Brentwood Middle School

2025 – 2026

Course Description Handbook

The following descriptions represent courses of study during the middle school years in Grades 6, 7, and 8. We believe that these courses, along with the middle school structure, help to meet the needs of the young adolescent. It is our hope that the middle school years are productive and enjoyable for both students and parents.

Mr. David Radcliffe	Mr. Ted Ulmer
Middle School Principal	Middle/High School Assistant Principal

GRADING SCALE

90 - 100	A
80 - 89	B
70 - 79	C
60 - 69	D
Below 60%	E – Failure

HONOR ROLL

High Honors	3.5 – 4.00 GPA
Honors	3.0 – 3.49 GPA

TEAMS

All students in Grades 6, 7, and 8 are assigned to a TEAM. Students will be involved in a variety of team activities throughout the year that will enhance learning and foster team, school, and community spirit.

ADVISORY PROGRAM

The advisory program is designed to provide students with the opportunity to become acquainted with a teacher advisor. During the advisory program, themes such as responsibility, generosity, perseverance, etc. are explored each month, and the students are involved in activities that support those themes and encourage positive character traits. Each student will be paired with the same teacher advisor for all three years of middle school.

EXPLORATORY PROGRAM

Exploratory is a program unique to middle level education where students are given an opportunity to explore areas of interest beyond the traditional academic classes. The goal of the program is that each child will benefit from having been exposed to a skill or hobby, which they can continue to pursue outside of the school.

TUTORIAL

The purpose of the tutorial program is to provide students with tutoring from their teachers and/or fellow students. It is also a time in which students can act as peer tutors, work on homework and projects, use the computers, or read.

SCHOOL COUNSELING DEPARTMENT

Included in the services of the School Counseling Department are orientation, scheduling, career readiness, standardized testing, group and individual brief counseling, classroom lessons, and crisis intervention. Counselors serve as liaisons between parents and teachers. Students are encouraged to initiate contact with their counselor to discuss areas such as academic difficulties, career planning, personal issues, and social relationships.

ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY

Please refer to the ELIGIBILITY and CURRICULUM AND ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY sections of the Athletic Handbook.

NATIONAL JUNIOR HONOR SOCIETY

The National Junior Honor Society is an organization that recognizes students who reflect outstanding accomplishments in the areas of scholarship, character, leadership, citizenship, and service. Eligible students will be notified by the NJHS sponsor in February.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

SIXTH GRADE PROGRAM OF STUDIES

Sixth grade students are required to take the following courses:

English Language Arts 6
Mathematics 6
Science 6
Social Studies 6
Physical Education 6
Cycle 6 – Art 6, Computer Science 6, Media Literacy, Music 6

ELECTIVES: Band 6 and/or Chorus 6

SEVENTH GRADE PROGRAM OF STUDIES

Seventh grade students are required to take the following courses:

English Language Arts 7
Mathematics 7
Science 7
Social Studies 7
Physical Education 7 / Health 7
Math Extension 7 or Science and Design, U.S. in the World and Writing Workshop
Cycle 7 – Art 7, Music 7, Technology 7, TED 7

ELECTIVES: Band 7 and/or Chorus 7

EIGHTH GRADE PROGRAM OF STUDIES

Eighth grade students are required to take the following courses:

English Language Arts 8
Mathematics 8 or Algebra I
Science 8
Social Studies 8
German I, Spanish I or PSSA Prep
Physical Education 8 / Health 8
Cycle 8 – Computer Science 8, Family & Consumer Science 8, Music 8, Technology 8

ELECTIVES: Band 8 and/or Chorus 8

~ Eighth grade students who enroll in band will participate in the high school marching band.

~ Seventh grade students who enroll in band will have the opportunity to participate in the high school marching band upon the recommendation of the band director.

MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS WHO TAKE HIGH SCHOOL COURSES WILL NOT RECEIVE CREDIT TOWARD GRADUATION.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS
SIXTH GRADE

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS 6
(Full-year course)

Students taking this course will begin to understand the academic relationship between reading and writing. A multi-leveled approach will focus on fluent reading, understanding, and responding to literary works across multiple genres including informational, literature, poetry and drama. Emphasis will be placed on comprehension and making connections among ideas and between texts. Close reading will be practiced in order to critically analyze works and cite textual evidence. Mastery in these areas should result in the ability to integrate knowledge and ideas into an effective written or oral response. The writing process is taught with emphasis given to narrative, informative, persuasive/argumentative, and creative writings. A process approach is used to develop students' writing; drafting, rewriting, conferencing, revising, editing and publishing become the method to polished compositions. Open-ended responses to literary and informational texts will be examined and evaluated thoroughly via text-dependent analysis. Students' writing conventions will be augmented through analysis and peer and teacher editing. Grammar is taught as a means to produce effective writing; emphasis is placed on function rather than terminology. In addition, students will develop and improve their listening and speaking skills through multi-task and discussion-based activities.

MATHEMATICS 6
(Full-year course)

Students in this course will develop both procedural skills and conceptual understanding leading to the application of mathematical concepts. The course curriculum will focus on the strands of Ratios and Proportional Relationships, The Number System, Expressions and Equations, Geometry, and Statistics and Probability all framed around the Standards of Mathematical Practice. Course work will involve high level thinking where students will engage in the 8 Standards of Mathematical Practice: make sense of problems and persevere in solving them, construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others, use appropriate tools strategically, look for and make use of structure, reason abstractly and quantitatively, model with mathematics, attend to precision, and look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning.

SCIENCE 6
(Full-year course)

Sixth grade science is an introduction to various areas in science. Such areas include: the metric system, biology, ecology, weather and climate, physical science, and chemical science. The course encompasses both designing and carrying out experiments using the scientific method. Learning is achieved through cooperative learning activities, cross curricular projects, presentations, and

many hands-on experiences. Students will develop scientific literacy through vocabulary development unique to science, reading scientific articles, analyzing data, and providing written responses. Assessment for 6th grade science encourages students to think abstractly, thus allowing them to analyze, synthesize, apply, and evaluate throughout the year.

SOCIAL STUDIES 6 - WORLD GEOGRAPHY
(Full-year course)

Students enrolled in sixth grade World Geography will focus on the 5 geographic themes-Location, Character, Region, Movement, and Human-Environmental Interaction. After mastering the five themes and how they can be identified and applied, students will apply the themes while examining countries from around the world. The curriculum will cover countries in both the Eastern and Western Hemispheres. Students will also be able to compare and contrast countries and be able to solve and predict the geographic problems and conditions that exist within these countries. The ultimate goal is for students to gain a sense of empathy for other races, ethnicities, religions, and peoples of varying socio-economic backgrounds. Assessments will include mapping activities, quizzes and tests, writing prompts, lab simulations, and projects.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION 6
(Full-year course)

The physical education curriculum is a comprehensive health-related program that teaches the motor skills and fitness concepts necessary for students to develop and maintain an enjoyable physically active lifestyle. Course work is centered on developmental sequences defined by the National Physical Education Standards. The program focuses on basic movement skills, fitness, and team and individual sports. Leadership, teamwork, cooperation, competition, and good sportsmanship are stressed throughout the physical education curriculum. Students learn to evaluate their own fitness level in conjunction with the health curriculum through the use of a variety of assessment tools.

CYCLE 6

ART 6
(Nine-week cycle)

In 6th grade art, students will explore the exciting world of visual expression while developing their creativity and artistic skills. This course introduces the **elements of art**—line, shape, color, texture, value, form, and space—and how they are used to create meaningful works of art. Students will also learn about the **principles of design**, including balance, contrast, emphasis, movement, pattern, rhythm, and unity, to better understand how artists organize their work effectively.

Through a variety of hands-on projects, students will experiment with different materials and techniques such as drawing, painting, sculpture, and mixed media. They will study famous artists and art movements, engage in thoughtful critiques, and develop their own creative voice.

COMPUTER SCIENCE 6
(Nine-week cycle)

Computer Science 6 is a collaborative introduction to the field of computer science. Students will learn how to structure and style web pages using HTML (Hypertext Markup Language) and CSS (Cascading Style Sheets). Students will develop valuable programming skills as they create their own personal website, along with debugging skills and the concepts of clean code and commenting code.

MEDIA LITERACY
(Nine-week cycle)

In this 9-week cycle course, students will have opportunity to use variety digital media technology and develop skills that encourage creativity, critical thinking, productivity, and collaboration in the classroom and day-to-day life. Skills will be demonstrated by creating projects in different media content areas such as photography and graphic design. Students will also learn the definition of mass media and how to responsibly interact and critically evaluate the digital media that surrounds them. Through a variety of discussions and multimedia projects, students will explore the impact of media on society and learn how to effectively search and evaluate quality, credibility, and validity of digital information.

MUSIC 6
(Nine-week cycle)

Students in this course will explore the basic concepts of music, compose their own original music, learn about the science of sound, and experiment with audio engineering and learn to play the ukulele in our revamped music curriculum: QuaverMusic. This technology friendly curriculum allows students to log in to their accounts at home to practice note reading, composition, or explore world music on their own as well as in a full class setting.

ELECTIVES

BAND 6
(Full-year course)

Students in this course will continue to develop their skills in performing music on an approved band instrument. This course has mandatory evening performances at least twice each year usually consisting of a Winter Concert in December and a Spring Concert in May. There will also be a sixth-grade band night in conjunction with youth sports night at a home Spartan football game on a Friday night in late September/early October in which the sixth grade band members will get the chance to perform with the marching band. Students should have previous experience in band, audition or have teacher recommendation. Students that sign up for this class as beginners are allowed but must be approved by the director. Beginners will be mostly self guided and must either provide their own instrument or rent from a pre-approved music store.

CHORUS 6
(Full-year course)

Sixth grade chorus is designed for entry-level singers as well as those who have achieved elementary choral skills. Active participation will include Kodàly sight-singing skills, basic music theory for singers, as well as the development of vocal technique to a level required for continuance in this field of study. This is an elective course which meets and rehearses on a regular basis as part of the student's daily schedule. Once the student enrolls in the class, he or she may drop the course ONLY DURING THE FIRST FOUR WEEKS OF THE SCHOOL YEAR. The chorus will perform at a mandatory winter concert in December and a mandatory spring concert toward the end of the school year, as well as other performance opportunities as scheduled by the director. Participation in these performances is part of the class grade, and a concert dress code will be detailed in class and sent home. Failure to participate in the concert may result in a D for that grade period.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS
SEVENTH GRADE

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS 7
(Full-year course)

Students taking this course will continue their understanding of the academic relationship between reading and writing. Two novel units using *The Outsiders* and *The Giver*, along with other short literary works, will aid the students in their mastery of comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and making connections among ideas and between texts with a concentration on textual evidence. The writing process is taught with emphasis given to text-dependent analysis writing. As in the previous year, open-ended responses to literary and informational texts will be examined and evaluated thoroughly. Grammar is practiced daily as a means to enhance effective writing. Vocabulary using Greek and Latin roots is studied and seamlessly aligns to the vocabulary study done in high school.

MATHEMATICS 7
(Full-year course)

Mathematics 7 is an introduction to Algebra I. This course is designed to expand understanding of integer operations to include all forms of signed, rational numbers while introducing key algebraic concepts such as writing and simplifying expressions, solving and graphing equations and inequalities, and using and evaluating formulas. Students will continue to explore ratios, rates, unit rates, and proportions and their use in graphs, statistics, and probability. In addition, other seventh grade PA Core anchors will be incorporated into daily lessons such as measurement and comparison of geometric figures, probability analysis, and data distribution.

SCIENCE 7
(Full-year course)

The Science 7 curriculum focuses on Earth and Space science topics. Laboratory work and deductive reasoning using the scientific process establish the Pennsylvania State Standards for Science. Topics ranging from sun-earth-moon relationship to rock cycle and ending in modern environmental issues allow 7th graders the ability to develop and use the processes taught in sixth grade. Responsibility of laboratories and connections between content prepare students for eighth grade.

SOCIAL STUDIES 7 - ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS
(Full-year course)

To understand today's world, students must learn about its past since many ancient civilizations laid strong foundations for modern cultures. In this course, students will learn how ideas, events,

and people of those early ages have shaped our lives. We will study their culture, their beliefs and gods, and how the geography of the land influenced their way of life. Through our interactive textbook with online student access, primary documents, videos, ancient world atlases, literature, and writing, students will learn, analyze, and apply information from the past to live in the present and plan for the future. They will analyze how perspective changes, how an event is portrayed and how that often affects what we learn about history. Students will be expected to apply what they have learned to compare and contrast, show cause and effect, and use higher level skills to infer, state and support opinions, show connections, and draw conclusions. We will cover the Stone Age, Mesopotamia, Egypt, India, China, Greece, Rome, and the ancient American civilizations.

MATH EXTENSION 7
(Full-year course)

Math Extension is a supplemental class to Math 7 where students receive additional support in the application of the 7th grade PA Core math standards. In Math Extension, students are provided with additional examples, re-teaching, and enrichment through notes, assignments, and projects. When assignments are given in Math 7, time is allotted during Math Extension for guided practice and help. The goal of Math Extension is to provide students with the assistance and time they may need to be more successful learners.

SCIENCE AND DESIGN
(Nine-week course for students not enrolled in Math Extension 7)

Students will engage in a problem-solving format for which they must create a design for a particular need. Student engineers will set goals by establishing objectives, developing a plan, and evaluating their prototype. Teams will utilize their knowledge of science and math to ultimately develop, build, and test their proposed designs. Once engineer teams have built their prototypes, they will use the scientific method to complete performance tests. Groups will present their prototypes to representatives for a final review of success. Additionally, students will collaborate with their peers in US in the World during the end of the quarter to create civilization. While in Science & Design, students will design and create a 3-D civilization using skills learned during the first portion of the course. This civilization will model the research component US in the World students will create. Science and Design students will be responsible for building physical structures that follow the civilization plan.

U.S. IN THE WORLD
(Nine-week course for students not enrolled in Math Extension 7)

U.S. in the World introduces students to current events and debate topics that are facing the world today. This course will give the students an understanding of what is happening in the world around them. The students will be encouraged to form their own opinions while improving their awareness of important national and global issues. Students will explore the issues from a variety of perspectives and evaluate how these issues can affect them. Students will explore topics in the areas of civil/human rights, domestic laws and policies, world health concerns, environmental issues, global economic systems, and the role of the United States in the 21st century global

community. This course will also give students the opportunity to collaborate with students from Science and Design to create their own society. Students will create a STEM model of their society along with completing a presentation that will focus on the geography, social structure, government, religion, and achievements of their society.

WRITING WORKSHOP
(Nine-week course for students not enrolled in Math Extension 7)

Writing Workshop will enhance the writing instruction that students receive in their 7th grade English Language Arts class. Specific attention will be paid to the skills necessary to create a well-developed text dependent analysis. Students will also focus on grammar skills that will improve their written communication.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION 7
(Full-year course)

The physical education curriculum is a comprehensive health-related program that teaches the motor skills and fitness concepts necessary for students to develop and maintain an enjoyable physically active lifestyle. Course work is centered on developmental sequences defined by the National Physical Education Standards. The program focuses on basic movement skills, fitness, and team and individual sports. Leadership, teamwork, cooperation, competition, and good sportsmanship are stressed throughout the physical education curriculum. Students learn to evaluate their own fitness level in conjunction with the health curriculum through the use of a variety of assessment tools.

HEALTH 7
(Full-year course)

The curriculum is a knowledge and skills-based approach designed to focus on the social, physical, and emotional well-being of each student. Our mission is to develop responsible and productive citizens who will continue to build their health literacy as well as utilize this knowledge to promote their personal and community wellness throughout their lifetime. Our course addresses key concept areas recommended by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the National Health Standards.

CYCLE 7

ART 7
(Nine-week cycle)

Students in this course will obtain foundation knowledge of a series of different artistic mediums. Both 2 dimensional and 3 dimensional works will be explored, and students will be asked to complete a number of projects that follow detailed steps, familiarizing them with techniques that will be used in higher level art classes. This course is formatted in a way that reflects high school art classes, and is designed to give students a look into what high school art electives entail. Grading in this course focuses on project completion and time management skills more so than the aesthetic quality of the work, which becomes a larger focus in higher level classes.

MUSIC 7
(Nine-week cycle)

General Music 7 includes an interactive approach to learning music history by utilizing Quaver Music. Students will explore music of the Baroque Era through the Modern Period. Topics also studied and discussed are the development of the orchestra and keyboard, as well as the lives & works of great composers. These events are paralleled with important international events, relating music to the development of western civilization. Students will be introduced to world drumming and rhythm as well.

TECHNOLOGY 7
(Nine-week cycle)

Technology 7 is a nine-week cycle course enabling students to apply their knowledge and skills in computer applications to the design, presentation, and evaluation of specified projects. This course will cover computer literacy skills in the use of word processing, multimedia and spreadsheet applications. Applications taught will include Microsoft Word, PowerPoint and Excel. Lessons are cumulative and build upon previous skills. Students will create a PowerPoint presentation as a final project on a topic of their choice.

TED 7 (TECHNOLOGY ENGINEERING & DESIGN 7)
(Nine-week cycle)

This Technology Education based course is developed and designed to follow an introduction to the Engineering Design Process. This course is designed to guide students through engineering and manufacturing processes for designing and fabricating fluid power systems. Students will be required to develop independent thinking and problem-solving skills to complete various technology-based tasks.

ELECTIVES

BAND 7
(Full-year course)

Students in this course will continue to develop their skills in performing music on an approved band instrument in a concert band setting and an optional marching band setting. Seventh grade students who wish to participate in the marching band should express their interest to the marching band director. Marching band begins immediately after school lets out in June with rookie marching camp, sectionals, and full band rehearsals to prepare for the Brentwood Fourth of July Parade. A two-week band camp in the last two weeks of July to August is mandatory for every member. Students that do not attend Camp will not be on the field in the drill of the show. The marching band performs at every football game (home and away), parades including the Brentwood Fourth of July Parade, Kennywood Fall Fantasy Parade, Pittsburgh 12 Veterans Day Parade, and Brentwood Memorial Day Parade, as well as band festivals in August through November. As the marching season winds down after the first nine weeks grading period, the concert band begins to prepare for the holiday concert held in December, winter concert in February, and the spring concert at the end of April or beginning of May. Following the spring concert, marching band resumes in preparation for the Brentwood Memorial Day Parade. Students should have previous experience in band, audition or teacher recommendation. Students that sign up for this class as beginners are allowed but must be approved by the director. Beginners will be mostly self-guided and must either provide their own instrument or rent from a pre-approved music store.

CHORUS 7
(Full-year course)

Seventh and eighth grade chorus takes the singing voice with some experience, as well as the novice voice, and develops choral methods appropriate to a junior high school level. Students will further their experience with Kodàly sight-singing skills as well as developing a deeper understanding of vocal technique, which includes the cambiata, or changing voice. This is an elective course which will meet and rehearse on a regular basis as part of the student's daily schedule. Once the student enrolls in the class, he or she may drop the course ONLY DURING THE FIRST FOUR WEEKS OF THE SCHOOL YEAR. The ensemble will perform at a mandatory winter concert in December and a mandatory spring concert toward the end of the school year, as well as other performance opportunities as scheduled by the director. Participation in these performances is part of the class grade, and a dress code for the evening performances will be detailed in class and sent home. Failure to participate in the concerts may result in a D for that grade period. Opportunities for participation in outside PMEA Choral Festivals will be offered.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS
EIGHTH GRADE

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS 8
(Full-year course)

Language Arts 8 presents thematic units which demonstrate that language and oral communication are important tools students need to live effectively. Students become the artists, as they learn that vocabulary, writing, and reading are interwoven to produce a unique product. Students learn to read, interpret, and analyze different types of texts and make connections. Activities and multi-modal materials involve listening, reading, speaking and writing. Work in classic and contemporary fiction and non-fiction help students review basic reading skills and develop critical thinking and evaluation skills through activities, written responses, discussions, projects, and presentations. Analysis and application are at the heart of class activities. A process approach is used to develop students' writing; drafting, rewriting, conferencing, revising, editing and publishing become the artist's method to polished compositions. The writing process is taught with emphasis given to narrative, argumentative, informative/explanatory, and creative writings. Grammar is taught as a means to produce effective writing; emphasis is placed on function rather than terminology.

ALGEBRA I
(Full-year course)

In Algebra I, students will build upon Mathematics 7 concepts as well as develop skills necessary for success in upper level math and science courses. Students will learn to approach and solve problems following a logical, organized and justified sequence of steps. Coursework will involve class work such as participation in discussions, note-taking, practice problems and group work as well as daily homework assignments and on-line Keystone Exam practice. Course content is aligned to the Algebra I Keystone Assessment Anchors and includes the study of real numbers, expressions, linear equations and inequalities, functions, polynomial operations, coordinate geometry, data analysis and probability. In addition, the 8th Grade PA Core Standards will be incorporated into daily lessons. Students in Algebra I will take the 8th Grade PSSA Math Assessment in the spring and the Algebra I Keystone Exam in May. In order to help prepare for the Keystone Exam, Algebra I students will have an additional lab period each week.

Criteria for selection-

1. Final Grade of an A or a B in Mathematics 7
2. Recommendation of Mathematics 7 Teacher

MATHEMATICS 8
(Full-year course)

In this course, students will solidify and build upon concepts introduced in Mathematics 6 and Mathematics 7. This course covers mathematics concepts not only in depth but also in a creative way to reach students who may have some difficulty with mathematics. The goal is for students to master essential concepts and procedures and then be able to apply them in various problem solving situations. Coursework will involve class work such as participation in discussions, note-taking, practice problems and group work as well as daily homework assignments and on-line PSSA Test practice. Course content is aligned to the 8th Grade PA Core Standards and includes the study of the number system, algebraic expressions and equations, functions, coordinate geometry, statistics and probability. Students in Mathematics 8 will take the 8th Grade PSSA Math Assessment in the spring.

SCIENCE 8
(Full-year course)

The main objective of this science program is to introduce students to the aspects of science that they will encounter during their four years of high school. We focus on scientific reasoning, scientific inquiry, data analysis, and critical thinking as they apply to scientific concepts such as motion, forces, work/simple machines, energy, matter, genetics, and biological processes. Frequent experimentation and laboratory work will be conducted to provide students with the necessary techniques and experience needed to succeed in future science courses. The class fosters problem-solving skills and deeper understanding of basic concepts taught in the preceding science courses. Those skills will be applicable to subsequent courses as well as to everyday life.

SOCIAL STUDIES 8 – AMERICAN HISTORY
(Full-year course)

Students in this course will investigate, analyze, and interpret concepts and events that shaped the early history of the United States of America. The course curriculum will focus on eight distinct units of study: Unit 1 – Foundations of Historical Analysis, Unit 2 – European Colonization of the Americas, Unit 3 – The 13 Colonies, Unit 4 – The American Revolution, Unit 5 – The Constitution and Bill of Rights, Unit 6 – The Early Republic, Unit 7 – Expansion and Division, and Unit 8 – The Civil War. Course work will include higher level reading and writing assignments, evaluating the credibility of sources of information, examining multiple perspectives through primary/secondary source analysis, and utilizing the historical inquiry approach to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION 8
(Full-year course)

The physical education curriculum is a comprehensive health-related program that teaches the motor skills and fitness concepts necessary for students to develop and maintain an enjoyable physically active lifestyle. Course work is centered on developmental sequences defined by the National Physical Education Standards. The program focuses on basic movement skills, fitness, and team and individual sports. Leadership, teamwork, cooperation, competition, and good sportsmanship are stressed throughout the physical education curriculum. Students learn to evaluate their own fitness level in conjunction with the health curriculum through the use of a variety of assessment tools.

HEALTH 8
(Full-year course)

The curriculum is a knowledge and skills-based approach designed to focus on the social, physical, and emotional well-being of each student. Our mission is to develop responsible and productive citizens who will continue to build their health literacy as well as utilize this knowledge to promote their personal and community wellness throughout their lifetime. Our course addresses key concept areas recommended by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the National Health Standards.

FOREIGN LANGUAGE

GERMAN I
(Full-year course)

German I is the foundation of the language of German. The German I student begins with pronunciation of letters and sounds and learning to introduce oneself and greet others. Basic classroom commands are taught and then the students expand into discussions of themselves and their interests. They learn to discuss likes and dislikes, discussing family and friends, school life, reacting to good news and bad news, and discussing sports and music. They have regular listening activities and tests, which helps them interpret spoken German. By the end of the school year, German I students are expected to conjugate verbs, tell time, use correct syntax, express wants and needs, read schedules, read maps, describe weather and seasons. The recognition of grammatical patterns and rules such as forming plurals, identifying genders of nouns, and identifying parts of speech is necessary for success in German I.

Criteria for selection-

1. Teacher recommendation
2. Proficient or Advanced on 7th grade ELA PSSA

SPANISH I
(Full-year course)

The first year course in Spanish provides the foundation for the four essential skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The students learn everyday situations through unit themes, such as greeting others, inviting friends, expressing emotions and opinions, and seeking information about personal details, school, food, and family. In addition, ample written exercises and a variety of activities reinforce vocabulary usage and grammatical structures. Listening skills are developed using teacher and peer conversations as well adding enrichment with cultural insights and perspectives.

Criteria for selection-

1. Teacher recommendation
2. Proficient or Advanced on 7th grade ELA PSSA

PSSA PREP
(Full-year course)

PSSA Prep is a course offered to 8th grade students who are not enrolled in Level I of a foreign language (German or Spanish). The course is designed to provide additional instruction relative to the skills that are assessed on the English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics PSSA exams that are administered in the spring. Student classroom performance as well as previous performance on the 7th grade PSSA exams are considered when determining enrollment in the PSSA Prep course.

CYCLE 8

COMPUTER SCIENCE 8
(Nine-week cycle)

In this cycle class, you will learn to create digital scenes, interactive animations, and simple 2D games using the JavaScript programming language in code.org's "Game Lab" environment. Starting off with simple shapes and building up to more sophisticated sprite-based animations, students will become familiar with programming concepts and processes commonly used by designers and developers. Along the way, students will frequently practice design, testing, and iteration, as they come to see that debugging is an expected and valuable part of the programming process.

FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCE 8
(Nine-week cycle)

Eighth grade students will explore the Family and Consumer Sciences strand of curriculum through exposure to nutrition, child development, and career readiness activities. The course work will provide students with hands-on opportunities to develop foundational skills and understandings necessary for high school family and consumer science course offerings.

MUSIC 8
(Nine-week cycle)

General Music 8 completes our trip through music history in the 20th and early 21st century and concludes with music today. We begin with the history and development of the great American art form of Jazz. The musical elements of rock and roll and its metamorphosis are explored & compared & contrasted with Jazz 7 Hip-Hop. Through the continued use of guitars, students investigate chords and harmonies, take a deeper look into reading, writing and creating music, and alternate picking further prepares the motivated student with a solid foundation for further independent study. As always, thoughtful and responsible discussion and opinion is highly encouraged. A final music composition project in Quaver Music is required.

TECHNOLOGY 8
(Nine-week cycle)

Technology 8 is a nine-week cycle course enabling students to apply their knowledge and skills in computer applications to the design, presentation, and evaluation of specified projects. This course will build upon the skills covered in Technology 7 and introduce more advanced features used in word processing, multimedia, and spreadsheet applications. The applications taught will include Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, and Excel. Lessons are cumulative. Students will create a PowerPoint presentation as a final project on a topic of their choice.

ELECTIVES

BAND 8
(Full-year course)

Students in this course will continue to develop their skills in performing music on an approved band instrument in both a marching band and a concert band setting. Marching band begins immediately after school lets out in June with rookie marching camp, sectionals, and full band rehearsals to prepare for the Brentwood Fourth of July Parade. A two-week band camp in the last two weeks of July to August is mandatory for every member. The marching band performs at every football game (home and away), a few parades including the Brentwood Fourth of July Parade, Kennywood Fall Fantasy Parade, Pittsburgh Veterans Day Parade, and Brentwood Memorial Day Parade, as well as a few band festivals in August through November. As the marching season winds down after the first nine weeks grading period, the concert band begins to prepare for the winter concert held in December and the spring concert usually held in May. Following the spring concert, marching band resumes in preparation for the Brentwood Memorial Day Parade. Students should have previous experience in band, audition or teacher recommendation. Students that sign up for this class as beginners are allowed but must be approved by the director. Beginners will be mostly self-guided and must either provide their own instrument or rent from a pre-approved music store.

CHORUS 8
(Full-year course)

Seventh and eighth grade chorus takes the singing voice with some experience, as well as the novice voice, and develops choral methods appropriate to a junior high school level. Students will further their experience with Kodàly sight-singing skills as well as developing a deeper understanding of vocal technique, which includes the cambiata, or changing voice. This is an elective course which will meet and rehearse on a regular basis as part of the student's daily schedule. Once the student enrolls in the class, he or she may drop the course ONLY DURING THE FIRST FOUR WEEKS OF THE SCHOOL YEAR. The ensemble will perform at a mandatory winter concert in December and a mandatory spring concert toward the end of the school year, as well as other performance opportunities as scheduled by the director. Participation in these performances is part of the class grade, and a dress code for the evening performances will be detailed in class and sent home. Failure to participate in the concerts may result in a D for that grade period. Opportunities for participation in outside PMEA Choral Festivals will be offered.

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

ESL I
(Full-year course)

ESL I is offered to students qualifying for English as a second language instruction based off their ACCESS Screener or ACCESS WIDA exam. This course teaches the foundations of English and consists of two periods of class daily. Students will work on common phrases in English and build phonics skills. Instruction is provided in English with accommodated materials that meet the needs of each leaner. ESL I students are expected to communicate their basic needs, personal information, follow multiple step verbal instructions, create grammatically correct simple sentences, and read at an early elementary level in English by the end of the year.

ESL II
(Full-year course)

ESL II is offered to students qualifying for English as a second language instruction based off their ACCESS Screener or ACCESS WIDA exam. Students must score at the "Developing" or higher level to be eligible for this course. This course teaches an English language arts curriculum with modifications that are meant to assist English language learners meet their grade level English language arts expectations. Students are expected to read grade level text with comprehension and fluency, apply grammar and mechanic rules in their writing, and speak using a robust English vocabulary to discuss a wide range of subjects. Students can expect to complete a variety of writing and reading assignments which connect to their grade level ELA standards.

Foundations of Numeracy
(Full-year course)

Foundations of Numeracy is designed for English language learners who are building their foundational math skills. The course focuses on helping students develop confidence and competence in basic math operations such as addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. Students will also explore working with integers, understanding the order of operations, and solving one- and two-step equations. Additionally, practical skills such as managing money and applying math to real-life situations will be a key part of the curriculum.

Throughout the course, students will engage in hands-on activities, practice problem-solving strategies, and develop a strong number sense. A supportive, inclusive classroom environment is provided where students can improve their math skills at their own pace while preparing for more advanced math courses in the future.

This course is perfect for students who are new to formal schooling and need a solid math foundation to build on. Whether students are just starting to learn math or need to strengthen basic skills, this class will provide the support and practice needed to succeed.

Criteria for selection-

1. Teacher recommendation
2. Diagnostic assessment score

Brentwood Middle School
Class Schedule
2025-2026

Grade 6

Block 1	8:00 – 9:10
Block 2	9:15 – 10:15
Lunch	10:20 – 10:55
Block 3	11:00 – 12:00
Block 4	12:05 – 1:06
Period 7 - Phys Ed/Band/Chorus/Tutorial	1:10 – 1:52
Period 8 - Cycle	1:56 – 2:45

Grades 7 and 8

Period 1	8:00 – 8:46
Period 2	8:50 – 9:32
Period 3	9:36 – 10:18
Period 4	10:22 – 11:04
Lunch	11:04 – 11:34
Period 6	11:38 – 12:36
Period 6B – Band/Chorus/Tutorial	12:36 – 1:06
Period 7	1:10 – 1:52
Period 8	1:56 – 2:45

Brentwood Middle School
Grades 6 - 7 - 8

Mr. David Radcliffe
Middle School Principal

Mr. Ted Ulmer
Middle/High School Assistant Principal

Mrs. Whitney Reynolds
Middle School Counselor

The Brentwood Borough School District is an equal opportunity educational institution and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin sex, or disability in its activities, programs or employment practices as required by Title VI, Title IX, and Section 504.