

**WHO**

**All Parents of Identified GT  
5<sup>th</sup> Grade Students**

# Planning for Sixth Grade and Beyond

**It is time to plan for your child's graduation and beyond. Learn about middle school and high school course options for GT students in Language Arts, Social Studies, Mathematics, and Science, including the Pre-AP and AP programs.**

**Sponsored by:**

**Advanced Academic Studies**

**FROM**

Spring Branch Independent School District  
**PRE-AP/AP PARENT/STUDENT CONTRACT**

**This completed, signed contract must be submitted with your course selection form if you are choosing to enroll in Pre-Advanced Placement (Pre-AP) or Advanced Placement (AP) classes.**

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade Level: \_\_\_\_\_ School Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Please mark each Pre-AP/AP class in which you would like to be enrolled:

English     Math     Science     Social Studies     Elective(s) \_\_\_\_\_

The purpose of the Pre-AP/AP entrance and exit guidelines is to provide information to parents and students and to facilitate students' success in academically challenging courses. While Pre-AP/AP courses are open to any student wishing to enroll, parents and students should consider the profile of students who typically experience success in Pre-AP/AP courses. **The decision to enroll in Pre-AP/AP courses ultimately rests with the parents and the students.** Pre-AP/AP classes in Spring Branch Independent School District stimulate and challenge students to perform at an advanced academic level. Therefore, Pre-AP/AP coursework requires students to engage in more independent analytical reading and writing assignments, both inside and outside the classroom.

**Entrance Guidelines regarding Pre-AP/AP Courses**

We encourage students who are interested in the Pre-AP/AP courses to enroll. The following guidelines provide a profile of a student who typically experiences success in Pre-AP and AP courses.

- Successful completion of prerequisite coursework
- Current or previous successful performance in related area/course
- 85<sup>th</sup> percentile or above on the most recent standardized achievement test or other district identified testing measure
- Teacher recommendation
- Careful consideration of demands of extracurricular activities, employment, community service, religious activities, and homework

Pre-AP/AP courses are designed as full year courses. Students who enroll in these courses will be required to complete both semesters in the Pre-AP/AP course, unless they exit due to a grade of D or F (below 75).

**Exit Information regarding Pre-AP/AP Courses**

- The opportunities for a student to choose to exit a Pre-AP/AP class are limited to within the 1<sup>st</sup> formal grading period (six weeks or nine weeks) and at the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> semester. At this time students should consider choosing to exit a Pre-AP/AP course if they are not maintaining at least a "C" average. This decision requires parent/guardian approval.
- If the student's grade in a Pre-AP/AP course falls below a 70 (failing) at the end of any formal grading period (six weeks or nine weeks), the student will be removed from the Pre-AP course unless otherwise recommended by the building principal. Reassignment from a Pre-AP/AP course to a Grade Level course will be recommended by campus personnel.
- For Pre-AP/AP courses for which there are no grade level equivalents, students must have at least a "C" average to remain in the course at end of the 1<sup>st</sup> six weeks. The parent/guardian of a student with a "D" average who wishes to remain in the course must sign a statement documenting that they understand the student will not have the opportunity to exit the course until the end of the semester.
- If, at the end of the first semester, the student is earning a "D" or lower (below 75 average) and desires to drop the course where there is no equivalent Grade Level course, the student will select an elective based on availability and the ability to earn credit based on attendance 90% of the designated time.

Spring Branch ISD takes pride in offering a strong curriculum in all courses. If a schedule change to a Grade Level class occurs, the student will continue to experience quality learning opportunities designed to effectively prepare him or her for high school and college curriculum.

I understand the entrance and exit guidelines pertaining to participation in Pre-AP/AP courses in SBISD.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

# Language Arts: Opportunities in Pre-AP and Advanced Placement

Students in the Pre-AP English-Language Arts classes in Spring Branch middle schools have the opportunity to engage in a deepening understanding and appreciation for the written word. They participate in experiences that foster their growth as literate young people who find satisfaction and pleasure in the careful reading, analysis, and discussion of both contemporary and classic works. Students are expected to read widely and deeply and write to understand authors' works and the world around them. Their writing takes many forms and includes reflection, analysis, interpretation, and argumentation. The growing insights they gain will enrich their lives and provide a lifetime of enjoyment. We are committed to opening up these opportunities to students and supporting them as they mature as learners!

| Grade Level   | Course Options                       | Content and Skill Description For Each Course  |
|---|--------------------------------------|--|
| 6 <sup>th</sup> , 7 <sup>th</sup> , 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade | Pre-AP English                       | <p><b>Content focus:</b><br/>In reading, students are required to develop an analytical approach to reading. Students are introduced to a wide array of literary terms so that they are equipped to use the language of a critic. They have opportunities to analyze a variety of texts and identify how an author's style, choice of words, and selected genre interweave to create meaning. Students read both contemporary and classic works that increase from grade-to-grade in complexity and depth. They must also read an increased range of texts. Students are expected to engage in close reading, noting how an author crafts a text. In writing, students are required to use more complex sentence structures and grammatical constructions. They learn to organize texts in convincing and sophisticated ways to accomplish a variety of purposes. In particular, they learn to assume a position, reason clearly, and argue persuasively. The middle school years play a critical role in laying a rich foundation students build on in their high school years. Pre-AP presents new demands on students' time as reading and writing assignments escalate at the same time expectations for rigor increase.</p> |
| 9 <sup>th</sup> & 10 <sup>th</sup> Grade                  | Pre-AP English I & Pre-AP English II | <p><b>Content focus:</b><br/>These courses build on the foundation of close reading and analytical writing that students experience in middle school. There are increased demands on students' outside-school time, and reading assignments are both regular and rigorous. Literary texts include both classic and contemporary works intended to broaden and deepen students' experience. More advanced literary and rhetorical terms and concepts are introduced and serve as tools for analyzing an increasing variety of texts. Classroom activities include in-depth discussions and both process and timed writing. Students are asked open-ended questions and expected to draw from both their assigned and wide-reading experiences. Further, they must provide textual evidence to support their analyses and arguments.</p>   |
| 11 <sup>th</sup> Grade                                    | AP English Language and Comp.        | <p><b>Content focus:</b><br/>The Language and Composition course engages students in close reading of prose drawn from a variety of periods and disciplines, written for a variety of rhetorical purposes. Students grow as skilled writers who compose for a variety of purposes. Both the reading and the writing focus on how a writer's purpose, choice of subject, and style interact to convey meaning and influence an audience. Language is viewed as a tool, and students are expected to analyze an author's effectiveness. Many new terms are introduced. Grammar is studied in the context of students' reading and writing. There is special attention to how authors craft sentences and structure their writing to accomplish specific purposes. A college-level text is used, and a rigorous curriculum is followed. It is essential that students develop fluency in writing and acuity in reading. Students should be prepared for increased demands on their out-of-school time.</p>  |
| 12 <sup>th</sup> Grade                                    | AP English Literature and Comp.      | <p><b>Content focus:</b><br/>The Literature and Composition course includes the close and careful reading and critical analysis of imaginative literature. The curriculum includes reading a range of genre, including poems and plays, fiction and nonfiction, and classic and contemporary works. Students must draw from their wide reading to discuss a range of universal themes and literary elements. They deepen their appreciation of authors' literary styles and works. Students write to understand, explain, and evaluate a literary work. They engage in both process and timed writing to sharpen their analytical skill and explore questions inherent in the study of literature. As in the Language and Composition course, grammar is studied in the context of students' reading and writing. A college-level text is used, and a rigorous curriculum is followed. Students should be prepared for increased demands on their out-of-school time.</p>  |

## Language Arts: Opportunities for G/T Students

| Grade Level   | Course Options                                     | Content and Skill Description for Each Course  |
|---|--|--|
| 6 <sup>th</sup> , 7 <sup>th</sup> ,<br>8 <sup>th</sup><br>Grade | G/T English  | This G/T course provides an expansion of the basic curriculum to accommodate the needs of gifted students. The course of study using a multi-media approach stresses development of independent learning skills, the expansion of the basic curriculum, the use of higher level thinking processes in problem solving, the development of greater awareness of self and others, and the opportunity to develop unique abilities into potential career choices. |
| 9 <sup>th</sup> &<br>10 <sup>th</sup><br>Grade                  | G/T English I & II                                 | This G/T course provides an expansion of the English II curriculum to accommodate the needs and learning styles of gifted students. An interdisciplinary approach to the study of literature is stressed and literary research is introduced.  |
| 11 <sup>th</sup><br>Grade                                       | G/T English III AP<br>Language and<br>Composition  | This G/T course provides an expansion of the English III curriculum to accommodate the needs and learning styles of gifted students. In addition to literacy analysis, literacy criticism is emphasized and methods of scholarly presentation are studied. A cross-discipline approach is stressed. Must be taken in conjunction with United States History. This course prepares students for the English Language and Composition AP examination in May.     |
| 12 <sup>th</sup><br>Grade                                       | G/T English IV<br>AP Literature and<br>Composition | This G/T course provides an expansion of the English IV curriculum to accommodate the needs and learning styles of gifted students. An in-depth study of literature both in analysis and literary criticism is fostered and advanced skills in literary research are examined. This course prepares students for the English Literature and Composition AP examination in May.   |

## Social Studies: Opportunities in Pre-AP and Advanced Placement

Students in the Pre-AP social studies classes in the middle schools of Spring Branch ISD should regularly be building the habits of mind that will enable them to be successful during those experiences as well as in honing those reading, thinking, and writing skills that will be so essential for their success and enjoyment of more challenging classes in our fine high schools. We are committed to building those habits in all our students! The purpose of Pre-AP is to equip the high school student with a powerful opportunity to acquire the knowledge, concepts, skills, and habits of mind needed to engage in a higher level of learning. Students who are enrolled in Pre-AP Social Studies classes engage in active, high-level learning strategies which reflect topics, concepts, and skills found in AP courses. These strategies include the use of document-based writing assessments which develop habits of thinking and writing mandatory for success in high school, AP testing, and post secondary challenges. Pre-AP courses offer both project and test-based Curriculums and research is a key component. Students will be expected to complete reading assignments outside of class and demonstrate good writing skills.

| Grade Level           | Course Options  | Content and Skill Description For Each Course  |
|-----------------------|---|--|
| 6 <sup>th</sup> Grade | Modern World Cultures—one credit                        | In Grade 6, students study people and places of the contemporary world. During this journey through various parts of the world, students learn the physical and human characteristics of locations; examine human relationships within places and with the environment, and how regions form and change. Students explore the cultures of people and compare and contrast nations within a region and to the U.S. They learn to recognize where they are, both physically and culturally, in relation to other people of the world. Students identify different ways of organizing economic and governmental systems. The concepts of limited and unlimited government are introduced, and students describe the nature of citizenship in various societies. Students compare institutions common to all societies such as government, education, and religious institutions.  |
| 7 <sup>th</sup> Grade | Texas Studies—one credit                                | Texas History includes a comprehensive study of the history and geography of Texas. The course content shows the interaction of the forces of land, people, politics, economics and government that have shaped Texas. Students examine the full scope of Texas history, including a brief review of the cultures of Native Americans living in Texas prior to European exploration and the eras of mission-building, colonization, revolution, republic, and statehood including Texas in the 21 <sup>st</sup> century. The focus in each era is on key individuals, events, and issues and their impact. The use of primary and secondary sources, analysis of cause and effect relationships and introduction of basic economic and political concepts are all critical for the understanding of Texas History.   |
| 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade | United States History Through Reconstruction—one credit | Students study the history of the United States from the early colonial period to the Reconstruction following the Civil War. This year lays the foundation for deep understanding of early American and U.S. history through examination of primary sources with emphasis on foundational documents and significant leaders. Historical content focuses on the political, economic, and social events and issues related to the colonial and revolutionary eras, the creation and ratification of the U.S. Constitution, challenges of the early Republic, westward expansion, sectionalism, Civil War, and Reconstruction. Students describe the physical characteristics of the United States and their impact on population distribution and settlement patterns in the past and present. Students analyze the various economic factors that influenced the development of colonial America and the early years of the Republic and identify the origins of the free enterprise system. Students examine the American beliefs and principles, including limited government, checks and balances, federalism, separation of powers, and individual rights, reflected in the U.S. Constitution and other historical documents. |

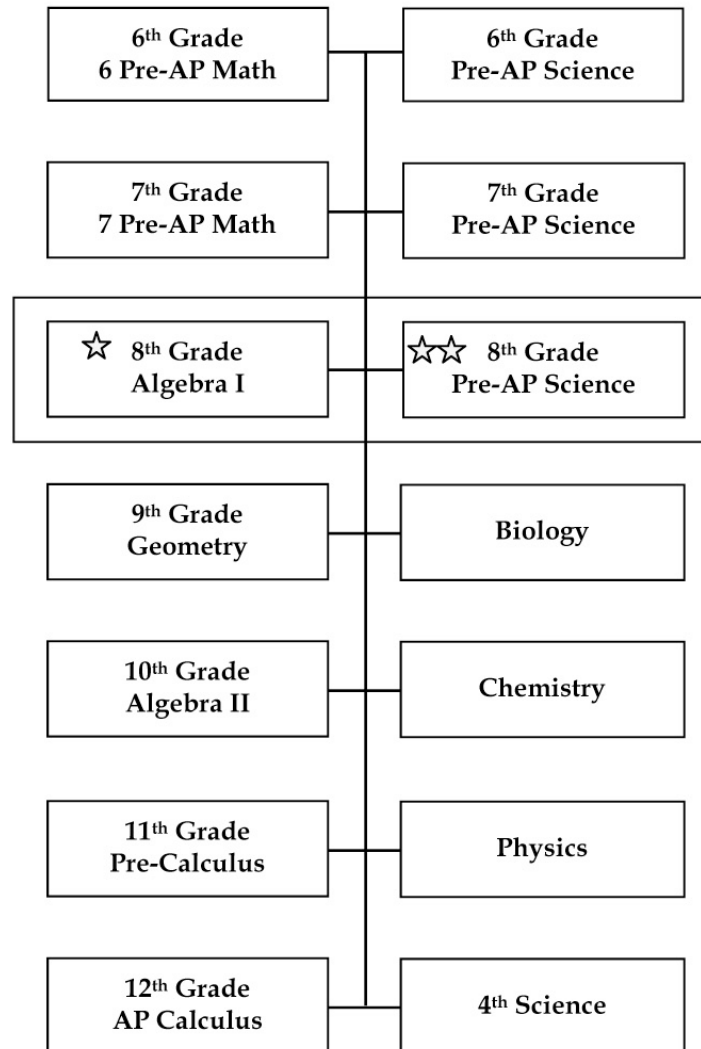
| Grade Level            | Course Options                                    | Content and Skill Description For Each Course  |
|------------------------|---|--|
| 9 <sup>th</sup> Grade  | Pre-AP World Geography Studies—one credit         | World Geography is more than just learning about continents, oceans and mountain ranges. It is a source and a framework to begin to understand global problems. In World Geography Studies, students examine people, places, and environments at local, regional, national, and international scales from the spatial and ecological perspectives of geography. Students describe the influence of geography on events of the past and present. A significant portion of the course centers around the physical processes that shape patterns in the physical environment; the characteristics of major land forms, climates, and ecosystems and their interrelationships; the political, economic, and social processes that shape cultural patterns of regions; types and patterns of settlement; the distribution and movement of world population; relationships among people, places, and environments; and the concept of region. Students analyze how location affects economic activities in different economic systems throughout the world. Students identify the processes that influence political divisions of the planet and analyze how different points of view affect the development of public policies. Students compare how components of culture shape the characteristics of regions and analyze the impact of technology and human modifications on the physical environment. Students use problem-solving and decision-making skills to ask and answer geographic questions. |
| 10 <sup>th</sup> Grade | Pre-AP World History Studies—one credit<br><br>OR | World History Studies is the only course offering students an overview of the entire history of humankind. The major emphasis is on the study of significant people, events, and issues from the earliest times to the present. Traditional historical points of reference in world history are identified as students analyze important events and issues in western civilization as well as in civilizations in other parts of the world. Students evaluate the causes and effects of political and economic imperialism and of major political revolutions since the 17th century. Students examine the impact of geographic factors on major historic events and identify the historic origins of contemporary economic systems. Students analyze the process by which democratic-republican governments evolved as well as the ideas from historic documents that influenced that process. Students trace the historical development of important legal and political concepts. Students examine the history and impact of major religious and philosophical traditions. Students analyze the connections between major developments in science and technology and the growth of industrial economies, and they use the process of historical inquiry to research, interpret, and use multiple sources of evidence.   |
|                        | AP World History—one credit                       | AP World History is a college-level, global, thematic world history course designed to prepare students to take the rigorous AP World History exam. Success in the course requires extensive reading, high-level thinking, strong study skills, self-discipline, and a high maturity level. Using six broad historical themes across five different periods emphasizing 600 CE to the present, students will study a macro history of the world. Europe will be studied in the context of its global position, and will comprise 30% of the course. Students will study broad trends that cross time periods and geographic regions. Themes to be explored include interactions (trade, war, diplomacy, international exchange) among major societies, impact of technology and demography on people and the environment (population growth and decline, disease, manufacturing, migration, agriculture and weaponry), systems of social and gender structure, cultural and intellectual development, and changes in functions and structures of states. The course will culminate in students taking the AP World History exam for college credit. The course may substitute for the world history requirement.   |

| Grade Level   | Course Options   | Content and Skill Description For Each Course  |
|---|--|--|
| 11 <sup>th</sup> Grade                                      | AP United States History—one credit<br><br>NOTE: Dual Credit U.S. History also available on some sites, most years | AP United States History is an open enrollment course which is rigorous and challenging and designed to be the equivalent of a freshman college course and can earn students college credit. It is a two semester survey of US history from exploration to the present. Since the course covers all of U.S. history, not just post-Reconstruction, student cannot transfer between AP and Academic U.S. History. A full year of either course fulfills the required U.S History requirement. All students who participate in AP US History are expected to read analytically and critically. Students are then expected to answer analytical objective questions and become proficient in writing expository essays with or without documents. Students will be responsible for reading at least one chapter of a college level text and taking notes over the material each week. Time management, reading comprehension, critical thinking, note taking, and the ability to see the “big picture” and its component parts are skills need for success. |
| 12 <sup>th</sup> Grade                                      | AP U.S. Government & Politics—one-half credit  | AP “US Government and Politics” is a one semester course designed to give students an analytical perspective on government and politics in the United States. This course includes both the study of concepts needed to interpret politics in the United States and the analysis of specific examples. The United States government curriculum includes an intensive study of the formal and informal structures of government coupled with a focus on policy-making and implementation. This course is structured at the freshman college level and students are expected to perform at this level in a consistent manner. This course may substitute for the government requirement.   |
|   | AP Economics—one-half credit   | The aim of AP Economics is to provide the student with a learning experience equivalent to that obtained in a typical college introductory macroeconomics course. AP Macroeconomics explores consumer and government decisions and how they affect the economy as a whole. While the course is mainly macro, important micro issues such as the theory of the firm and market supply and demand are introduced in the course. This is a one semester course and can substitute for the economics requirement.  |
| High School Electives (not offered at all sites every year) | AP European History—one year   | College textbook and AP curriculum required. Design of curriculum presumes that students should have already completed at least one AP course. Students should have basic knowledge of major world events and chronology in order to focus on these themes of post-1450 European history: intellectual/cultural history; political/diplomatic history; social/economic history. Students are expected to use historical evidence and interpretation in their college-level writing and in preparation for multiple choice and essay writing of the AP test. Extensive reading, writing, and interpretation of visuals are consistently required in this course.  |
|   | AP Psychology—one-half credit  | The AP Psychology course is designed to introduce students to the systematic study of the behavior and mental processes of human beings and other animals. Students are exposed to the psychological facts, principles, and phenomena associated with each of the major subfields within psychology along with the methods psychologist use in their science and practice. This course is structured at the freshman university level and each student is expected to perform at this level in a consistent manner.  |

## Social Studies: Opportunities for G/T Students

| Grade Level            | Course Options   | Content and Skill Description For Each Course  |
|------------------------|--|--|
| 6 <sup>th</sup> Grade  | G/T Social Studies<br>Modern World<br>Cultures                           | This G/T course provides an expansion of the sixth grade social studies curriculum to accommodate the needs and learning styles of gifted and talented students. In many middle schools, this G/T course is integrated through language arts and social studies instruction using a multi-disciplinary approach.   |
| 7 <sup>th</sup> Grade  | G/T Social Studies<br>Texas Studies                                      | This G/T course provides an expansion of the seventh grade social studies curriculum to accommodate the needs and learning styles of gifted and talented students. In many middle schools, this G/T course is integrated through language arts and social studies instruction using a multi-disciplinary approach.   |
| 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade  | G/T Social Studies<br>United States History<br>Through<br>Reconstruction | This G/T course provides an expansion of the eighth grade social studies curriculum to accommodate the needs and learning styles of gifted and talented students. In many middle schools, this G/T course is integrated through language arts and social studies instruction using a multi-disciplinary approach.  |
| 9 <sup>th</sup> Grade  | G/T World<br>Geography   | This G/T course provides thematic curriculum which focuses on the investigation of physical and cultural geography. This thematic approach is integrated with literature and non-fiction writing and thus must be taken in conjunction with English I G/T.   |
| 10 <sup>th</sup> Grade | G/T World History  | This G/T course provides a differentiation of the World History curriculum to accommodate the needs and learning styles of gifted and talented students. A thematic approach enables students to compare and contrast eras. The study of history is integrated with the literature studied in English II G/T.  |
| 11 <sup>th</sup> Grade | G/T United States<br>History AP  | This is a survey course of American history from earliest colonial experiences to present emphasizing historiography, independent learning skills, processes in decision making, and analyses of our national heritage to include past, present, and future perspectives. This course provides a differentiation of the basic curriculum to accommodate the needs of gifted and talented students.   |
| 12 <sup>th</sup> Grade | G/T Government AP<br>G/T Economics AP                                    | The content in this course is similar to Government AP. Students will prepare to take the AP examination in May. Differentiation of the United States Government curriculum to accommodate the needs and learning styles of gifted and talented students is provided. Advanced research and individual projects will be emphasized.<br>The Economics curriculum provides a differentiation of the curriculum to accommodate the needs and learning styles of gifted and talented students. Collection, analysis, and evaluation of contemporary data will be emphasized in individual and creative research presentations. |

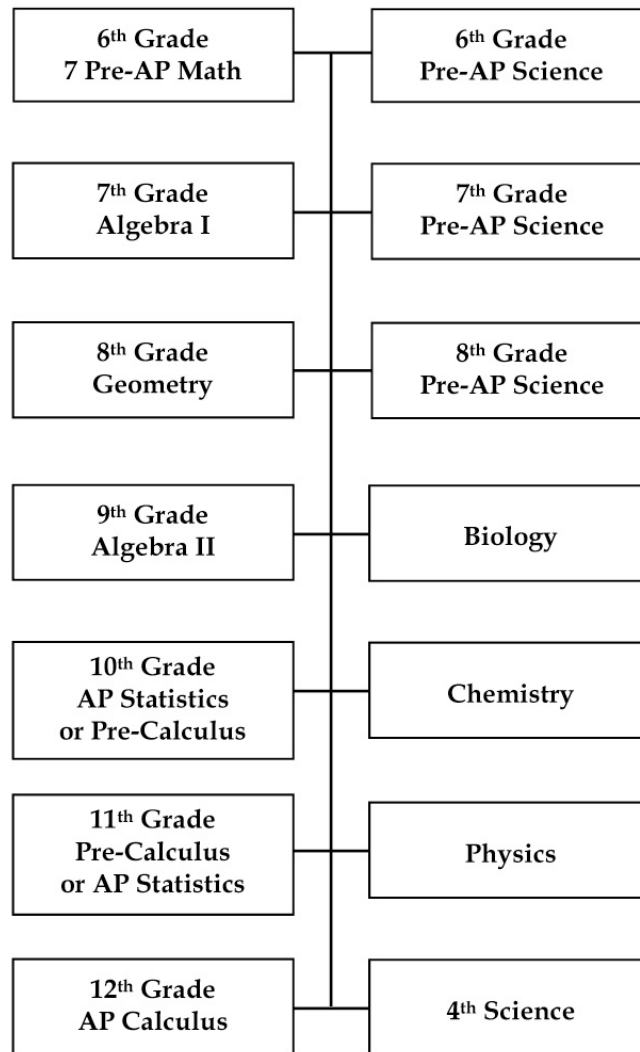
# Mathematics – Science Course of Study Options for Students Who Take Algebra I in 8<sup>th</sup> Grade



☆ Students who withdraw from Algebra I must either also withdraw from 8<sup>th</sup> Pre-AP Science *or* take IPC in high school.

☆☆ Students who withdraw from 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Pre-AP Science do not need to withdraw from Algebra I.

# Mathematics – Science Course of Study Options for Students Who Take Algebra I in 7<sup>th</sup> Grade



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