative.*

Students will be allowed to use their PODs in school, with teacher permission. Given guidance, they can significantly enhance instruction. *Should a student choose to bring a POD to school, please take the time to thoroughly read the necessary agreement forms and make sure you are aware of the responsibilities with PODs.* Teachers and other staff will not store or hold PODs, and our technicians will not support, repair, or troubleshoot devices. Also, if classroom teachers do not allow use of a POD, then students are expected to keep them off and out of sight. If a student does not bring a POD, school devices will be provided when needed.

Students who register their PODs are bound to and must comply with the following:

- Regulation 6410, *Appropriate Use of Fairfax County Public Schools’ Network and Internet Resources*
- Regulation 2601, *Student Rights and Responsibilities*
- Regulation 6401, *Student Use of FCPS Network and Internet Resources*
- DIT Technical Bulletin 302, *Use of Privately Owned Computing Devices on FCPS Networks*

Compliance pertains to use while on FCPS property or while involved in any FCPS sponsored event/activity, or when using FCPS resources, regardless of who owns the computer or device used by the student or how it is connected. Additionally, devices that are not registered, are not used with permission by the teacher, or are used in “technology-free” areas of the school (locker rooms, restrooms, [signs will be posted] etc.) are subject to confiscation.

For more information and the forms needed to register a POD, please visit [http://www.fcps.edu/ThoreauMS/TechnologyatThoreau.html](http://www.fcps.edu/ThoreauMS/TechnologyatThoreau.html)
Middle School Promotion Policy

To qualify for promotion, seventh and eighth grade middle school students must demonstrate knowledge and competency based upon identified standards of achievement in the four core areas of language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. To guarantee promotion, students must demonstrate proficiency in the foundational knowledge and skills in each of the four core subject areas and earn a passing final grade based on grade level expectations.

Students who earn an “F” as a final grade in one or two core subjects are retained at the discretion of the principal, and encouraged to participate in an intervention program. Based upon the extent to which a student demonstrates knowledge and competency of identified standards of achievement in an intervention program, he/she is promoted or retained. Students who are promoted may receive continued intervention throughout the following school year. If students do not participate in an intervention program, they are retained at the discretion of the principal.

Students who earn an “F” in three or four core courses are retained, at the discretion of the principal.

By Helen Bodde
Grade 8
Overview of Middle School Programs

Middle Schools are committed to a program that provides students with the challenge of a rigorous curriculum in conjunction with a support system to provide a smooth transition from elementary school to middle school and from middle school to high school. The middle-school core curriculum is aligned with the FCPS Program of Studies and Virginia State Standards of Learning in order to promote success for all students.

The science program in the seventh and eighth grade focuses on structured inquiry. These courses incorporate the Virginia Standards of Learning and provide numerous opportunities for students to review and reinforce scientific investigation skills. Science process skills such as collecting and organizing data, constructing models, interpreting results, the use of technology to gather and interpret data, and applying scientific reasoning and logic are also integrated throughout each course.

Life Science (7th grade) contains three units of study: Observing Living Things; Exploring Heredity and Diversity; and Understanding our Environment: A Study of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

Physical Science (8th grade) contains four units of study: Investigating Matter and Its Changes; Investigating Heat and Temperature; Investigating Energy and Its Transformations; and Investigating Forces and Motion.

The middle-school mathematics program is aligned with the National Council for Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) Standards as well as the Virginia Standards of Learning. The curriculum emphasizes the application of problem-solving strategies to mathematics learning. The program is directed toward preparing students for higher level mathematics courses. The implementation of the program of studies assumes that the instructional environment encourages hands-on learning using manipulatives, current technologies, and a variety of strategies and materials in a problem-based setting. The middle school mathematics 7 program is a challenging and comprehensive program that students should master prior to enrollment in Algebra I or Algebra I Honors in order to ensure their success in upper-level mathematics courses. 7th Grade Algebra I Honors is a challenging and comprehensive program that students should master prior to enrollment in Geometry.

The English program is designed to develop student competency in communication skills and knowledge of literature and grammar. The English/Language Arts curriculum contains the instructional objectives for teaching literature and language study and the processes of reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing. In addition, the program integrates the use of technology into informational reading and writing strategies.

Students in the middle-school social studies classrooms acquire knowledge and understanding about the United States in an increasingly interconnected world and develop skills to participate thoughtful and responsible citizens in a democratic society. Standards for United States History (Grade 7) and Standards for Civics and Economics (Grade 8) identify the content knowledge and the procedural knowledge that define essential learning in middle-school social studies. Students use a variety of resources to access, retrieve, organize and evaluate information to communicate understanding of social studies concepts, skills, and process.

In addition to the core-subject areas, middle schools offer health and physical education and a variety of exploratory opportunities. Exploratory courses offered at Thoreau Middle School include Band, Orchestra, Art, Chorus, Speech, Theatre Arts, Introduction to Foreign Language, Spanish I, French I, Technology Exploration, Computer Solutions, Digital Input Technologies, Family and Consumer Sciences, Literary Arts: Journalism, and Media Communications.
Department of Student Services

The student services program is an integral part of the total education program. A staff of professional counselors under the leadership of a director of student services, provides counseling services which include individual and group counseling, group guidance, personal conferences, academic planning, goal setting, career awareness, individual assessment, school/family conferences and referrals. Student services also include course selection, arranging homebound instruction, test interpretation, and student assignment. The counselors, teachers, and administrators work collaboratively to provide optimal services for each student.

By Georgia Day
Grade 7
Selecting Your Program for the 2015-2016 School Year

All seventh and eighth grade students in Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) are required to take English, mathematics, science, social studies, and health/physical education. In addition to the Thoreau Middle School Student Handbook and Course Selection Guide 2015-2014, parents should look for the FCPS Middle School Honors Classes brochure published February 2012. Among other things, the honors brochure provides an overview of the Honors Program in FCPS and explains the difference between an Honors course and a standard course.

Within this course offering book are Course Registration Sheets to be used as a working copy for students and parents. During the orientation process, counselors will give students another Course Registration Sheet which they will take home to parents/guardians for signature. Students/parents/guardians are asked to complete the Course Registration Sheet by placing all semester-elective options in rank order by preference. Students wishing to participate in year-long electives should indicate preference/s with a check mark. Rising eighth grade students should also complete the information requested on the back side of the 8th Grade Course Registration Sheet (elective courses the student took in 7th grade.)

The course selection process begins for rising seventh-grade students in March when our feeder elementary school students come to Thoreau to tour the building and to learn about course requirements/options. Parents/guardians are invited to an evening orientation to hear overviews of courses, course options and to gain a general understanding of how the school functions.

Honors classes are available in the four-core academic areas of English, mathematics, social studies, and science. Honors classes use a Fairfax County Public Schools-developed middle school curriculum that extends the FCPS Program of Studies in depth and complexity. The curriculum is based on the Parallel Curriculum Model, a nationally endorsed model for high-ability learners. Students who have demonstrated high achievement, interest, and/or potential in one or more academic areas and seek academic rigor may enroll in honors classes. Honors classes offer students an opportunity to experience the Extended Program of Studies at greater levels of depth and complexity. At Thoreau, all seventh and eighth-grade students, with a few exceptions, are enrolled in the honors social studies and honors science classes.

Mathematics 7 Honors is open enrollment for all students; however, there are specific requirements for enrollment in Algebra I Honors in 7th grade. Enrollment in Algebra I Honors in 7th grade is based on the following criteria:

1. Successful completion of Compacted Mathematics 6 or a year-long accelerated mathematics program
2. Score at or above the 91st percentile on the Iowa Algebra Aptitude Test (IAAT)
3. Score a pass advance (500 or above) on the Mathematics 7 Standards of Learning (SOL) test.

The course selection process begins in March for rising eighth-grade students as well. Thoreau counselors meet with students in the classrooms to talk about course offering for eighth grade.
Sixth-grade teachers will be asked to advise students and parents as to the students’ mathematics and English placement. All seventh and eighth grade students at Thoreau Middle, with a few exceptions, take honors science and honors social studies/Civics.

The Mathematics 7 teachers at Thoreau will provide input regarding the most appropriate mathematics class for students in eighth grade, e.g., Math 8, Algebra I, or Algebra I Honors, or Geometry. Students currently enrolled in English 7 Honors carry over their placement into eighth grade unless the parent/guardian requests the student be enrolled in English 8. If there is a question by the seventh grade English teacher regarding whether placement in English 8 Honors is appropriate, the teacher or counselor will notify the parent/guardian of the concern.

The ultimate goal at Thoreau Middle School is to ensure that every student has an opportunity to develop his or her full potential. When there is a difference of perspective between the parent/guardian and the school regarding the most appropriate placement for a student’s English or math placement, e.g., honors vs. standard course offering, the parent has the final decision with the exclusion of Algebra I Honors for seventh grade students and Geometry Honors in eighth grade.

Under all circumstances, parents/guardians are welcome to speak with a counselor or the Director of Student Services regarding what you think is best for your child. We are committed to working with you to assure the best placement for students.

All exploratory course offerings (elective courses) are subject to adequate staffing and enrollment. If a course must be cancelled, has more requests than seats available, or cannot be scheduled around a student’s core academic needs, an alternative elective will be selected. We will give consideration to the student’s preferences indicated on the Course Registration Sheet. Students identified for remedial services or intervention based on demonstrated academic difficulty, may be required to complete a remediation course in place of an elective.

Thoreau students’ visual journals
The following information is included to assist parents/guardians of rising 8th grade students at Thoreau as you converse with your child about what is the best placement for world language and math classes.

Is My Child Ready for French I or Spanish I in 8th Grade?

The foreign language department has provided the information below to assist students with deciding whether they are ready to begin a world language course in the eighth grade. Please have your child respond to the following statements to help guide your decision.

1. I am willing to commit 15-20 minutes of homework each night to reinforce/enhance my learning in the classroom.
2. I will take advantage of opportunities to practice speaking and listening to French/Spanish.
3. I pay close attention in class and willingly participate.
4. I am very organized.
5. I make up work in a timely fashion.
6. I plan to take three to four years of a foreign language in high school.
7. I have self-discipline as a learner.

Is My Child Ready for Algebra I Honors in 8th Grade?

The Thoreau math department finds successful Algebra I Honors students have the following characteristics:

1. Consistent above-average achievement in the 7th grade math program.
2. Readiness to reason abstractly and solve problems independently.
3. Self-discipline as a learner.

For example, the student is open to correcting errors and reworking problems on a regular basis; willing to pay close attention in class and to seek help as needed in class, during Eagle Time, and/or after school. Equally important, the student participates regularly, makes-up work in a timely fashion, and demonstrates good organizational skills.

Mastery of concepts in numerical reasoning, spatial relations, language of algebra, and data analysis, including the solution of two-step equations; and equations involving the distributive property and combining like terms; the ability to graph, read, and analyze functions, based on a table and/or a rule; proficiency in fraction computation; and the application of the laws of exponents.
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Curriculum defined by:
- Program of Studies (POS) of Fairfax County Public Schools
- Standards of Learning (SOL) of Commonwealth of Virginia

Content includes:
- Numerical Relationships
- Operations
- Measurement
- Geometry
- Data Analysis, Statistics and Probability
- Patterns, Functions, and Algebra
- Advanced Math Curriculum

**Students enrolling in Algebra 1 Honors in 7th grade must meet placement criteria.**

*Precalculus includes all the topics of trigonometry

- Multivariable Calculus is a one semester course followed by Matrix Algebra
Most frequently asked questions…And their answers!

1. **What is the difference between Algebra I and Algebra I Honors?**

   A. The depth and level of understanding expected in Algebra 1 Honors is beyond the scope of the standard Algebra I course. The expectations are higher and much of the material is more abstract and rigorous.

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<td>• Finite Differences</td>
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<td>• Linear programming</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Solve three or more equations on calculator</td>
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</table>

2. **How should the decision be made as to which course a student enrolls?**

   Seventh grade teachers will advise students regarding math placement. Teacher input will be based on a student’s mathematics grades, attainment of pre-Algebra skills included in the seventh grade curriculum, standardized test history, and other achievement indicators. There are no placement tests for these courses.

   Both Algebra I and Algebra I Honors are open enrollment courses at the eighth grade level. Families should consider teacher input as well as a student’s future mathematics goals when choosing a course.

3. **What if a student starts Algebra I Honors and is struggling?**

   Teachers will work with students to provide additional support as possible. If difficulty persists, parents/guardians should work with teachers and counselors to review possible options.
Special Education Services

The special education program at Thoreau offers a continuum of services, including resource support, team-taught academic classes and small-group academic classes. An Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is written for each student receiving Special Education Services. The learning disabilities, the ABA autism, and/or emotional disabilities specialists work with students from one to five periods a day in the areas of English, science, mathematics, social studies, reading, personal development, and/or basic skills, depending on individual student needs.

Students participating in team-taught academic classes receive on-site special education support in a full-inclusion environment. Team-taught classes have a general and special education teacher in the classroom.

Students participating in small-group academic classes receive special education support in a small-group setting. Grade-level curriculum is covered in the small-group setting; however the method of instruction and assignments may be adapted as appropriate to meet student needs.

Students receiving special education support through team-taught and/or small-group special education classes participate in the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL) tests. Special education teachers use a variety of individualized instructional strategies to remediate academic gaps and promote student success.

Many special education students receive additional support services to address the specific needs identified in their IEP. Itinerant teachers come to Thoreau to assist students requiring related services such as speech and language, occupational therapy, adapted physical education, vision/hearing services, and physical therapy. Students receiving a related service are served individually or in a small group by our related service provider.
Special Education Classes

**Strategies for Success (Basic Skills) 7, 8**  
Prerequisite: Student's I.E.P. designates Basic Skills

This elective course is designed to provide support to a student in core curricular areas and to provide direct instruction in specific learning strategies, study skills, time management, organization and coping skills. Time is also allotted to address individual areas of need as identified in a student's Individual Educational Plan (IEP). While students may receive assistance on core curricular assignments, the course is not designed to serve as a study hall. The course may be taught as an elective both years, as appropriate.

**PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT 7, 8**  
Prerequisite: Student's I.E.P. designates Personal Development

This special education course is designed for students who need additional social/emotional support in order to progress in the general education curriculum because their social/emotional needs affect their school performance. Course topics include understanding yourself, goal-setting, communication, building relationships, dealing with emotions, stress management, wellness, problem-solving, decision-making, self-advocacy, and career and transition. The Personal Development course is appropriate for students who have documented social/emotional needs on their individualized education program (IEP).

**READING 7**

This course is designed to provide direct, explicit and intensive reading instruction to students with disabilities who are reading significantly below grade level. Basic objectives of the reading courses are focused on closing the gap between the student's present level of performance and the level of performance needed to successfully access the general curriculum. Instruction focuses on increasing student's decoding, fluency and comprehension skills of fiction and nonfiction materials, which is based on the diagnosis of each student's needs as outlined through the student's Individual Education Program (IEP).

**READING 8**

This course is designed to provide direct, explicit and intensive reading instruction to students with disabilities who are reading significantly below grade level. Basic objectives of the reading courses are focused on closing the gap between the student's present level of performance and the level of performance needed to successfully access the general curriculum. Instruction focuses on increasing student's decoding, fluency and comprehension skills of fiction and nonfiction materials, which is based on the diagnosis of each student's needs as outlined through the student's Individual Education Program (IEP).

**READ 180 7, 8**

READ 180 is a full-year reading intervention course designed to meet the needs of students whose reading achievement is below proficient level. The course addresses individual needs through direct teacher instruction, high-interest reading material, and adaptive instructional software. Because it is an intervention course, Read 180 is capped at 15 students. It can be accessed by both seventh and eighth graders. This course is a self-contained course solely for students with disabilities. Depending on their proficiency level, some students might be in the course for two years.
ADAPTED PHYSICAL EDUCATION
Grade 7, 8
Prerequisite: Student's I.E.P. designates Adapted Physical Education

Adapted physical education is a developmental course for general education and/or special education students. This course serves students who are temporarily or permanently physically disabled or have deficiencies in motor coordination and/or physical fitness. This course is individualized and is directed toward improvement of deficiencies. The course includes specifically selected activities that are designed for the student's level of performance and designed to improve deficiencies, and maximize participation. Students in adapted physical education will participate in health education units required of their grade level.
English for Speakers of Other Languages

The middle school ESOL program comprises a range of courses to meet the cultural, linguistic, and academic needs of middle school Level 1-4 students. The language objectives of the program are based on the Grade 7 & 8 English Language Arts Standards, benchmarks, and indicators. The ESOL curriculum is designed to help students develop social and academic language proficiency and to provide students with foundational academic learning that will support their achievement of the Virginia SOLs.

BEGINNING ESOL ENGLISH
WIDA ELP Level 1 & 2 Grade: 7, 8

This is one of two English classes in which WIDA ELP Level 1 & 2 students may be enrolled. This class is designed to support the development of academic language and skills through alignment with the grade level FCPS Language Arts Standards. It maintains a focus on vocabulary development, literacy skills and the writing process. This course may be repeated.

Students are required to take the Standards of Learning End of Course Test.

BEGINNING ESOL ENGLISH
WIDA ELP Level 1 & 2 Grade: 7, 8

This is the second of two English classes in which WIDA ELP Levels 1 & 2 students may be enrolled. This class is designed to support the development of academic language and skills through alignment with the grade level FCPS Language Arts Standards. It maintains a focus on vocabulary development, literacy skills and the writing process. This course may be repeated.

Students are required to take the Standards of Learning End of Course Test.

ESOL US HISTORY 7
WIDA ELP LEVEL 1 & 2 Grade: 7

This is the social studies class in which grade 7 WIDA ELP Level 1 & 2 students are enrolled. It is aligned with the Grade 7 Virginia Standards of Learning and the FCPS Program of Studies. This class is designed to support the development of academic language and skills through alignment with the grade level Social Studies Standards. It supports content vocabulary development as well as academic discourse of social studies.

Students are required to take the Standards of Learning End of Course Test.

ESOL CIVICS & ECONOMICS 8
WIDA ELP Level 1 & 2 Grade: 8

This is the social studies class in which Grade 8 WIDA ELP Level 1 & 2 students are enrolled. This class is designed to support the development of academic language and skills through alignment with the Grade 8 Civics and Economics Standards. It supports the development of vocabulary and academic discourse of social studies.

Students are required to take the Standards of Learning End of Course Test.
ESOL FAST MATH
WIDA ELP Level 1 & 2 Grade: 7, 8

This course is designed for WIDA ELP Level 1 & 2 students with significant gaps in mathematics to support the development of the mathematics and language skills necessary for success in grade level math. Students examine algebra- and geometry-preparatory concepts and skills; strategies for collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data; and number concepts and skills emphasizing proportional reasoning. Problem solving, communication, concept representation, and connections among mathematical ideas are presented in a hands-on learning environment. Students may need up to two years to complete the course, so the course may be repeated. Students move to the next course as soon as their mathematics skills warrant.

Students are required to take the Standards of Learning End of Course Test.

ESOL FOCUS SCIENCE
WIDA ELP LEVEL 1 & 2 Grade: 7, 8

This course is the science course for WIDA ELP Level 1 & 2 students. It is designed to develop the academic language of science through scaffold grade-level, hands-on investigations. Students learn foundations science concepts as they acquire key vocabulary in Life and Physical Science. The grade 8 End of Course Test covers content from grades 6, 7 and 8. This course may be repeated.

Students are required to take the Standards of Learning End of Course Test.

DEVELOPING ESOL ENGLISH
WIDA ELP LEVEL 2 & 3 Grade: 7, 8

This is the English language class in which WIDA ELP Level 3 students may be enrolled. This class is designed to support the development of academic language and skills through alignment with the grade level Language Arts standards. It maintains a focus on vocabulary development, literacy skills and the writing process. When appropriate, Level 3 ESOL students may also be enrolled in grade level English class. This course may be repeated.

ESOL ACADEMIC LANGUAGE
WIDA ELP LEVEL 3 & 4 Grade: 7, 8

The class is designed to enrich students' academic language across the curriculum. Students develop academic language through targeted instruction in vocabulary, reading strategies, content writing and academic discourse models for continued success in grade level courses. WIDA ELP Level 4 students are enrolled in both this course and a grade level English class. This course may be repeated.

Students are required to take the Standards of Learning End of Course Test.

By Jayde Thomas
Grade 7
Instructional Support

**Focused Remediation & Enrichment Classes**

Thoreau Middle School is anchored in the belief that all students will learn; therefore assessment of student progress is continual. Data used to assess academic progress includes standardized test results, progress grades, teacher referrals, and academic cumulative history. As a result of this continual evaluation, Thoreau Middle School has developed a curricular program that includes small remediation and enrichment classes that focus on specific basic skills and that support the academic subjects. Students will be monitored throughout the school year and continuation of this level of support will be based upon the student’s performance in his/her core-academic classes. The remediation and enrichment classes take the place of an elective, e.g., Algebra and Language Arts, Read 180, Writing Workshop, Power Math 7, Tutorial Learning, and Algebra I Resource.

**READ 180 7/8**

This year-long course is a research–based, structured reading program designed as an intervention for students reading below-grade level expectation. It is available for both seventh and eighth-grade students who are found eligible through a process that includes teacher recommendations and student performance on the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI). While students in the standard education program are identified largely by grades, SRI scores and teacher recommendation, other students will be assigned to READ 180 in accordance with their IEP. READ 180 is also available to students in the program for English Language Learners when the schedule permits. The program includes small group instruction that is reinforced by individualized, independent reading practice using classroom books and computer software designed to include reading comprehension, vocabulary and spelling skill practice.

**Power Math 7**

Power Math is a semester Mathematics course designed to provide students with foundational skills to support success with the current Mathematics 7 course. Based on teacher recommendation, some students may stay in this small group mathematics class for a second semester. Students who failed the Virginia Standards of Learning Grade 6 Mathematics Test, have been conditionally promoted, retained, or at risk for failure during the year may be required to take this class.

**Strategies for Success**

This elective course is designed to provide support to a student in core curricular areas and to provide direct instruction in specific learning strategies, study skills, time management, and organization and self-advocacy skills. While students may receive assistance on core curricular assignments, the course is not designed to serve as a study hall and is meant to support the development of academic habits necessary for academic success. Students may enroll in this course multiple years as appropriate.

**Computer Technology**

The use of computers at Thoreau is designed to reinforce and extend existing classroom curriculum. Students integrate multimedia projects, spreadsheets, data analysis, and problem solving into the curriculum. Students have access to computer labs which support their learning in a variety of configurations. Computers are located in computer labs, the library and individual classrooms. All computers are supported by trained personnel as well as by the support of a full-time technology specialist.
**Library Services**

The library is the central resource area at Thoreau. Online catalogs, data bases and internet access are available to assist students in research and data collection. When entire classes are scheduled in the library, the librarian often works in cooperation with the classroom teacher to meet group and or individual student’s curriculum needs. In addition, Thoreau’s librarian takes great pride in being able to help individual students select books and materials for classroom assignments and for recreational reading. The library is open after school on Monday and Wednesday for students who wish to do research, read, or do class work on the computer.

*By Olivia McCabe*

*Grade 7*
7th Grade Curriculum

ENGLISH 7

Students read and study a variety of fiction and nonfiction, building on an understanding of reading as a process that includes analyzing and comprehending texts. Language study includes vocabulary building, learning about grammar, and spelling. Through varied and frequent writing assignments, students build on their understanding of writing as a process that includes drafting, revising, editing, proofreading, and publishing. They use writing to develop ideas and learn new concepts. Students also learn discussion skills, research skills, and oral communication skills, and learn to adapt speaking and listening to the audience, topic, purpose, and situation. Reading and writing competencies addressed in the Virginia Standards of Learning are incorporated into the course objectives.

Students are required to take the Standards of Learning End of Course Test.

ENGLISH 7 HONORS

This course extends the standard program of studies for English 7. As students read and study a variety of fiction and nonfiction, building on an understanding of reading as a process that includes analyzing and interpreting the text, they make connections across time, place, and subject; perform as a practitioner or scholar in a discipline; and self-assess and reflect on their learning and the learning process. Instruction is enriched and extended through research-based practices designed to engage and challenge advanced learners, e.g. problem-based learning, research, and investigations.

Students are required to take the Standards of Learning End of Course Test.

MATHEMATICS 7

Prerequisite: Grade 6 mathematics

Students examine algebra- and geometry-preparatory concepts and skills; strategies for collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data; and number concepts and skills, especially proportional reasoning. Reasoning, problem solving, communication, concept representation, and connections among mathematical ideas are emphasized in a hands-on learning environment. Graphing calculators and computers are integrated with instruction. This course provides students the opportunity to acquire the concepts and skills necessary for success in Math 8, Algebra I or Algebra I Honors in the eighth grade.

Students are required to take the Standards of Learning End of Course Test.

MATHEMATICS 7 HONORS

The depth and level of understanding in Mathematics 7 Honors is based on Mathematics 8 curriculum and includes extensions and enrichment. Emphasis is placed on mathematical reasoning, non-routine problem solving, and algebraic connections among mathematical ideas. This course provides students the opportunity to acquire the concepts and skills necessary for success in Algebra I or Algebra I Honors.

Students are required to take the Standards of Learning End of Course Test.
ALGEBRA I HONORS
1 High School Credit
Prerequisite: Mathematics 7 and/or Mathematics 8

Enrollment in Algebra I Honors is restricted to those seventh grade students who have met specific FCPS county-wide requirements. To qualify for Algebra I Honors in 7th grade, sixth grade students must have completed The Advanced Academic Program or a year-long accelerated program, score at or above the 91st percentile on the Iowa Algebra Aptitude Test, and have received a score of pass advanced ($500 or above) on the Virginia Standards of Learning Grade 7 Mathematics Test.

The depth and level of understanding expected in Algebra I Honors is beyond the scope of Algebra I. Students are expected to master algebraic mechanics and understand the underlying theory, as well as apply the concepts to real-world situations in a meaningful way. Students extend knowledge and understanding of the real number system and its properties through the study of variables, expressions, equations, inequalities, and the analysis of data from real world phenomena. Emphasis is placed on algebraic connections to arithmetic, geometry, and statistics. Calculators and computer technologies are integral tools. Graphing calculators are an essential tool for every student to explore graphical, numerical, and symbolic relationships. Students are required to take the Standards of Learning End of Course Test.

INVESTIGATIONS IN ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE HONORS 7

All 7th grade students at Thoreau Middle School with the exception of a few students take this Honors 7 science class. This course extends the standard program of studies for life science. As students study the content strands of cellular structure and function, heredity, diversity, populations and ecosystems, the students will think conceptually; make connections across time, place and subject areas; perform as a practitioner or scholar in a discipline; and self-assess and reflect on their learning and the learning process. Instruction is enriched and extended through research-based practices designed to engage and challenge advanced learners, e.g., problem-based learning, research, and investigations.

UNITED STATES HISTORY HONORS 7, 1865 TO THE PRESENT

All 7th grade students at Thoreau Middle School with the exception of a few students take this Honors 7 social studies class. This course extends the standard program of studies for US History in grade 7, a survey of American history since 1865. As they study the four strands of history, geography, civics, and economics, the students will think conceptually; make connections across time, place and subject areas; perform as a practitioner or scholar in a discipline; and self-assess and reflect on their learning and the learning process. Instruction is enriched and extended through research-based practices designed to engage and challenge advanced learners, e.g., problem-based learning, research, and investigations. Students are required to take the Standards of Learning End of Course Test.

HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION 7

Students strengthen and/or master basic skills developed at the elementary level. Emphasis is on highly organized lead-up activities, modified games, and fitness and wellness activities. Content knowledge includes movement skill, movement principles and concepts, personal fitness planning, essential life skills, and physically active lifestyle. Health units include alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use prevention; personal health; injury and violence prevention; emotional and social health; and human growth and development.
8th Grade Curriculum

**PRE-ALGEBRA (MATHEMATICS 8)**
Prerequisite: Mathematics 7

Students extend their study of algebra- and geometry-preparatory concepts and skills; strategies for collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data; and number concepts and skills, especially proportional reasoning. Reasoning, problem solving, communication, concept representation, and connections among mathematical ideas are emphasized in a hands-on learning environment. This course provides students the opportunity to acquire the concepts and skills necessary for success in Algebra I or Algebra I Honors. **Students are required to take the Standards of Learning End of Course Test.**

**ALGEBRA I**
1 High School Credit
Prerequisite: Mathematics 7 and/or Mathematics 8

This course extends students’ knowledge and understanding of the real number system and its properties through the study of variables, expressions, equations, inequalities, and analysis of data derived from real-world phenomena. Emphasis is placed on making connections in algebra to geometry and statistics. Calculator and computer technologies will be used as tools wherever appropriate. Use of a graphing calculator is considered essential to provide a graphical and numerical approach to topics in addition to a symbolic approach. Topics include linear equations and inequalities, systems of linear equations, relations, functions, polynomials, and statistics. **Students are required to take the Standards of Learning End of Course Test.**

**ALGEBRA I HONORS**
1 High School Credit

The depth and level of understanding expected in Algebra I Honors is beyond the scope of Algebra I. Students are expected to master algebraic mechanics and understand the underlying theory, as well as apply the concepts to real-world situations in a meaningful way. Students extend knowledge and understanding of the real-number system and its properties through the study of variables, expressions, equations, inequalities, and the analysis of data from real-world phenomena. Emphasis is placed on algebraic connections to arithmetic, geometry, and statistics. Calculators and computer technologies are integral tools. Graphing calculators are an essential tool for every student to explore graphical, numerical, and symbolic relationships. **Students are required to take the Standards of Learning End of Course Test.**

**GEOMETRY HONORS**
1 High School Credit
Prerequisite: Students must have mastered the standards of Algebra I Honors in 7th grade.

The depth and level of understanding expected in Geometry Honors is beyond the scope of Geometry. This course emphasizes two- and three-dimensional reasoning skills, coordinate and transformational geometry, and the use of geometric models to solve problems. A variety of applications and some general problem-solving techniques, including algebraic skills, will be used to explore geometric relationships. Conjectures about properties and relationships are developed inductively and then verified deductively. Students investigate non-Euclidean geometries, formal logic, and use deductive proofs to verify theorems. Calculators, computers, graphing utilities, dynamic geometry software, and other appropriate technology tools will be used to assist in teaching and learning. **Students are required to take the Standards of Learning End of Course Test.**
ENGLISH 8

Students read and study a variety of fiction and nonfiction, building on an understanding of reading as a process that includes analyzing and interpreting the text. Language study includes vocabulary building, learning about grammar, and spelling. Through varied and frequent writing assignments, students build on their understanding of writing as a process that includes drafting, revising, editing, proofreading, and publishing. Students practice a variety of writing forms including informational/technical and essay writing. All students learn research skills and to adapt speaking and writing skills to the audience, topic, purpose, and situation. Reading and writing competencies addressed in the Virginia Standards of Learning are incorporated into the course objectives.

Students are required to take the Standards of Learning End of Course Test.

ENGLISH 8 HONORS

This course extends the standard program of studies for English 8. As students read and study a variety of fiction and nonfiction, building on an understanding of reading as a process that includes analyzing and interpreting the text, they make connections across time, place and subject; perform as a practitioner or scholar in a discipline; and self-assess and reflect on their learning and the learning process. Instruction is enriched and extended through research-based practices designed to engage and challenge advanced learners, e.g. problem-based learning, research, and investigations.

Students are required to take the Standards of Learning End of Course Test.

INVESTIGATING MATTER AND ENERGY HONORS 8

This course extends the standard program of studies for physical science. As they study the content strands of properties of matter, energy forms and their transformations, and forces and motion the students will think conceptually; make connections across time, place and subject areas; perform as a practitioner or scholar in a discipline; and self-assess and reflect on their learning and the learning process. Instruction is enriched and extended through research-based practices designed to engage and challenge advanced learners, e.g. problem-based learning, research, and investigations. The end of course test covers content from grades 6, 7, and 8.

Students are required to take the Standards of Learning End of Course Test.

CIVICS AND ECONOMICS HONORS 8

All 8th grade students at Thoreau Middle School with the exception of a few students take this Honors Civics and Economics class. This course extends the Grade 8 Standard Program of Studies for Honors Civics and Economics which is designed to prepare students to be responsible, productive citizens in a democratic republic and an interconnected world. As they gain an understanding of the concepts and processes of democratic government and the American economic system, the students will think conceptually; make connections across time, place and subject areas; perform as a practitioner or scholar in a discipline; and self-assess and reflect on their learning and the learning process. Instruction is enriched and extended through research-based practices designed to engage and challenge advanced learners, e.g., problem-based learning, research, and investigations. A service learning component helps students personalize citizenship education.

Students are required to take the Standards of Learning End of Course Test.

HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION 8

Students continue to strengthen and/or master basic skills, and participate in wellness activities and wellness-related testing and fitness planning. Content knowledge includes movement skill, movement principles and concepts, personal fitness planning, essential life skills, and physically active lifestyle.
Health units include alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use prevention; personal health; injury and violence prevention; emotional and social health; and human growth and development.

**Year-Long Electives**

**BEGINNING BAND 7, 8**

Beginning level band classes develop skills on woodwind, brass, or percussion instruments. Guidance will be given by the instructor in the selection of an instrument. Simple duets, rounds and other ensemble literature will be performed in the class. Students must meet both the school day and after-school participation requirements to receive credit for the course. **This course requires a student materials fee as listed in FCPS Notice 5922.**

**INTERMEDIATE BAND 7, 8**

Prerequisite: Successful audition

Intermediate level band students will continue to develop skills on woodwind, brass, or percussion instruments. A variety of musical styles will be studied through the playing of band literature. Students must meet both the school day and after-school participation requirements to receive credit for the course. **This course requires a student materials fee as listed in FCPS Notice 5922.**

**ADVANCED BAND 7, 8**

Prerequisite: Successful audition

Advanced level band offers instruction to the advanced player. In-depth study of musical styles will be realized through challenging band literature. Students must meet both the school day and after-school participation requirements to receive credit for the course. **This course requires a student materials fee as listed in FCPS Notice 5922.**

**STRING ENSEMBLE 7, 8**

Beginning level string classes develop skills on the violin, viola, cello and double bass. Guidance will be given by the instructor in the selection of an instrument. Simple duets, rounds, and other literature will be performed in class. Students must meet both the school day and after-school participation requirements to receive credit for the course. **This course requires a student materials fee as listed in FCPS Notice 5922.**

**INTERMEDIATE ORCHESTRA 7, 8**

Prerequisite: Successful audition

Intermediate level orchestra students will continue to develop skills on violin, viola, cello, and double bass. A variety of musical styles will be studied through the playing of string orchestra literature. Students must meet both the school day and after school participation requirements to receive credit for this course. **This course requires a student materials fee as listed in FCPS Notice 5922.**

**ADVANCED ORCHESTRA 7, 8**

Prerequisite: Successful audition

Advanced level orchestra offers instruction to the advanced string player. In-depth study of musical styles will be realized through challenging string orchestra literature. Students must meet both the school day and after school participation requirements to receive credit for this course. **This course requires a student materials fee as listed in FCPS Notice 5922.**
ADVANCED WOMEN'S CHORUS 7, 8
Prerequisite: Successful audition

This course offers advanced instruction in vocal techniques, music fundamentals, and sight-reading. Through a variety of challenging choral literature, students will experience three and/or four-part singing. Types of performances may include concert choral performances, choral choreography, and/or musical dramas. Students must meet both the school day and after-school participation requirements to receive credit for the course.

This course requires a student materials fee as listed in FCPS Notice 5922.

ADVANCED MEN'S CHORUS 7, 8

This course offers advanced instruction in men's vocal techniques, music fundamentals, and sight-reading. Through a variety of challenging choral literature, students will experience three and/or four-part singing. Types of performances may include concert choral performances, choral choreography, and/or musical dramas. Students must meet both the school day and after-school participation requirements to receive credit for the course.

This course requires a student materials fee as listed in FCPS Notice 5922.

VOCAL ENSEMBLE 7, 8
Prerequisite: Successful audition

This ensemble is designed to meet specific needs and/or interests for vocalists. Content includes study of appropriate ensemble literature, and rehearsal and performance techniques from the various areas of musical composition. Schools may also require membership in an intermediate or advanced choral class. Voicing of the group is at the discretion of the instructor. Students must meet both the school day and after-school participation requirements to receive credit for the course.

This course requires a student materials fee as listed in FCPS Notice 5922.

FRENCH 1 Grade 8
1 High School Credit

Students develop the ability to communicate about themselves and their immediate environment using simple sentences containing basic language structures. This communication is evidenced in all four language skills-listening, speaking, reading and writing—with emphasis on the ability to communicate orally and in writing. Students begin to explore and study the Program of Studies themes of Personal and Family Life, School Life, Social Life, and Community Life. For middle school students, this credit becomes a part of the high school transcript, is included in the determination of the high school grade point average (GPA), and counts toward fulfilling the world languages requirement of the high school Advanced Studies diploma. It also counts toward the total number of credits required for graduation.

SPANISH 1 Grade 8
1 High School Credit

Students develop the ability to communicate about themselves and their immediate environment using simple sentences containing basic language structures. This communication is evidenced in all four language skills-listening, speaking, reading and writing—with emphasis on the ability to communicate orally and in writing. Students begin to explore and study the Program of Studies themes of Personal and Family Life, School Life, Social Life, and Community Life. For middle school students, this credit becomes a part of the high school transcript, is included in the determination of the high school grade point average (GPA), and counts toward fulfilling the foreign language requirements of the high school diploma. It also counts toward the total number of credits required for graduation.
LITERARY ARTS: JOURNALISM 7, 8
Application process required

Students learn basic publication and journalism skills focusing on writing articles and designing layouts for pages of the school newspaper and yearbook. Students will acquire computer skills that can be used to succeed in all classes and life. Programs used will include MS Word, MS Excel, MS Publisher, MS PowerPoint, and Windows Movie Maker. Students should be able to work both independently and in a group.

ADVANCED THEATRE ARTS APPRECIATION 8
Prerequisite: Theatre Arts Course in Grade 7 and/or recommendation of the theatre or speech arts instructor.

Students who are continuing the study of theatre arts for a second year will be taught to apply and expand the skills developed in the introductory class. They will participate in a variety of dramatic activities and perform for varied audiences. This course is designed for students who are interested in an expanded study of theatre arts and oral communication.

This course requires a student materials fee as listed in FCPS Notice 5922.

MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS 7, 8 - Application process required
Through this course, students will apply communication skills using different types of media. Students will learn and use the correct vocabulary while working in this course. Students will learn the tools for working in front of and behind the cameras. Additional skills covered include audio and video editing, script writing, creating story boards, correct interviewing skills, wiring audio and video equipment, correct research, digital photography, and using computer software for presentations. Students will be responsible for creating, producing, and broadcasting shows that could be aired for Thoreau Middle School’s news programs.
All students will go on-camera and learn speech and acting techniques and practice public speaking and improvisation.
Semester Electives

**CHORUS 7, 8**

This course provides instruction in proper vocal techniques, music fundamentals, and rehearsal practices. Through a variety of choral literature, students will experience two and/or three-part singing. Types of performances may include concert choral performances, choral choreography, and/or musical dramas. Students must meet both the school day and after-school participation requirements to receive credit for the course. **This course requires a student materials fee as listed in FCPS Notice 5922.**

**MUSIC PARTICPATION LAB 1 7, 8**

This course provides students an opportunity to examine many kinds of music. Students will be actively involved in music through singing, listening, playing instruments, moving, and improvising. Other experiences may include vocal and instrumental ensembles, musical dramatizations, contemporary music, computer music, guitar, piano and/or recorder.

**ART FOUNDATIONS 7, 8**

Explore a variety of art materials, develop art techniques, and use creative thinking skills to express ideas and viewpoints about personal experiences and the world through the concept of transformation. Produce meaningful and unique drawings, paintings, prints, sculptures, ceramics and crafts in a studio setting. Study artists and their works to gain understanding of the artistic process and learn about art produced at different times and in diverse cultures. Make interdisciplinary connections based on the Virginia Standards of Learning for all disciplines. **This course requires a student materials fee as listed in FCPS Notice 5922.**

**SPANISH 1 PART A 7**

In this semester course, students begin to develop the ability to communicate about themselves and their immediate environment using simple sentences containing basic language structures. These language structures include subject pronouns; the verbs to be, to have and basic regular verbs; subject-verb agreement; and expressions of likes and dislikes. Students begin to study the POS themes and topics of level 1. Students also explore traditions, customs, beliefs, and cultural contributions and how these elements relate to language. This course does not count as a world languages high school credit.

**FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES 7, 8**

This course is designed to develop independence in students by teaching them practical life skills. Students actively participate in units of study such as food preparation and nutrition; clothing maintenance and construction; career exploration and job readiness; and money management and consumerism. Mathematics, science, English, social studies and technology are integrated throughout the course. **This course requires a student materials fee as listed in FCPS Notice 5922.**

**SPEECH AND THEATRE ARTS APPRECIATION 7, 8**

Students develop an appreciation of speech and theatre arts through an introduction to the basic concepts and skills relating to oral communication and acting. They begin to develop poise and confidence in speaking, and they develop skills in listening, collaborating, and discussing in group situations. They participate in a variety of dramatic activities by exploring improvisation and dramatic interpretation. Course may consist of speech topics, drama topics, or a combination of both. **This course requires a student materials fee as listed in FCPS Notice 5922.**
COMPUTER SOLUTIONS 7, 8

Computer Solutions combines the instruction of concepts in database, spreadsheet, presentation, publishing, and Internet skills while allowing students to explore the 16 Career Clusters and develop an understanding of career pathways. The Computer Solutions course extends student expertise in a project-based curriculum with an emphasis on career and college readiness.

DIGITAL INPUT TECHNOLOGIES 7, 8
Prerequisite: Computer Solutions in 7th grade or fall semester of 8th grade

Digital Input Technologies introduces new and emerging input devices (e.g., speech- and handwriting-recognition software, headset/microphone, tablets, scanner, digital camera, digital video camera, keyboard, and mouse) to prepare students for using tools that are becoming standard in the workplace and in everyday life.

TECHNOLOGY EXPLORATION 7

This course challenges young men and women of all levels to develop higher order problem solving skills by stimulating creativity in a hands-on learning environment. Academic subject disciplines such as applied physics, algebra and geometry powerfully come alive as students design, build and test modern structure and vehicle prototypes. Students acquire 21st Century Skills like communication and team problem solving, through the mastery of engineering concepts such as CAD and mechanical advantage. Schools equipped with modular "synergistic" labs provide active exploration of a wide variety technologies and related careers in a dynamic computer based-learning environment.
This course requires a student materials fee as listed in FCPS Notice 5922.

TECHNOLOGY EXPLORATION 8

In this course young men and women will experience how science, technology, engineering, and mathematics interact to create our technological society. By active participation in research, design, fabrication, and prototype testing, students will explore various topics in Technology, such as structural engineering and transportation systems. Students will develop problem solving strategies and work place skills that will be useful in 21st century careers. This course is a dynamic approach to many academic subject areas to include mathematics and science by physically demonstrating these concepts in real world applications with a focus on critical thinking skills and problem solving. Schools equipped with modular "synergistic" labs provide active exploration of a wide variety technologies and related careers in a computer based-learning environment.
This course requires a student materials fee as listed in FCPS Notice 5922.
Graduation Requirements
At the time of this publication, the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) had not defined graduation requirements for those students entering 9th grade for the first time in 2013-2014 or beyond. Graduation requirements information will be posted to www.fcps.edu/is/schoolcounseling/graduation.shtml as it is made available.

GRADING SYSTEM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Score Range</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>(93-100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>(90-92)</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>(80-82)</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>(67-69)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>(64-66)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>(53-63)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Effective September 2009

GRADE POINT AVERAGE

Middle schools do not calculate a grade-point average. High school grade point average (GPA) is calculated on the basis of all courses for which high school credit has been earned or attempted, including repeated courses previously passed. In order for a repeat course to raise a GPA, the student’s grade must be higher than the one originally given. All classes appearing on the high school transcript including high school classes taken in summer school, middle school, elementary school, or online are included when calculating GPA.

Algebra 1 Honors, Geometry Honors and Algebra 2 Honors receive an additional 0.5 weight added to the final grade upon successful completion of the course. Successful completion is defined as completing the course with a passing grade. For example, a final grade of A in an honors class shall receive 4.5 quality points.

High school credit bearing courses dropped will not be counted in grade point average (GPA) except when a final grade of F is received: (a) for the fourth grading period of a full-year course, or (b) for the second grading period of a semester course. A student’s GPA is determined by dividing the total number of quality points earned by the number of courses included in the transcript. The grade point average is reported to three decimal places (thousandths). Fairfax County Public Schools does not rank its students.

EXPUNGING HIGH SCHOOL COURSES TAKEN IN MIDDLE SCHOOL

In accordance with Virginia state regulations, FCPS Regulation 2430 permits parents of students who take a high school credit-bearing course in middle school to request that the grade be omitted from the student's high school transcript and the student not earn high school credit for the course. Parents must make this request in writing no later than the end of the first nine weeks of the school year following completion of the course. The form to make this request, along with the process for making the request, is available at: http://www.fcps.edu/it/forms/is104.pdf

or through your student’s school counselor. Parents are strongly advised to discuss this decision with their student's school counselor and the impact of expunging a course on desired high school diploma type and standard and verified credit requirements.

COURSES TAKEN OUTSIDE OF FCPS

Currently enrolled FCPS students who wish to take a course outside of FCPS and transfer back the credit must have written approval from their school prior to enrolling in the course. The course must meet the requirements outlined in the current version of FCPS regulation 2460 and Virginia state regulations. For additional information about pursuing coursework outside of FCPS for credit, please contact your school counselor.

WITHDRAW POLICY

For the first grading period only, a student has five days after the date on which report cards are sent home in which to drop a course without having a grade recorded. Courses dropped are not counted in the grade point average except when an F is received for the course. Middle schools do not calculate grade-point averages; however, if a high school credit course is taken by a middle school student, courses dropped are not counted in the high school grade-point average except when an F is received for the course. Unless the principal approves an exception, a student may not withdraw during the final quarter of a course if he or she is passing the course. If a student drops a course during the:

1st quarter No penalty--nothing is recorded.
2nd quarter WP (withdrawn passing) or WF (withdrawn failing) is recorded. Exception: For semester courses a WP or F for failure is recorded.
3rd quarter WP or WF is recorded.
4th quarter WP or F for failure is recorded.
WORLD LANGUAGES PROFICIENCY CREDIT

The Credit Exam for World Languages is given each fall to students who wish to demonstrate written proficiency in one of several languages: American Sign Language, Amharic, Arabic, Bengali/Bangla, Chinese/Mandarin, Farsi/Persian, French, German, Hindi, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Nepali, Punjabi, Russian, Somali, Spanish, Tagalog/Tagalog, Tamil, Telugu, Twi, Urdu, or Vietnamese. Students who are successful on the exam receive two world languages credits which may be used to fulfill the world languages requirements/electives of the Advanced Studies or Standard Diplomas. In addition, middle school students in grades 6-8 enrolled in certain ESOL 5720-5730 courses may receive up to two world languages credits towards high school graduation requirements in the two-plus-two option for fulfilling the world languages requirement. High school students enrolled in ESOL 5720 courses may receive elective or up to two world languages credits toward high school graduation requirements in the two-plus-two option for fulfilling the world languages requirement. For more information on the exam, go to: http://www.fcps.edu/is/worldlanguages/creditexam/index.shtml or contact the World Languages Team at 571-423-4602.

ADVANCED ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

Fairfax County Public Schools Advanced Academic Programs seek to provide academic rigor to all students who are interested in challenging learning experiences designed to meet the unique learning profile of a broad range of advanced learners. Through a continuum of opportunities, students engage in complex subject matter, preparing them for more challenging and rigorous classes as they advance in grade level.

Advanced Academic courses at the middle school consist of Honors classes and the Level IV Center program. Honors classes, aligned with national standards for gifted and talented education, are open to all students. The goal of Honors classes is to provide extensions to the Program of Studies that add depth and complexity. Resources, units, and lessons are designed to nurture and develop advanced academic potential in all learners. The extensions in Honors classes encourage students to think conceptually; to make connections across time, place and subject; to perform as a practitioner or scholar in a discipline; and to self-assess and reflect on their learning and the learning process.

At the middle school level, Fairfax County offers open enrollment in Honors social studies, English, science, and mathematics. Students who have demonstrated high achievement, interest, and/or potential in one or more academic areas and seek academic rigor may enroll in Honors classes.

Students eligible for full time Level IV center placement have the option to take full honors at their local middle school.

Advanced Academic courses in high school are open to all students. Students have the opportunity to enroll in honors courses as underclassmen and continue in Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), and dual enrollment courses. Students may earn college credits based on the results of their examinations (AP or IB) or course grade (dual enrollment). Student transfer applications may be submitted for an AP or IB program if the base school does not offer the desired program of study. For more information on the transfer process, please visit the web site: http://www.fcps.edu/is/aap/index.shtml.

AP and IB courses are advanced-level courses with external exams. Students who take AP and IB courses are required to complete the examinations.

The Advanced Academic program responds to the requirement of the Virginia Board of Education that each local school division plan and implement an instructional program for gifted and talented students at all levels K-12. Courses designated as honors, Level IV, IB or AP fulfill this requirement. Differentiated curricula and teaching strategies which stress critical thinking skills, creativity, and problem solving are integrated into the content of all advanced academic course offerings. The four-year sequence of courses in each of the academic disciplines, which progress from honors to AP, and IB, provides a continuous and balanced advanced academic program.

International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program

The International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program (IBMYP) is designed for students ages 11-16 (grades 6-10). The program helps students develop the knowledge, understanding, attitudes, and skills necessary to participate actively and responsibly in a changing world. The curriculum is supported by the fundamental concepts of intercultural awareness, holistic learning, and communication. The IBMYP program is available at the following middle and high schools: Glasgow, Holmes, Hughes, Poe, Whitman, Annandale, Mt. Vernon, South Lakes, and Stuart.

Advanced Placement in High School

Centreville, Chantilly, Fairfax, Falls Church, Hayfield, Herndon, Lake Braddock, Langley, Madison, McLean, Oakton, South County, West Potomac, West Springfield, Westfield, and Woodson High Schools offer the Advanced Placement (AP) program. Individual AP courses are also offered at other high schools. All students enrolled in an AP course are required to complete the end-of-course AP exam. Students may receive college credit and/or placement based upon their exam grades. The AP program is offered in English, social studies, mathematics, science, world languages, and fine arts. AP courses are offered as open enrollment to all students committed to rigorous, academic work. Students taking at least 3 AP exams with at least a grade of 3 on each are recognized by the College Board as AP Scholars. Further information about the AP program may be
obtained by contacting the school counselor or AP coordinator at the participating school.

**International Baccalaureate in High School**

Annandale, Edison, Lee, Marshall, Mount Vernon, Robinson, South Lakes, and Stuart High Schools offer the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Program. To qualify for the IB Diploma, students must select at least one subject from each of six IB subject groups including English, world languages, mathematics, science, social studies, and an elective. Students take at least 3 and not more than 4 of these subjects at higher level (HL), the others at standard level (SL). All students enrolled in an IB course are required to complete the end-of-course IB exams. IB diploma candidates must complete 150 hours of extracurricular activities and community service, take the Theory of Knowledge course, and write a 4000 word essay on a topic of their choice. Students in IB schools may also take IB courses in areas of academic strength and interest. IB diploma course students take one or more IB courses and the associated exam(s) and receive recognition for each IB exam with a score of “4” or better. The IB program is offered in English, social studies, mathematics, science, world languages, fine arts, and other electives. IB courses are offered as open enrollment to all students committed to rigorous, academic work. Further information about the IB program may be obtained by contacting the school counselor or IB coordinator at the participating school.

Annandale, South Lakes, Mount Vernon, and Stuart High Schools implement the IB Middle Years Program in 9th and 10th grade. Students may choose to work toward the MYP certificate which requires the completion of a personal project at the end of 10th grade and success on the MYP 10th grade assessments.

**Thomas Jefferson High School For Science And Technology**

The Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology is a unique Fairfax County public school offering a comprehensive college preparatory program emphasizing the sciences, mathematics, and technology. As the Governor’s School for Science and Technology in Northern Virginia, the school serves students who are selected in a competitive process and intend to pursue college preparation in the sciences, engineering, or related fields. Students may obtain information about application procedures and deadlines from the School Counseling Office of their local schools or by calling Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology Office of Admissions at 571-423-3770 or at: http://www.tjhsst.edu/abouttj/admissions/index.html

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**FCPS ONLINE COURSES**

FCPS Online Campus is a program designed to provide students with an online option for earning high school credits toward graduation. This program supports the Governor’s “Early College Scholars” program by providing advanced courses to students.

Students registered in any Fairfax County Public School are eligible to apply to take a course through the FCPS Online Campus. These courses are for students who have scheduling conflicts, transportation issues, or have special needs requiring web-based instruction. Tuition will be charged when a student is already scheduled to receive seven credits during the academic year or when a student enrolls in an FCPS online summer course. Students must meet all course requirements to enroll in an FCPS online course. Students interested in enrolling in an FCPS Online Campus course should consult their school counselor for information regarding the registration process. For more information go to: http://www.fcps.edu/is/onlinecampus/

The following courses are currently available online for middle school students:

- Algebra 1
- Algebra 1 Honors
- Geometry
- Geometry Honors
- Algebra 2
- Algebra 2 Honors
- Precalculus
- Korean 1
- Korean 2

*By Ashley Penaloza*

**Grade 8**

**STUDENT FEES**

Courses that require a student fee for consumable materials have been designated in this catalog. The schedule of divisionwide student fees to be charged for any elective course can be found in Notice 5922 at http://www.fcps.edu/Directives/topicalindexQR.shtml#REVE.

Students eligible for the federal Free and Reduced-Price meals program may have course and test fees waived. For more information, see your school counselor.
We hope that this booklet provides you with valuable information and has answered many of your questions about the school program at Thoreau Middle School. This booklet would not be complete without including a few words regarding Thoreau’s school business partner. Thoreau Middle School entered into a partnership with Navy Federal Credit Union (NFCU) in 1989. Since that time, Navy Federal employees have come together with Thoreau’s students and faculty to share their time, talents, and expertise. The partnership’s programs are many and varied, all with the same goal, to enhance student motivation and career awareness and improve basic skills. Navy Federal employees volunteer as speakers, tutors, activity sponsors and mentors to Thoreau students. Through their commitment to these programs, Navy Federal employees demonstrate that volunteers can truly make a difference in the lives of our students. Annual partnership events/activities include the Mentor and Pen Pal Programs, choral/band/orchestra concerts, and Project Neighbors (provides holiday gifts, food, clothing, furniture and support to families in need). Additional partnership events/activities include student art exhibits and receptions at Navy Federal; all “A” honor roll parties; teacher appreciation luncheons; student and faculty awards for service excellence; monetary donations for faculty professional development; and printing of various newsletters, handbooks, literary arts magazines, music programs, and posters.

We would like to thank our Business Partner Navy Federal Credit Union for printing this Course Selection Guide. THANK YOU SO MUCH!