



**Buffalo Creek Middle School  
Cambridge Assessment International Education**

**Course Description Guide**

**2021-2022**

## MISSION

The mission of Buffalo Creek Middle School is to inspire our students with a passion for learning, empowered to pursue their dreams confidently and creatively while contributing to our community, nation, and world. The school aims to fulfill this mission by incorporating Cambridge schoolwide for all students.

### Cambridge supports schools to develop learners who are:

- ▶ **confident** in working with information and ideas – their own and those of others
- ▶ **responsible** for themselves, responsive to and respectful of others
- ▶ **reflective** as learners, developing their ability to learn
- ▶ **innovative** and equipped for new and future challenges
- ▶ **engaged** intellectually and socially, ready to make a difference

## OVERVIEW

It is important for students to be enrolled in courses that will challenge them, but also allow for academic success. That balance is achieved by considering FSA scores, report card grades, work ethic, course pre-requisites and teacher recommendations.

The Master Schedule is created, and teachers are hired based on student registration in classes. Schedule changes will NOT be made after the school year begins, unless there has been a clerical error or a student has been misplaced. Students and parents need to carefully select classes based on course descriptions, teacher recommendation and counselor advice.

We make every effort to honor students' elective choices, but Class Size Amendment, which limits the number of students in core courses does have an effect on our master schedule. This may mean that it is not possible to balance classes and give all students their first or second choice of electives. Students with low FSA scores will be in remediation classes instead of electives.

Teacher recommendations for the level of classes are important because the teacher observes the student's work ethic, organizational skills, and maturity. Advanced and honors classes require extra time and commitment on the part of the student.

## CAMBRIDGE/ADVANCED/HONORS/DUAL ENROLLMENT CLASSES

**Advanced, Cambridge and Honors courses** have several FSA and course pre-requisites and have an expectation of considerable homework, class participation, good behavior & attitude, required outside projects, and outside-of-class preparation. *Comprehensive semester exams will be given.*

**High school dual enrollment classes** have higher FSA pre-requisites, an expectation of nightly homework, outside reading and preparation, outside projects, and expectations of good behavior & attitude. *Comprehensive semester exams comprise at least 20% of the semester report card grade. Students must pass a state End-of-Course Exam in math classes to receive credit for the class, regardless of grades.*

**Dual enrollment** classes establish the student's high school Grade Point Average (GPA) and will appear on high school transcripts. Students and parents should discuss the number of dual enrollment classes that a student can handle at one time because of the daily out-of-class-time required to prepare

for these classes. Grades of an A or B in Dual Enrollment courses indicate success. A “C” average means the student would carry a 2.0 GPA on the high school transcript.

## **AVID**

**AVID 6,7,8** Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) is an in-school academic support program. The purpose of the program is to prepare students for college eligibility and success. AVID places academically average students in advanced classes; levels the playing field for minority, rural, low-income, and other students without a college-going tradition in their families; and targets students in the academic middle--B, C, and even D students--who have the desire to go to college and the willingness to work hard. These students have an AVID elective each day in place of another elective. Applications will be available after March 1<sup>st</sup> and must be completed online.

## **LANGUAGE ARTS**

**Intensive Reading** This course is required as remediation for those who need to increase reading skills. The purpose of this course is to develop and strengthen reading through the integration of reading, writing, listening, speaking, viewing, and critical thinking, depending on FSA reading level.

**Language Arts 6** Students learn several techniques to improve their expository and persuasive writing skills. Grammar mini lessons are presented, as a strong understanding of English grammar translates into solid writing. Greek and Latin roots are studied in order to create expansive vocabularies. Reading strategies such as KWL Plus, selective highlighting, and text coding are emphasized, and literature study includes award winning young adult fiction, short stories, plays, and poetry.

**Language Arts 7** Greek and Latin roots are studied in order to create expansive vocabularies. Literature study includes fiction, nonfiction, short stories, drama, and poetry. Grammar lessons are presented to help students identify patterns and rules found in the English language. Techniques and devices are taught to improve expository and persuasive writing skills. Literary techniques and devices are used in comprehension and creation of written, oral, and visual communication. Multimedia tools are used to enhance communication, presentations, and information relevant to the course.

**Language Arts 8** Curriculum focuses on reading, writing, listening, speaking and viewing competencies, which are integrated throughout students' learning experiences. Major emphasis is on the implementation of the writing process with both formal and informal writing situations. Eighth grade students will learn several strategies to improve their expository and persuasive writing skills, which prepare students for FSA Writes. Eighth graders will study elements of literature, grammar, and vocabulary while reading young adult fiction, nonfiction, short stories, plays, and poetry.

### **Cambridge Language Arts 6, 7, or 8**

Cambridge classes are more rigorous than regular classes with expectations of more advanced writing and reading assignments requiring more out-of-class time and homework. Unit Performance Assessments will be at a higher level. Writing and reading are more mature and challenging.

**Pre-AICE English I** This is a High School Dual Enrollment course that is offered to eighth grade students who meet academic requirements and have teacher recommendation. Grades will be on the high school transcript. Unit studies and themes are consistent with the ninth-grade honors language arts curriculum. Class requirements include extensive outside reading, writing and projects. A cumulative exam counts for at least 20% of the semester grade.

## MATHEMATICS

**Intensive Math 6, 7, or 8** This course covers the same material as regular math but provides extra remediation for students who scored below proficiency on the FSA Math the prior year.

**Mathematics 6** This course covers the operations with whole numbers, decimals and fractions, exponents, ratio and proportion, basic geometry, estimation, data display, standard and metric measurement, and the use of variables.

**Mathematics 7** This course covers a variety of general math topics from core curriculum, including basic statistics, number theory, algebraic reasoning, proportional reasoning, percentages, probability and basic geometry.

**Mathematics 8** This course is primarily a Pre-Algebra course that is designed to prepare students to take Algebra I in high school. This course has a strong emphasis on the use of variables in equations and expressions and focuses on operations with integers and fractions. Basic geometric concepts are taught with an emphasis on algebraic thinking. In addition, the course covers word-problem solving strategies, probability and data analysis.

**Cambridge Mathematics 6,7,8** Cambridge classes are more rigorous than regular classes, the expectation is for the highly motivated student, applied and accepted, has teacher recommendation, along with above average FSA scores.

**Pre Algebra 8** This course covers foundations for a solid mathematical understanding which will prepare for a successful experience in high school mathematics. Algebraic and geometric concepts will be integrated into every unit and meaningful connections will be made to real-world problem solving.

**Pre-AICE Math 1 (Algebra 1)** This course meets high school dual enrollment credit requirements. Students must complete and demonstrate mastery of the material covered in advanced 7th grade math and have earned a 4 or 5 on the most current FSA Mathematics. Emphasis is on algebraic solutions to complex word problems, including functions and systems of equations, polynomials, irrational numbers and quadratic equations. Students are required to take the same cumulative semester exams that are given in high school, counting at least 20 percent of the semester grade.

**Pre-AICE Math 2 (Geometry 1)** This is a high school dual enrollment course that will be on the high school transcript. The primary objective is to teach students how to reason mathematically through visualization, analysis and deductive reasoning. Proficiency with geometric skills is developed and applied to the understanding of geometric concepts. Topics include angle measurements and relationships, parallel line relationships, properties of polygons and solids, congruent triangles, similarity, right triangle trigonometry, circles, constructions, area, volume and coordinate geometry. Emphasis is on logic and proofs. A variety of applications and general problem-solving techniques, including algebra skills, are required. Pre-requisites are a recommendation from the algebra teacher and a grade of 85 % or better in Algebra I Honors.

## SCIENCE

**Science 6** This course studies general concepts, theories, and processes relating to these core questions: *How do we learn about our world and ourselves? What are the parts of living things and how do they work? Why do some parts of our world change while others stay the same? How do natural forces affect our lives? How can we use models to learn about our world?* The content includes scientific method, laws and theories, cell structure and function, organization levels, body systems, classification, rock cycle, Earth structures,

weathering and erosion, energy, weather, and force and motion.

**Science 7** This course studies general concepts, theories, and processes relating to these core questions: *In what ways do living things interact with each other and the environment? Why does the Earth change over time? How does energy move in the environment? What is our role on Earth?* The content includes the scientific method, environmental organization, food chains and webs, ecosystems, resource conservation, fossils, evolution, endangered and extinct species, genetics and heredity, continental drift, plate tectonics, and energy and waves.

**Science 8** This course studies general concepts, theories and processes relating to these core questions: *How are science and technology used to solve problems and improve our way of life? How are objects in the universe organized? What does the structure of an object tell us about how it works? Why are both stability and change necessary for sustaining life?* Content includes the scientific method, seasonal changes, lunar phases, sun and planets, space exploration, electromagnetic spectrum, matter, atoms, periodic table, acids and bases, chemical reactions, cellular respiration, and human growth & development.

**Cambridge Science 6, 7 or 8** Designed for the highly motivated above-average student who can read and work independently outside of class to prepare. Requires more homework and out-of-class reading. Cambridge students must demonstrate time management and multi-tasking skills.

#### **Pre-AICE Coordinated Science**

**\*\*\* Students will be placed based on our Student Progression Plan T**

This course gives learners the opportunity to study Biology, Chemistry and Physics within a cross-referenced, scientifically coherent syllabus. Learners gain an understanding of the basic principles of each subject through a mix of theoretical and practical studies, while also developing an understanding of the scientific skills essential for further study.

## **SOCIAL STUDIES**

**World History** This course focuses on the development of the world community within the context of history by examining connections to the past to prepare for the future as participating members of a global society. Students will use knowledge of history, geography, economics, political processes, religion, ethics, diverse cultures, and humanities to solve problems in academic, civic, and social and employment settings.

**Advanced World History** Designed for the highly motivated student who can read and work independently outside of class. Completion of a project for the History Fair is mandatory. \*\*\*

**Civics** This state-required course provides a study of the foundations of government and what it means to enjoy the freedoms and liberty that a democracy provides its citizens. The course work also integrated economics, and geography. **In order to be promoted from middle school, students must pass and End-of Course Exam.**

**Advanced Civics Completion** Designed for the highly motivated student who can read and work independently outside of class. Completion of a project for the History Fair is mandatory.\*\*\*

**United States History** The purpose of this course is to enable students to understand the development of the United States within the context of history by examining connections to the past to prepare for the future as participating members of a democratic society. Students will use knowledge pertaining to history, geography, economics, political processes, religion, ethics, diverse cultures, and humanities to solve problems in academic, civic, social, and employment settings.

**Advanced United States History** Designed for the highly motivated student who has teacher recommendation and can read and work independently. Completion of a History Fair project is mandatory.\*\*\*

\*\*\**Note: the timing of the History Fair project and Science Fair project dates overlap. Advanced students need to demonstrate time-management and multi-tasking skills.*

## ELECTIVES

### AGRICULTURE

**Agriculture I** The agricultural program is a fun hands-on course that offers an opportunity for students to learn about the endless possibilities in the world of agriculture. Students will be exposed to the many areas of agriculture such as wildlife, aquaculture, small animals, career explorations, dairy products, greenhouse plant management, landscaping, beef cattle, leadership, and food safety.

**Agriculture II** Students will have an expanded opportunity to work closely with the land lab and several different types of small animals. This course also allows students to compete in local, state, and national competitions. Exploration of the many careers in agriculture are explored and experienced in a fun and challenging way.

**Advanced Agriculture III-FFA** Building on the prior years of agriculture, students in this class will participate in the Future Farmers of America (FFA) and meet the requirements for participation in this organization, including competitions and academics. The ability to work independently is necessary. *Ag teacher recommendation required.*

#### **Agriscience Foundations**

\*\*\**This is a high school dual enrollment course for eighth graders that affects a student's high school GPA.*

This course is designed to develop competencies in the areas of agricultural history and the global impact of agriculture; career opportunities; scientific and research concepts; biological and physical science principles; environmental principles; agriscience safety; principles of leadership; and agribusiness, employability, and human relations skills in agriscience. Laboratory-based activities are an integral part of this course. These include the safe use and application of appropriate technology, scientific testing and observation equipment.

*Application and Agriculture teacher approval is required.*

#### **Global Perspectives**

Cambridge IGCSE Global Perspectives is a groundbreaking and stimulating course that stretches across traditional subject boundaries and develops transferable skills. It is both cross-curricular and skills-based and taps into the way learners of today enjoy learning, including teamwork, presentations, projects, and working with other learners around the world. The emphasis is on developing the ability to think critically about a range of global issues where there is always more than one point of view.

## BAND

\*\**All students may sign up for Beginning Band. Other bands require an audition and recommendation from the Band teacher.*

**Beginning Band I** This course is for students with no previous band experience. Students will choose from several different band Instruments. No previous music reading knowledge is necessary. *Participation in performances beyond regular school hours is part of this course.*

**Symphonic Band II** This course is for seventh and eighth grade students with at least one year of band instruction. The purpose of this course is to continue to develop playing skills and related non-playing concepts.

*Participation in performances beyond regular school hours is a required part of this course.*

**Jazz Band III** This course is for any student that has successfully completed Beginning Band. The purpose of this course is to introduce Jazz concepts, styles and history. To be in Jazz Band, all students except guitar and piano players MUST be in Symphonic Band or Wind Ensemble as well.

*Participation in performances beyond regular school hours is a required part of this course.*

**Wind Ensemble** For eighth graders with at least one year of band instruction, the course continues to develop playing skills and related non-playing concepts. Advanced seventh grade band students may be placed in this group with teacher approval.

*Participation in performances beyond regular school hours is required.*

## CHORUS

**Chorus I** Designed for students to learn proper vocal technique to become better singers & musicians. This class incorporates learning to read music lyrics, notation and symbols. Students will sing various styles of music and are required to perform in scheduled outside performances. Participation in performances beyond regular school hours is required.

**Chorus II- Intermediate** For seventh and eighth graders who have completed a prior course of Chorus as a semester or year-long elective. Participation in performances beyond regular school hours is required.

**Chorus III-** Students with previous choral experience build intermediate-level knowledge of vocal technique, musical literacy, ensemble skills, and related musical knowledge through rehearsal, performance, and study of a variety of high-quality 2-, 3-, and 4-part choral literature. Public performances may serve as a culmination of specific instructional goals. Students may be required to attend and/or participate in rehearsals and performances outside the school day to support, extend, and assess learning in the classroom.

## ORCHESTRA

**Beginning Orchestra I** This course is for students with no previous string playing experience. Students will choose to play the violin, viola, cello, or bass. No previous music reading knowledge is necessary. *Participation in performances beyond regular school hours is part of this course.*

**Concert Orchestra II** This course is for string students with at least one semester of string instruction. The purpose of this course is to continue the development of playing skills and further general knowledge of related non-playing concepts.

*Participation in performances beyond the regular school hours is a required part of this course.*

**Symphonic Orchestra III** This course is for eighth grade students with at least one year of string instruction. The purpose of this course is to continue to develop playing skills and related non-playing concepts. Advanced seventh grade string students may be placed in this performing group with teacher approval.

*Participation in performances beyond regular school hours is a required part of this course.*

**Chamber Orchestra** This course is an advanced orchestra course for students with at least one semester of string instruction who are also taking concert or symphonic orchestra. The purpose of this course is to continue to develop playing skill and related non-playing concepts. The music performed in this class has an emphasis on pop music.

*Participation in performances beyond the regular school hours is a required part of this course.*

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

### **Physical Education- Fitness 6**

The purpose of this course is to provide students with the knowledge, skills, and values they need to become healthy and physically active for a lifetime. This course addresses both the health and skill-related components of physical fitness which are critical for students' success.

### **Physical Education- Team Sports 7**

The purpose of this course is to develop the physical skills necessary to be competent in many forms of movement, knowledge of team sports concepts such as offensive and defensive strategies and tactics, and appropriate social behaviors within a team or group setting. The integration of fitness concepts throughout the content is critical to the success of this course.

### **Physical Education- Extreme Sports 8**

The purpose of this course is to provide the skills, knowledge, and motivation necessary for participation in non-traditional forms of physical activity. The integration of fitness concepts throughout the content is critical to student success in this course and in the development of a healthy and physically active lifestyle.

## SPANISH

*\*7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade students only*

**Beginning Spanish** This course introduces students to the target language and its culture. Students will learn beginning skills in listening and speaking and an introduction to basic skills in reading and writing. Also, culture, connections, comparisons, and communities are included in this one-year course.

**Spanish I** This is a high school dual enrollment course for eighth graders that affects a student's high school GPA. Students must have the recommendation of the current language arts teacher. Students begin to acquire proficiency in Spanish through a linguistic, communicative, and cultural approach to language learning. Emphasis is placed on the development of listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills and on acquisition of the fundamentals of applied grammar.

*Students must take a cumulative exam that counts for at least 20 percent of the semester grade.*

## BUSINESS TECHNOLOGY

**Computer Applications in Business I** The purpose of this course is to assist students in making informed decisions regarding their future academic and occupational goals and to provide information regarding careers in the Business Management and Administration career cluster. The content includes but is not limited to instruction in intermediate keyboarding, intermediate word processing, intermediate electronic presentation, intermediate computer hardware, intermediate Internet, introductory spreadsheet, and skills for business applications. This class provides an overview of



multiple software programs including Business related applications such as Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint and Graphic Designing Applications such as Adobe Photoshop. This class is for the student who enjoys technology and wants to learn more about graphic design or business-related fields.

**Computer Applications in Business II** This course is designed for who have taken Computer Applications I and want to enhance their soft skills in Business related applications and Graphic Design. Students will dig deeper into programs such as Photoshop, Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint. It is highly recommended that students join FBLA (Future Business Leaders of America) to compete against other students from across the district and state in these technology areas.

**Computer Applications in Business III** This course is designed for students who have taken Computer Applications II and want to specialize their learned skills. The purpose of this course is to assist students in making informed decisions regarding their future academic and occupational goals and to provide information regarding careers in the Business Management and Administration career cluster. The content includes but is not limited to instruction in higher level keyboarding, intermediate word processing, intermediate electronic presentation, intermediate computer hardware, intermediate Internet, spreadsheet, and exponential skills for business applications.

**Business Leadership-** This course is designed for students who have taken Business Technology 1 and are involved in FBLA. Students will learn different aspects of Leadership and Management along with bettering their skills in multiple applications such as Microsoft Office, Adobe Illustrator, Dreamweaver and Advanced Photoshop. FBLA (Future Business Leaders of America) is required for this course in order to compete against other students from across the district and state in these areas.

*Application and Business Teacher approval is required.*

## **ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY**

### **Applied Engineering Technology**

**\*\*\*This is a high school dual enrollment course for eighth graders that affects a student's high school GPA.**

**Students can earn an industry certification in this course.**

The purpose of this program is to provide students with a foundation of knowledge and technically oriented experiences in the study of applied engineering and its effect upon our lives and the choosing of an occupation. The content and activities will also include the study of entrepreneurship, safety, and leadership skills. This program focuses on transferable skills and stresses understanding and demonstration of the technological tools, machines, instruments, materials, processes and systems in business and industry.

***Application and Engineering teacher approval is required.***

**Engineering Introduction to Tech I** This hands-on course includes introductory studies in areas of technology and engineering which introduce students to the development of abilities to calculate, make important observations, analyze and solve problems using manipulative skills while working cooperatively with others in team activities. Students will create innovative projects in robotics, racecar design and production, building water towers, product creation, etc.

**Engineering Exploratory Tech II** This course is designed for the student who has taken at least one year of technology, computer, or graphics design courses. Students will engage in advanced projects to include furniture repurposing, robotics, product creation, and an introduction to Adobe and/or 3D modeling software- Teacher recommendation required.

**Engineering and Design Technology III** –This course is designed for the student who is interested in learning various programs through the creation of projects and program application. Although these may change from year to year, they may include: Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Illustrator, Adobe Premier, Adobe InDesign or Solid works. Teacher recommendation required.

**TSA Leadership**- TSA members are eligible to apply for this class. Students will work in groups on events and nationally winning TSA projects as well as team and leadership building. In addition, they may work on learning programs needed to complete their projects.

## **ART**

### **Studio Art 1**

Students explore media and techniques used to create a variety of 2-D artworks through developing skills in drawing, painting, printmaking, and collage. Students practice, sketch, and manipulate the structural elements of art. Investigation of artworks from Western and non-Western cultures provide a means for students to expand their understanding and appreciation of the role of art in global culture. Student artists use an art criticism process to evaluate, explain, and measure artistic growth in personal or group works. This course incorporates hands-on activities and consumption of art materials.

### **Studio Art 2**

Students refine techniques used to create a variety of two-dimensional (2-D) artworks through developing skills in drawing, painting, printmaking, and collage. Students manipulate the structural elements of art to promote creative risk-taking in 2-D artwork. Investigation of artworks from Western and non-Western cultures provides a means for students to expand their understanding and appreciation of the role of art in global culture. Student artists use an art criticism process to evaluate, explain, and measure artistic growth in personal or group works. This course incorporates hands-on activities and consumption of art materials.

### **Studio Art 3**

Students will be placed based on prerequisites and/or experience. Students will make creative use of a set of combined relationships with innovative treatment of space to produce utilitarian forms or aesthetic structures. Student artists may work in, but are not confined to, content in green or environmental design, sculpture, ceramics, or installation art, creating maquettes, casting, and carving. Students explore abstraction and the relationship of scale (i.e., hand-held, human, or monumental) and disproportionate or exaggerated scale, as well as tension, grouping, proximity, and containment. Craftsmanship and quality are reflected in the surface and structural qualities of the completed art forms. Students in the 3-D art studio focus on use of safety procedures for process, media, and techniques. Student artists use an art criticism process to evaluate, explain, and measure artistic growth in personal or group works. This course incorporates hands-on activities and consumption of art materials.

**Yearbook Production** This course is open to seventh and eighth grade students who have already taken computer courses and have been selected through an application process and teacher recommendation. In this course students will market, sell, create, and distribute the school yearbook.