

# Brenham Junior High



## Course Description Guide

### 8th Grade

# 2023-2024

**Brenham Junior High School**

**1200 Carlee Dr.**

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It is the policy of Brenham ISD not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, or handicap in its vocational programs, services or activities as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.



**Brenham**  
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT EST. 1875

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to Brenham Junior High School. Our goal is for all students to be successful in their academic studies and extracurricular activities. This course selection guide is designed to help you and your child choose the best academic path for Brenham Junior High School. It will also support your child in preparing for the next step in their secondary education. We are available to help you and your child in any way possible. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions.

Michael J. Watts

Principal, Brenham Junior High School  
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# **PUBLIC EDUCATION IN TEXAS CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS**

The direction for public education in Texas is driven by the legislature and is delegated to the State Board of Education as the chief governing body of public schools in Texas.

The philosophy of the State Board of Education established the framework for the goals of public school education. Public education is responsible for providing all students with the opportunity for development of knowledge, skills, and competencies that every student should possess to be a self-supporting, self-governing, and contributing member of society.

## **CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS**

Brenham Junior High provides a multiple period day for instruction where students will enroll in eight classes. Course requirements mandated by the Texas Education Agency require students to enroll in English, Math, Science, and Social Studies. Elective classes have the following requirements:

- Students in grade 8 are required to take Health and Dollars and Sense
- Students in grade 8 are required to take an English, Math, Science, and History course

## **COURSE SELECTION OPTIONS ACADEMIC COURSES**

### **MATH**

#### **8TH GRADE MATHEMATICS**

Seventh grade mathematics is one step in the sequential organization of the mathematics program. This course provides students with a transitional stage in their math journey that is crucial to their success in all future math courses. Instruction covers all 8<sup>th</sup> grade Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills – developing skills and concepts for the depth of understanding. It includes rich problem-solving that requires students to think critically and make important math connections.

#### **8TH GRADE ALGEBRA**

Students must understand concepts, know basic facts, and efficiently use computational skills to select and apply appropriate problem-solving strategies. This rigorous and challenging course requires aptitude for problem solving and abstract concepts. Instruction covers all Algebra I Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills – developing skills and concepts for depth of understanding. This course will count as a high school credit.

# **SCIENCE**

## **8TH GRADE SCIENCE**

This course is an integrated unit of study with a focus on Earth Science concepts. These concepts include atoms and the periodic table, force and motion, Newton's Laws, plate tectonics, weather, ocean water and life, environmental concerns, chemical reactions, the moon, space, and stars. The Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills of 8th grade science will be addressed in the class.

## **8TH GRADE ADVANCED SCIENCE**

This course follows the 8th grade Science curriculum and is aligned with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills. The material is covered more quickly and in greater depth and complexity than the regular 8th grade Science course. This course will require projects that will reinforce topics covered throughout the school year.

# **HISTORY**

## **8TH GRADE AMERICAN HISTORY**

This course is the study of the history of the United States from the early Colonial Period through the Reconstruction Period. Instruction covers all 8th grade Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills - developing skills and concepts for the depth of understanding.

## **8TH GRADE ADVANCED AMERICAN HISTORY**

This course is the study of the history of the United States from the early Colonial Period through the Reconstruction Period. This content will be covered in greater depth, complexity, and at a faster pace than the regular American History course. Instruction covers all 8th grade Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills - developing skills and concepts for the depth of understanding.

# **ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS**

## **8TH GRADE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS**

Eighth grade English Language Arts will integrate the elements of literature, rhetoric, and the writing and research processes. Communication skills such as listening, speaking, and reading will be emphasized. Instruction covers all 8<sup>th</sup> grade Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills – developing skills and concepts for the depth of understanding.

## **8TH GRADE ADVANCED ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS**

In addition to having a considerably faster pace than the on level eighth grade English Language Arts curriculum, a greater variety of literature and writing assignments will be implemented in the accelerated classes. Research projects, oral presentations, self-initiated learning, and critical thinking are required. Instruction covers all 8<sup>th</sup> grade Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills – developing skills and concepts for the depth of understanding.

# **REQUIRED COURSES**

**Two courses, Health and Dollars and Sense, will each be taken as semester courses to meet the health and financial literacy requirement. These semester courses will be taken during opposite semesters. You do not need to register for these classes; all 8th grade students will automatically be enrolled. Both courses will count as high school credits.**

## **HEALTH**

This course provides an introduction to health and facts which develop proper attitudes, establish practices and habits that will contribute to personal, family, and community health.

## **DOLLARS AND SENSE**

This course focuses on basic financial literacy, such as managing family and personal budgets, setting financial goals, consumer spending, financial records, credit, and more.

# PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Select one of the following if you would like to take an athletics or PE course.

## 8TH GRADE PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Each student ***must*** dress out and participate in daily activities. Students will need to provide their own workout clothes. Activities include basketball, football, volleyball, fitness activities, ultimate running, jumping rope and other activities as equipment is available. A student's grade is based upon participation and dressing out.

## BOYS ATHLETICS

All students interested in trying out for the football, basketball, and/or track teams are allowed to participate as long as they remain academically eligible and follow athletic policies. Practice times are before and/or after school and during the scheduled class period. Students will be provided practice clothes and uniforms for games. Students will be provided a locker to store and protect their clothing and valuables. Students will be responsible for providing their own locks. Each athlete must participate in at least one sport and must have a physical prior to entering competition. **Each student must have a physical on file and complete Rank 1 on the computer.**

## GIRLS ATHLETICS

All students interested in trying out for the volleyball, basketball, and/or track teams are allowed to participate as long as they remain academically eligible and follow athletic policies. Practice times are before and/or after school and during the scheduled class period. Students will be provided practice clothes and uniforms for games. Students will be provided a locker to store and protect their clothing and valuables. Students will be responsible for providing their own locks. Each athlete must participate in at least one sport and must have a physical prior to entering competition. **Each student must have a physical on file and complete Rank 1 on the computer.**

## TENNIS

Students will learn about the game of tennis, how to play and how to keep score. Dressing out in athletic clothes, bringing your tennis racket and participating every day is mandatory. Competitive play is not required. After school practices and competition with schools in our area begin during the Spring Semester. The majority of a student's grade is based on participation and dressing out. Uniforms are provided for competition. Students will need to provide their own workout clothes, tennis racket and lock for a dressing room locker. **Each student must have a physical on file and complete Rank 1 on the computer.**

## **CROSS COUNTRY**

Dressing out in athletic clothes and daily participation is mandatory. Students will begin endurance training beginning the first week of school, building up to 3 - 4 miles. Students will race in 4 or 5 meets (held on Saturdays) in the Fall. Each race is 2 miles. Uniforms are provided for competitions.

During the track season in the Spring, students may choose the event they wish to train for and compete in. They will compete in 4 or 5 meets in the Spring (held on Fridays or Saturdays). The majority of a student's grade is based on participation and dressing out. **Each student must have a physical on file and complete Rank 1 on the computer.**

## **SWIMMING**

This class will teach the skills and techniques designed to prepare athletes to swim at a competitive level. Practices will be before and/or after school. Swimsuits and goggles must be purchased by the swimmers. If the cost for this class poses an issue, please let the coach know. Some meets will be held during the Spring. **Each student must have a physical on file and complete Rank 1 on the computer.**

## **GOLF**

This class will focus on the fundamentals of golf. Travel to the golf course on specified days will need to be provided by parents, and new player tryouts will be required the 1st week in August. There will also be a \$50 course fee to cover the cost of golf shirts and hats. If the cost for this class poses an issue, please let the coach know. **Each student must have a physical on file and complete Rank 1 on the computer.**

# ELECTIVE COURSES

If you chose an Athletic or PE course, choose 2 elective courses. If you did not choose an Athletic or PE course, choose 3 elective courses.

## BAND

BJHS has 3 bands: 1 Symphonic Band and 2 Concert Bands. Each of these groups perform at pep rallies, at junior high football games, concerts, contests and the Maifest Parade. All students who sign up for band are placed into a specific band by the directors. They will receive information concerning instrument rental or purchase by a band director. **There will be a financial obligation with the class. (instrument purchase/rental, book(s), and supplies as needed.)**

## CHOIR

Students will learn the basics of singing, sight-singing and choral performance. Choir students are expected to participate in Solo Competition and Region Choir auditions. This group also competes at UIL competitions. Concerts are usually held in the evening and are mandatory. Extra rehearsals will be held and are also mandatory.

## ART

Students receive basic instruction in design, drawing, painting, printmaking, ceramics, and sculpture. Fundamental elements and principles of design will be introduced in this course. Students will use a variety of media and techniques in producing their art work. Students will be required to purchase some art supplies for this course; required supplies are available at local stores.

## THEATRE ARTS

This introductory course will engage students in the art of theater. Students will begin to explore pantomime, improvisational and memorization techniques, learn basic acting techniques, knowledge, and skills needed to be successful in theater, but also begin to develop the self confidence and self discipline required to accomplish long and short term goals in life.

## PERFORMANCE ARTS

**Prerequisite: Audition and teacher recommendations.** This course is for the serious theater arts students who plan to continue to study theater beyond Brenham Junior High. Students will participate in plays and use more advanced techniques of acting.



## **DANCE**

This is an introductory course that provides the students with an exploration of basic movement fundamentals: ballet, jazz, hip-hop, modern, lyrical, contemporary, world dance, and choreography. Dance performances outside of the school day are required. Information regarding the purchase of required dance costumes for performances will be addressed by the instructor. **Each student must have a physical on file and complete Rank 1 on the computer.**

## **BRENADIERS**

**This course requires an audition.** Students will learn dance elements, movement, time, space, rhythm, shape and energy. Students will be expected to perform at pep rallies, football games, competitions, and the Spring Show. Information regarding the required dance attire will be addressed by the instructor; additional fees will be required. If the cost for this class poses an issue, please let the coach know. Dance performances may be required in venues after school. **Each student must have a physical on file and complete Rank 1 on the computer.**

## **CHEER**

**Cheer Prerequisite: Spring Audition and Selection Based on Judges Scores**

This cheerleading course trains participants in most aspects of cheerleading and prepares the squad to cheer and support a multitude of campus events such as girl's and boy's athletics, pep rallies, and other activities. Emphasis is placed on promoting positive school spirit, strong leadership skills, safety, flexibility, as well as proper cheer techniques. Students are required to attend summer camp, and participate at selected outside of school events (i.e. football, basketball, volleyball). Dance performances may be required in venues after school. **Each student must have a physical on file and complete Rank 1 on the computer.**

**Note: Cheer gear and a uniform is required. Payment must be made when placing your cheer uniform order. If the cost for this class poses an issue, please let the coach know.**

## **AVID (A STUDENT MUST BE INTERVIEWED AND BE ACCEPTED INTO THIS CLASS)**

An elective course that prepares students for college readiness and success. Students participate in activities that incorporate strategies focused on writing, inquiry, collaboration, organization and reading to support their academic growth. Students must apply for entry into this elective course. The process includes, but is not limited to, a written application and an oral interview. Grades, STAAR scores, attendance and behavior records are all reviewed as part of the process. **Students must fill out an application, be selected for an interview and selected by the AVID site team for acceptance.**

## **YEARBOOK**

This course is for the serious student who enjoys working hard, being creative and meeting deadlines. Students will understand the individual and staff responsibilities of a publication team. Students will apply journalism writing basics, photojournalism, desktop publishing and creative thinking skills toward publication of the school yearbook. Students will also understand and apply the financial and leadership obligations of yearbook production.

## **PRINCIPLES OF APPLIED ENGINEERING**

This course provides an overview of the major fields of engineering including chemical, electrical, mechanical and civil engineering. Through a variety of activities, students will learn how science, technology, engineering, and mathematics are used to solve engineering problems. Students will also learn about the engineering design process and the steps used to solve problems. Additionally, students will develop engineering communication skills, which include writing memorandums, 3-D modeling, and creating spreadsheets and presentations. Upon completing this course, students will understand the various fields of engineering and will be able to make informed career decisions in the field of engineering. This course will count toward high school credit.

## **SPANISH I**

This introductory course teaches basic language patterns and vocabulary. Repetition and comprehensible input are important components of this course. Focus is on all four language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Culture is an integral part of the course and is introduced through the use of media, games, adapted readings and class discussions. In addition to written tests and quizzes, students will also be assessed by means of oral activities. Completion of homework assignments is a must. Active participation is required. This course will count toward high school credit.

## **BROADCAST JOURNALISM**

This course teaches students about broadcast preparation and delivery. Students will use various forms of media to communicate school, community and world events to the student body. This is a yearlong course.

# **PUBLIC EDUCATION IN TEXAS CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS CONT.**

## **PROMOTION POLICY**

In grades 2-8, promotion to the next grade level shall be based on an overall average of 70 on a scale of 100 based on course-level, grade-level standards (essential knowledge and skills) for all **core** subjects.

The parent or guardian of each student who has not successfully completed a subject or course for the year shall be notified by the district as soon as practical of any summer program available in the district that may permit the student to successfully complete any failed courses.

## **ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

A student may participate in extracurricular activities by having a passing grade of 70 in all subjects and by meeting all requirements set by local and state policy.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION**

Students with disabilities may be eligible for and need special education services. BISD offers a wide range of instructional options for students with disabilities through services designed to meet unique education needs. These instructional options range from placement in the general education classroom with support services to placement in specialized classes. Students with disabilities may also be eligible for and need certain related services that may be necessary for the student to benefit from special education instruction.

An ARD Committee that includes the student, parents, administrators, counselors, teachers, and special education personnel make all special education programming decisions for individual students.

## **ALTERNATIVE SELECTIONS - ELECTIVES**

Students must select alternate selections in order to ensure a complete schedule. Every attempt will be made to honor students' first choices, but, due to physical limitations, maximum class sizes may need to be imposed.

## **CREDIT BY EXAM WITHOUT PRIOR INSTRUCTION**

Students wanting information regarding credit by exam without prior instruction should contact the counseling office. Students may not use credit by exams to gain credit when credit has been denied for excessive absences or when a student has received prior instruction over the material tested. Please Note: *CREDIT BY EXAM DATES for the 2023-2024 school year will be announced on the BISD website.*

## **STATE OF TEXAS ASSESSMENT OF ACADEMIC READINESS (STAAR)**

STAAR annual assessments are taken for grade 8 in Reading Language Arts, Mathematics (Algebra I EOC, if applicable), Science and Social Studies.

Districts are required to provide accelerated instruction to any student who fails a STAAR assessment through an intervention course. If the required accelerated instruction is not completed in summer school, students may be placed in a Math and/or Reading accelerated instruction intervention course during the school year in order to fulfill the state requirements.

## **ADVANCED CLASSES**

Brenham ISD acknowledges that student participation in advanced coursework is valuable. As such, Brenham Junior High encourages all willing and/or academically prepared students to participate in advanced courses. Students who participate in advanced coursework are exposed to rigorous curriculum that requires diligent study and time management skills. By building these critical foundational skills, students will establish competency and capability for success in a post-secondary education path as well as the workforce.

## **CHOOSING ADVANCED ACADEMICS:**

Advanced courses in Brenham Independent School District are designed to challenge students with a rigorous curriculum that extends learning opportunities for all students. While we expect students to be successful in all advanced coursework, a close look at the student's total course load and commitment to other activities should also be considered when choosing how many advanced courses to take. For some students, the best path is to start by enrolling in one advanced course, so that they better understand the expectation of advanced coursework. The decision to enroll in advanced classes ultimately rests with the parents and the students.

Students who are willing and/or academically prepared may consider enrolling in the following classes:

- Advanced English Language Arts
- Advanced Math
- Advanced Science
- Advanced Texas History

## BJH ADVANCED CLASS COMMITMENT

If your student takes on the responsibility of enrolling in an advanced course, he or she will agree to the rigorous expectations of that course. Dedication to staying on top of assignments, projects, studying, and other class commitments will be necessary for success in an advanced course. If your student decides to move from an advanced course to an on-level course, the following documentation will be required prior to unenrollment consideration:

- At least 2 forms of parent - teacher contact
- A parent - teacher conference
- Documented attendance of tutorials

Unenrollment from an advanced course will only be honored at the end of the 1st 9 week grading period and/or at the end of the 1st semester.

### Honor Code:

This class will be conducted under an honor code. Students will be given work that must be completed outside of class. **All students are required to do their own work and MUST show their work to receive credit.**

- Violation will result in a parent, teacher, student meeting, and the student will receive a zero on the assignment.

## SCHEDULE CHANGES

The master schedule is based on the courses requested by students. After selecting required courses, students should choose electives and alternates carefully. Schedules are determined by course selections; therefore, schedule changes will **only** be made if:

- Student is scheduled for a class for which he/she already has credit
- Student is enrolled in a course that requires an audition for which they were not selected
- Balancing of class size
- Student has an incomplete schedule
- Student is cut from any extracurricular program within the deadline
- ARD/504 Committee decision
- Student must have a Fine Art credit
- Student must have a PE credit
- Students must be enrolled in a Math and/or Reading accelerated instruction

### Procedures to request a schedule change:

Students must complete and submit the Schedule Change Request Form, which will be made available online, no later than 10 days after the first day of school. Until your concern is addressed, **students must follow your current schedule.** No student is to leave a class for a schedule concern unless sent for by a counselor. Requests that are **not** turned in by the deadline stated on the form will not be honored.