

A TRADITION OF EXCELLENCE FOR ALL



LYNCHBURG CITY SCHOOLS

# Lynchburg City Schools Middle School Program of Studies 2014 - 2015

*Every child, by name, and by need, to graduation*

*Lynchburg City Schools  
Mission Statement  
Adopted August 7, 2012*

*School Board Approved: March 4, 2014*

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<b>Page</b>
Overview	2
Attendance Zones	3
Promotion Guidelines	3
Graduation Requirements	3
High School Credit Courses in Middle School	4-5
Core Curriculum	6-9
English	6
Mathematics	7
Instructional Sequence Options for Math	8
Science	9
Social Studies/History	9-10
Physical Education, Family Life, Health	10
Paul Laurence Dunbar Middle School for Innovation	12
Gifted Education	12
Special Education	13
Middle School Electives	11-12

## Overview

The middle school provides instruction in core content knowledge and skills as well as elective and exploratory experiences appropriate to the developmental needs of early adolescents. In bridging the gap between elementary school and high school, the middle school moves the student from the child-centered, team-teaching, and unit approach of the elementary school to the departmentalized, diversified, and comprehensive instructional program available in the high school. The middle school day is divided into eight academic periods and a lunch period. Student hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 3:05 p.m.

The city's three middle schools offer a unified body of instruction based on the Standards of Learning for the Commonwealth of Virginia. All middle school students take at least one period of each of the four core academic areas: English, math, science, and social studies. Descriptions for these core academic courses are found in the Core Curriculum section of this document.

In addition to the core academic courses, all students participate in physical education and health coursework. In some cases in the sixth grade, physical education and health are part of an exploratory rotation. In the sixth or seventh grade, physical education and health classes are sometimes in conjunction with band or orchestra. Family life education is a part of the health curriculum, but parents may complete an "opt-out" form and have their child receive alternate assignments in place of the family life content. Remaining periods are commonly used to provide additional instruction in English, reading, math, exploratory courses, or elective courses. The exploratory and elective offerings vary among the schools. Information regarding the various offerings is found in the Middle School Electives section.

## **Middle School Attendance Zones**

The school a student attends is determined by the student's place of residence within geographical attendance zones; however, a portion of the student population of Paul Laurence Dunbar Middle School for Innovation is drawn from an applicant pool of students living outside of that attendance zone. Inquiries about the application process for Paul Laurence Dunbar Middle School for Innovation should be addressed to the Department of Information Technology, School Administration Building, 515-5017.

## **Middle School Promotion Guidelines**

A student's grade in a middle school course is determined by the teacher of that course. The teacher determines a numerical value for the student's achievement on each graded assignment, and a final percentage grade is calculated by the grading software provided by the school division.

Middle school promotion and retention guidelines are set by school board policy. Please refer to the Promotion, Retention, Acceleration Policy P 7-25 in the Lynchburg City Schools' Policy Manual found online at: <http://www.lcsedu.net/schoolboard/policymanual/>. Below is a summary of the promotion/retention guidelines for middle school students:

To be promoted from sixth grade to seventh grade, students must pass four courses. Students in advanced English must pass English and math, history and/or science, and/or one additional course. Non-advanced English students must pass two English classes (literature and writing) as well as math and either history or science. Students not promoted because they fail one or more core content courses must successfully complete the appropriate summer remediation courses to be considered for promotion.

To be promoted from seventh grade to eighth grade and to be promoted from eighth grade to ninth grade, students must pass five courses. Advanced English students must pass the four core academic subjects (English, math, science, and history) and one elective for promotion. Non-advanced English students must pass two English classes (literature and writing) as well as math, science, and history/social studies. If a student passes four core courses but not an elective, the principal may use his/her discretion in promoting the student. Students who fail one or more core courses must pass these courses in a summer school program to be considered for promotion.

## **High School Graduation Requirements**

High School graduation requirements are listed in the High School Program of Studies and can be found at <http://www.lcsedu.net/departments/curriculum/program-of-studies> on the Lynchburg City Schools' website.

# High School Credit Courses in Middle School

In accordance with the current *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia*, parents of a middle school student enrolled in a high school credit course may request that the grade earned in that course be omitted from their child's transcript. Under these guidelines, the grades earned in such classes are not included in the high school GPA, and no high school credit is earned for those courses.

Please see below sample copies of the **Third Quarter: High School Course Credit Option Form** and the **End-of-Year: High School Course Credit Option Form** which are used for parents to indicate high school credit decisions for their child.

[date]

Dear Parent/Guardian:

**As specified in the *Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia*, parents of middle school students who are enrolled in high school credit courses may “opt out” of the high school credit component of those courses. Under the guidelines, the grades earned in those classes will not be included on the student’s high school transcript, and the student will not receive high school credit for the courses. The standards further specify that notice of this provision and a document for “opting out” be provided by the school system. Specific questions regarding the opt-out policy should be directed to the counseling department.**

Therefore, for each high school credit course a middle school student takes, whether the student will be opted out or not, **this form must be completed and returned to the appropriate teacher within five days of receiving the third nine weeks’ report card.** If a student remains in the course for the second semester, that student will take any associated state Standards of Learning test, and that test score will be maintained in the student’s scholastic record. However, if at the end of the year the parents/guardians wish to have the entire year course removed from the transcript, that option will be available. Another form will be sent home with the final report card. At that time, to have an entire year of a course removed from the transcript, **a completed form will need to be returned for each course to be removed, and that form must be returned to the counseling department within one week of the receipt of the final report card.** Please be aware that students who are opted out of high school credit for a course will need to repeat that course in the future in order to receive credit toward meeting state diploma requirements.

Should you have any questions regarding the opt-out provision, please do not hesitate to contact your child’s counselor at [number].

Sincerely,

[Counseling Director]  
Counseling Director  
[LCS] Middle School

**Third Quarter: High School Course Credit Option Form (Sample)**

This form is for \_\_\_\_\_, **(print student's full name)**

for \_\_\_\_\_, **(course name)**

\_\_\_\_\_ I wish to have the course **counted** for high school credit and included on his/her high school transcript.

\_\_\_\_\_ I wish to have my child **opted out** of high school credit; this course should not be included on his/her high school transcript.

Parent/Guardian's Name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**End-of-Year: High School Course Credit Option Form (Sample)**

\*If there is no change from the decision indicated on the **Third Quarter: High School Course Credit Option Form**, it will not be necessary to complete and return this form.

This form is for \_\_\_\_\_, **(print student's full name)**

for \_\_\_\_\_, **(course name)**

\_\_\_\_\_ I wish to have the course **counted** for high school credit and included on his/her high school transcript.

\_\_\_\_\_ I wish to have my child **opted out** of high school credit; this course should not be included on his/her high school transcript.

This completed form will need to be returned for each course to be removed, and that form must be returned to the counseling department within one week of the receipt of the final report card. If this form is not returned, the default will be the decision indicated on the **Third Quarter: High School Course Credit Option Form**.

Parent/Guardian's Name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Core Curriculum

## English

**Blocked English 6 (961XY/9612Y):** This two-period (block) course provides instruction in vocabulary, reading comprehension, and literature, as well as in oral communication skills. The three domains of writing (composing, written expression, and usage/ mechanics) to produce multi-paragraph narratives, descriptions, and explanations will be a focus of this course. Students take the 6<sup>th</sup> grade reading SOL test upon completion of the course.

**English 6A (961AY):** This **advanced-level class** is designed to meet the needs of sixth grade students with **well-developed reading and writing skills**. Vocabulary, literature, language, and writing instruction are taught in one class period, and thus instruction must move at a faster pace than in the two-period format. In addition, students in the advanced-level class will have opportunities for wider reading and writing experiences than those required by the sixth grade English Standards of Learning. Selection factors for considering placement of students into this advanced-level class include success on the 5<sup>th</sup> grade SOL test, teacher recommendation and other standardized tests scores. Students take the 6<sup>th</sup> grade reading SOL test upon completion of the course.

**Blocked English 7 (971XY/9712Y):** This two-period (block) course provides instruction in vocabulary, reading comprehension, and literature, as well as in oral communication skills. The three domains of writing (composing, written expression, and usage/ mechanics) to produce multi-paragraph narratives, descriptions, and explanations will be a focus of this course. This class also includes oral communication. Students take the 7<sup>th</sup> grade reading SOL test upon completion of the course.

**English 7A (971AY):** This **advanced-level class** is designed to meet the needs of seventh grade students with **well-developed reading and writing skills**. Vocabulary, literature, language, and writing instruction are taught in one class period, and thus instruction must move at a faster pace than in the two-period format. In addition, students in the advanced-level class will have opportunities for wider reading and writing experiences than those required by the seventh grade English Standards of Learning. Selection factors for considering placement of students into this advanced-level class include success on the 6<sup>th</sup> grade SOL test, teacher recommendation and other standardized tests scores. Students take the 7<sup>th</sup> grade reading SOL test upon completion of the course.

**Blocked English 8 (981XY/9812Y):** This two-period (block) course provides instruction in vocabulary, reading comprehension, and literature, as well as in oral communication skills. The three domains of writing (composing, written expression, and usage/ mechanics) to produce multi-paragraph narratives, descriptions, and explanations will be a focus of this course. Students take the 8<sup>th</sup> grade writing and reading SOL tests upon completion of the course.

**English 8A (981AY):** This **advanced-level class** is designed to meet the needs of seventh grade students with **well-developed reading and writing skills**. Vocabulary, literature, language, and writing instruction are taught in one class period, and thus instruction must move at a faster pace than in the two-period format. In addition, students in the advanced-level class will have opportunities for wider reading and writing experiences than those required by the seventh grade English Standards of Learning. Selection factors for considering placement of students into this advanced-level class include success on the 7<sup>th</sup> grade SOL test, teacher recommendation and other standardized tests scores. Students take the 8<sup>th</sup> grade writing and reading SOL tests upon completion of the course.

# Math

**Blocked Math 6 (962XY/9622Y):** This two-period (block) course covers the sixth grade math Standards of Learning. The development of problem-solving skills will be a major goal. Students will use appropriate technologies such as calculators and computers. A wide range of skills and strategies will be developed in the following areas: number and number sense, computation and estimation, measurement, geometry, probability, statistics, patterns, and algebra. Students take the 6<sup>th</sup> grade math SOL test upon completion of the course.

**Math 6A (Accelerated) (962AY):** This course covers the seventh grade math Standards of Learning. Students will also identify applications of the mathematical principles that can be applied to science and other disciplines. Appropriate technologies such as fraction calculators, computers, laser discs, and videos will also be utilized. Selection factors for considering placement of students into this advanced-level class include success on the 5<sup>th</sup> grade SOL test, successful completion of the 6<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum in 5<sup>th</sup> grade, teacher recommendation and other standardized tests scores. Students take the 7<sup>th</sup> grade math SOL test upon completion of the course.

**PETAL Math Block 6/6A (Promoting Excellence Through Accelerated Learning) 962XAP & 962ABP:** This is a special program offered to selected students in a two-period blocked format. Students in this course complete the sixth grade math Standards of Learning first semester and the seventh grade math Standards of Learning second semester. Rising sixth grade students who were in the on-grade level math course in fifth grade are invited to participate in this program during the summer based on factors which include the following: math achievement in fifth grade, elementary math SOL test scores, scores on Division-Wide Assessments (DWAPs) in math, teacher recommendations, and previous participation in the PETAL summer math program. For additional information on the Sixth Grade PETAL Math Block, please contact the coordinator for equity and accountability in the School Administration Building, 515-5048.

**Blocked Math 7 (972XY/9722Y):** This two-period (block) course covers the seventh grade math Standards of Learning. The development of problem-solving skills will be a major goal. Students will use appropriate technologies such as calculators and computers. A wide range of skills and strategies will be developed in the following areas: number and number sense, computation and estimation, measurement, geometry, probability, statistics, patterns, and algebra. Students take the 7<sup>th</sup> grade math SOL test upon completion of the course.

**Pre-Algebra 7A (Accelerated) (972AY):** This course covers the eighth grade math Standards of Learning, including content that reviews and extends the concepts and skills learned in previous grades and new content that prepares students for more abstract concepts in algebra. Selection factors for considering placement of students into this advanced level class include success on the 7<sup>th</sup> grade SOL test, teacher recommendation and other standardized tests scores. Students take the 8<sup>th</sup> grade math SOL test upon completion of this course.

**Blocked Foundations of Algebra 8A (982AY/9822Y):** This two-period (block) course covers the eighth grade math Standards of Learning (SOL) and some of the Algebra 1 SOL. This course provides introductory instruction in the properties and basic operations of rational numbers including algebraic and graphical representation, linear equations and inequalities, and solving of these equations. Upon completion of this course, students will take the eighth grade math SOL test unless that SOL test was completed in grade 7.

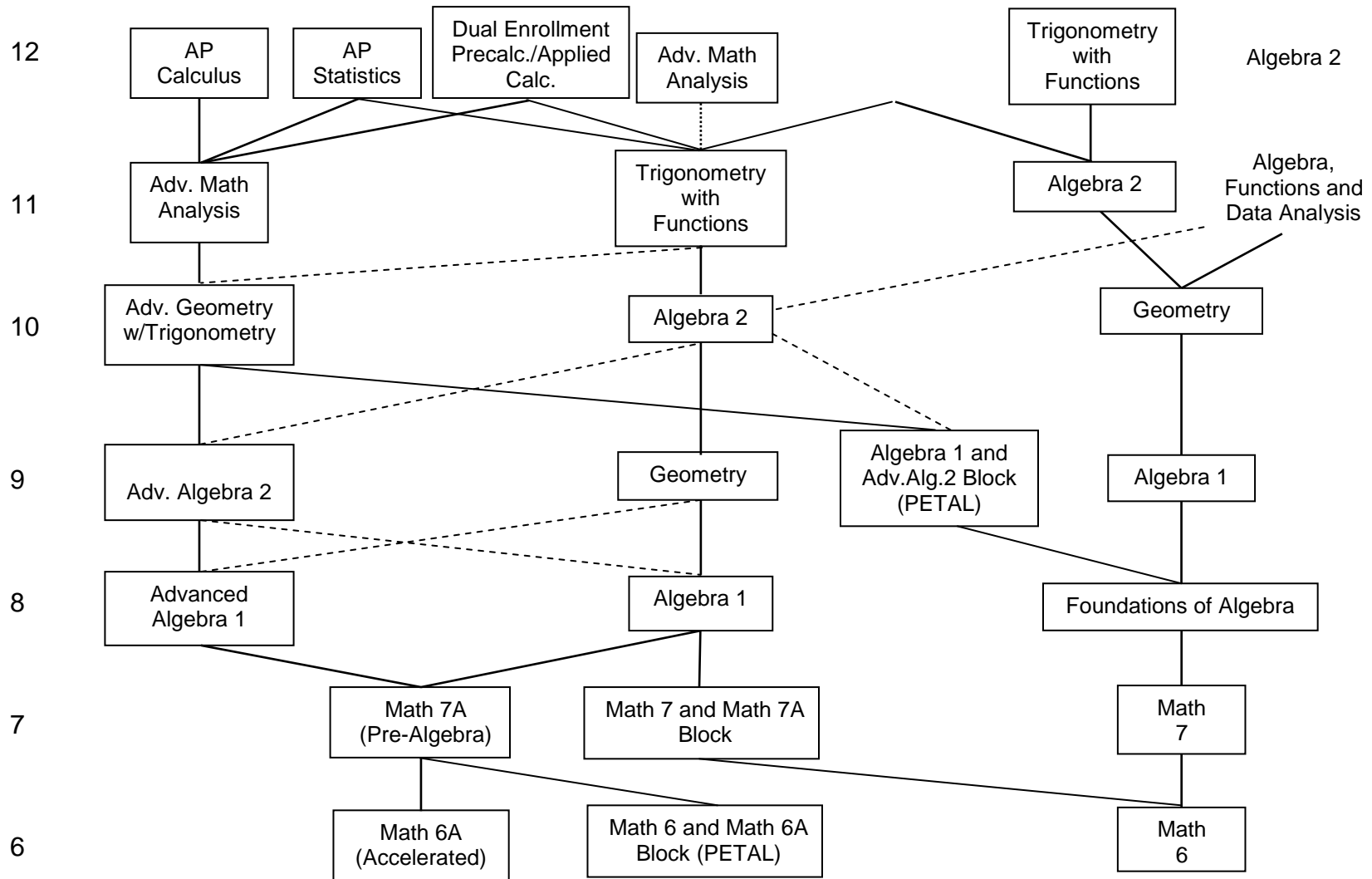
**Advanced Algebra I (2387A & B): High School Credit (0.5 high school credits per semester)**  
Prerequisite: teacher recommendation and/or Advanced Pre-Algebra. *This course is weighted as a 4.5 quality point course in terms of Grade Point Average (GPA).* This course includes instruction in greater depth than the traditional Algebra I course. Students attach meaning to the abstract concepts of algebra by using tables and graphs to interpret equations and inequalities and to analyze functions. Matrices are used to organize and manipulate data. Calculators, computers, spreadsheets, and graphing calculators or computer graphing simulators are used to assist in solving problems. Advanced algebra is the initial course in the sequence of courses designed for a five-year accelerated math program. Upon completion of this course students take the Algebra I SOL test.



# Mathematics

## Instructional Sequence Options

Classes at the Central Virginia Governor's School (CVGS) are available for students who meet the eligibility requirements and have been selected for the program. Please refer to the section on the CVGS program near the end of this document for more information.



Note: Dotted lines indicate possible, yet infrequently chosen, options

# Science

## **Life Science 6 (963XY):**

This course emphasizes a complex understanding of changes, cycles, patterns, and relationships in the living world. Students use the inquiry approach to manipulate variables in experimentation, organize and analyze mathematical data, and summarize conclusions. Students study both the general science sixth grade Standards of Learning and the life science Standards of Learning.

**Life Science 6A (Advanced) (963AY):** This course covers the same science Standards of Learning as the regular life science course but moves at a faster pace to allow time for additional opportunities for enrichment.

**Physical Science 7 (973XY):** This course provides an in-depth understanding of matter and energy. Students use experiments, technology, and literature reviews to build upon their investigation skills. Students in this course study the physical science Standards of Learning.

**Physical Science 7A (Advanced) (973AY):** This course covers the same science SOL as the regular physical science course but moves at a faster pace to allow time for additional opportunities for enrichment of the curriculum and a solid review of previous science SOL. Students completing this course take the eighth grade science SOL test.

**Principles of Science 8 (983XY):** This course enables students to complete an extended study of general, life, and physical science. The living world, matter, energy, and scientific experimentation are explored in depth. Students completing this course take the eighth grade science SOL test.

## **Advanced Earth Science 8 A and B (3387A & B): High School Credit (0.5 high school credits per semester)**

Prerequisite: teacher recommendation and/or physical science. *This course is weighted as a 4.5 quality point course in terms of Grade Point Average (GPA).* The major topics studied in this course are oceanography, meteorology, geology, and astronomy, each with accompanying laboratory activities. Students completing this course take the earth science SOL test.

# Social Studies

**United States History 6 (Part 1) 964XY:** This course covers the history of the United States from pre-Columbian times until 1865. At the end of this course students take the US History 1 SOL test.

**United States History (Part 1) 6A (Advanced) 964AY:** This advanced course covers the same SOL as the regular US History 1 course but moves at a faster pace to allow time for additional opportunities for enrichment of the curriculum. At the end of this course students take the US History 1 SOL test.

**United States History 7 (Part 2) 974XY:** This course covers the history of the United States from 1865 to the present. At the end of this course students take the US History 2 SOL test.

**United States History (Part 2) 7A (Advanced) 974AY:** This advanced course covers the same SOL as the regular US History 2 course but moves at a faster pace to allow time for additional opportunities for enrichment of the curriculum. At the end of this course students take the US History 2 SOL test.

## Social Studies (continued)

**Civics and Economics 8 (984XY):** This course covers the Constitutions of the United States and Virginia, as well as the structure and functions of government institutions at the national, state, and local levels. Students also study the basic principles, structure, and operation of the American economy. At the end of this course students take the civics/economics SOL test.

**Civics and Economics 8A (Advanced) (984AY):** This advanced course covers the same SOL as the regular civics/economics course but moves at a faster pace to allow time for additional opportunities for enrichment of the curriculum. At the end of this course students take the civics/economics SOL test.

## Physical Education

**PE/Health 6:** The sixth grade physical education curriculum introduces students to physical activities which promote personal wellness, physical fitness, body management, and a basic knowledge of sports for leisure-time pursuits. The health curriculum covers the development of healthy personal characteristics and includes information on self-esteem, decision-making, self-discipline, acceptance, loyalty, honesty, cooperation, diligence, tolerance, and trustworthiness. Sixth grade family life deals with the physical, social, emotional, and psychological changes that occur at the time of puberty, and includes AIDS education.

**PE/Health 7:** The physical education curriculum in the seventh grade focuses on the development of proficiency in specific areas of physical fitness through instruction and participation in team, individual, and dual sports. Emphasis is placed on skill development, playing strategies and rules of the game, and an appreciation for the aesthetic value of body management as it relates to dance and gymnastics. Health instruction includes information on the effects of alcohol and other drugs; information on the causes, symptoms, prevention, and treatment of communicable and non-communicable diseases; and first aid techniques. The relationship between nutrition and the development of good mental, physical, and emotional health is also covered. Family life topics include family relationships, human sexuality and loving relationships, and the causes and treatments of sexually transmitted diseases, including AIDS.

**PE/Health 8:** This course emphasizes the further development of flexibility, agility, cardiovascular endurance, balance, coordination, time, and speed. Students continue to develop skills in physical coordination and movement through the performance of dance and gymnastics routines. The history of team, individual, and dual sports is introduced, and specific rules and knowledge of playing strategies are reinforced. Health units continue instruction on the effects of tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs. Personal wellness and good mental health are promoted through the study of healthy lifestyles. Emphasis is placed on safety at home, at school, and in the community. Family life units focus on the stages of human growth and development. Emphasis is placed on responsible behaviors in dealing with sexuality, and topics covered include sexual abstinence, coping skills, teen pregnancy, the prevention of sexual assault, and AIDS awareness and prevention.

## Middle School Electives

Lynchburg City Schools' middle schools offer a wide array of elective offerings based on course enrollment. School specific offerings are available on each school's website. In support of the middle school philosophy, all three middle schools offer elective, exploratory and enrichment courses in the areas of foreign language, cultural arts, theatre, technology and career-technology. Electives are courses student's choose or "elect" to take. Exploratory rotations are courses students are scheduled into that afford students opportunities to explore their interests and talents. Specialized electives and enrichment opportunities provide students with differentiated instruction and an advanced curriculum to address students' unique intellectual gifts and talents. Elective, exploratory, and enrichment offerings are subject to change based on interest inventories, scheduling constraints, and staffing availability.

Electives and exploratory courses are offered in the areas of foreign language, cultural arts, technology and career-technology, and enrichment of the core subjects.

### High School Credit Elective Courses offered at the Middle School Level:

#### Foreign Language

##### LATIN 1: High School Credit (0.5 credits per semester)

This course provides the foundation for understanding Latin and the basis for learning any foreign language. Students enlarge their vocabulary, refine grammar in English, and learn about the origins of many aspects of our culture while reading the history, myths, and legends of the ancient Romans.

##### SPANISH 1: . High School Credit (0.5 credits per semester)

This course focuses on language as a means of active communication. A reasonable proficiency in understanding, speaking, reading, and writing Spanish is the primary goal.

##### FRENCH 1: High School Credit (0.5 credits per semester)

This course focuses on language as a means of active communication. A reasonable proficiency in understanding, speaking, reading, and writing French is the primary goal.

##### GERMAN 1: High School Credit (0.5 credits per semester) OFFERED ONLY AT DUNBAR

This course focuses on language as a means of active communication. A reasonable proficiency in understanding, speaking, reading, and writing German is the primary goal.

#### Career-Technical Education

##### KEYBOARDING High School Credit (0.5 credits per semester)

##### KEYBOARDING (6240A) High School Credit (0.5 credits per semester) Prerequisite: None

Students develop and enhance touch skills for entering alphabetic, numeric, and symbol information on a keyboard. Students compose and produce a variety of personal, educational, and professional documents.

## Career-Technical Education (Continued)

### KEYBOARDING APPLICATIONS (6250B) High School Credit (0.5 credits per semester)

*Prerequisite: Keyboarding (6240A) or mastery of touch typing*

Students enhance touch skills for entering alphabetic, numeric, and symbol information on a keyboard. Students compose and produce a variety of personal, educational, and professional documents with an emphasis on speed and accuracy.

## Drama

INTRODUCTION TO THEATRE, Grade 8 One-half Credit. *Prerequisite: Teacher Recommendation.*

This course is a basic introduction to acting and other theatre skills. Course content includes units in Theatre Games, Improvisation, Stagecraft, Theatre Vocabulary and Terminology, and Theatre History. **(Paul Laurence Dunbar Middle School for Innovation only)**

## Specialized Programs

### Paul Laurence Dunbar Middle School for Innovation

This magnet school draws from an applicant pool of students in all three middle school attendance zones. Inquiries regarding the school for innovation applications to Paul Laurence Dunbar Middle School for Innovation should be directed to the Department of Information Technology, School Administration Building, 515-5017. Paul Laurence Dunbar Middle School for Innovation offers innovative programs not available at the other middle schools. Paul Laurence Dunbar Middle School for Innovation offers an extensive curriculum in foreign languages ranging from exploratory courses to second year courses. Students at Paul Laurence Dunbar Middle School for Innovation may choose to take Spanish, Latin, French and German. Paul Laurence Dunbar Middle School for Innovation also offers a diverse drama curriculum and schedules a variety of performances throughout the school year. Paul Laurence Dunbar Middle School for Innovation is also home to Earth Zone, a program that allows for hands-on herpetology and marine biology classes.

## Gifted Education

The middle school program for gifted education is designed to serve those students who demonstrate a specific academic aptitude. The program is provided primarily through advanced and accelerated courses offered in English, math, science, and social studies as well as through differentiated instruction within the classroom. *The Lynchburg City Schools Local Plan for the Education of the Gifted* provides detailed information on referral and identification processes, as well as the services provided for identified students. Eighth graders have the opportunity to accelerate their program of studies by taking high school credit courses in the areas of math, science, and foreign language. In some cases, extremely gifted students have required an accelerated program of study which includes traveling to one of the high schools for courses. However, this type of service is rare and presents some logistical challenges. Students and their parents are encouraged to contact the school principal to learn more about all the gifted services available to middle school students and the opportunities they provide.

## Special Education

Programs available for students with disabilities are provided according to the student's *Individualized Education Plan*. Referrals for special services are routinely made by parents, counselors, and teachers through the school principal; however, a student can only be considered after authorization is secured from the parent or legal guardian.

Placement in a special education class or program is contingent upon the results of extensive diagnostic testing and evaluation. Scheduling is done on an individual basis according to the needs of each student.

Since the instructional program in all special education classes is based on each student's individual needs, individual educational programs are developed by the school in conjunction with parental permission and input.

The Lynchburg City School Division does not discriminate in admission to, or access to, or treatment or employment in its educational programs, services, or activities based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in accordance with state and federal laws. Inquiries regarding this policy may be directed to the Director of Personnel Services, 915 Court Street, P.O. Box 2497, Lynchburg, Virginia 24505-2497; telephone number (434) 515-5050.