



Forest Hills

EASTERN MIDDLE SCHOOL

2021-2022 Course Description Guide

Eastern Middle School
2200 Pettis NE | Ada, MI 49301 | 616-493-8850 | www.fhps.net



Forest Hills Public Schools

All learners achieving individual potential

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR FOREST HILLS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Vision

All learners achieving individual potential.

Mission

In partnership with our community, Forest Hills Public Schools will provide all learners with opportunities to acquire the knowledge, skills, and experience necessary to build meaningful and productive lives.

Guiding Principles

We believe Forest Hills Public Schools is a learning organization, built upon integrity, and to this end:

We are committed to the principle of **Caring**

We believe in:

- maintaining a family atmosphere
- supporting each other
- being warm, sincere and genuine
- accepting and including everyone
- confronting the tough issues
- keeping each other safe and secure

We are committed to the principle of **Collaboration**

We believe in:

- solving problems together
- working toward win/win
- building partnerships
- sharing best practices
- volunteering
- being generous
- engaging parents as full partners

We are committed to the principle of **Open Communication.**

We believe in:

- listening
- sharing
- promoting trust
- building community through dialogue
- encouraging participation from all

We are committed to the principle of **Diversity and Inclusiveness**

We believe in:

- helping students value their unique talents and gifts
- knowing, understanding and appreciating each other
- valuing individual differences
- celebrating our heritage
- healing racism
- embracing differences to enrich, strengthen, and connect our community
- striving for equity
- considering all viewpoints to arrive at better decisions

We are committed to the principle of **High Expectations**

We believe in:

- expecting all children to learn
- requiring all to give their best
- providing opportunities for all to contribute
- assuming parents want what's best for their child
- maintaining high academic standards
- offering challenging opportunities
- helping students make healthy choices
- contributing to the development of good character

We are committed to the principle of **Learning**

We believe in:

- learning for its own sake
- offering a range of educational opportunities
- providing diverse experiences
- individualizing learning programs
- accommodating multiple intelligences and learning styles
- preparing students for lifelong learning
- providing quality resources
- accessing the world beyond our classrooms

We are committed to the principle of **Respect**

We believe in:

- fostering high regard for self and others
- modeling civility
- appreciating differences
- adhering to our code of conduct
- having zero tolerance for inappropriate behaviors

We are committed to the principle of **Trust**

We believe in:

- being honest
- being consistent
- being loyal
- assuming others' intentions are good
- keeping promises
- demonstrating good stewardship

Forest Hills Public Schools

Dear Seventh- and Eighth-Grade Families:

We believe that middle school is an important time of transition for students. We recognize the unique physical, social, emotional, intellectual needs and qualities of students in this age group. In order to support student growth, a middle school curriculum must be authentic, engaging, rigorous, and developmentally responsive to their needs. The school culture must provide a supportive environment where students are empowered to gain the knowledge, skills, and competencies foundational for success in life. Our caring and responsive staff is committed to encouraging students' growing independence.

In seventh and eighth grade, our students will continue to benefit from a rigorous core curriculum aligned with the Michigan Academic Standards and benchmarks in language arts, math, science, and social studies, combined with an interesting variety of exploratory opportunities. Guidance and support services also continue to be a part of our comprehensive whole-child approach to education.

Historical results of both the Michigan State Test of Educational Progress (M-STEP) and PSAT 8/9 demonstrate that Forest Hills Public Schools consistently ranks among the highest-scoring districts in the state of Michigan. When measuring our success, however, we do not simply look at one data set. We value the quality of relationships and interactions we have every day with our students, their families, and staff. We model respect and understanding for each other. We invite the active involvement and participation of our students' families as learning partners in the educational experience

This guide serves as a planning tool as you and your student consider seventh- and eighth-grade learning opportunities. An important aspect to planning for their secondary education, each student will develop an Educational Development Plan (EDP) related to their future career and education goals after high school. In order to help you better understand the Michigan Merit Curriculum and related requirements, we have provided an additional section in our course description guide starting on page 4.

For all students, our counseling staff is available to support students in selecting and scheduling the appropriate courses. We look forward to working with you and your child as we plan together for a successful school year ahead.

Sincerely,

Charlie Vonk
Central MS

Judy Walton
Eastern MS

David Simpson, Ph.D.
Northern Hills MS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Educational Development Plans	4
Sample Student Schedules	4
Core Classes	
English Language Arts	5
Mathematics	5
Science	6
Social Studies	6
Electives	
Academic Enhancement	6
Citizenship/Leadership	7
Music	7
Physical Education	8
Special Education	8
Project Based Learning	8-9
World Language	9
Earning high school credit	10

EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANS (EDP)

The Michigan Merit Curriculum (MMC) legislation states, "each pupil in grade 7 is provided with the opportunity to develop an educational development plan, and that each pupil has developed an educational development plan before he or she begins high school. An educational development plan shall be developed by the pupil under the supervision of the pupil's school counselor or another designee qualified to act in a counseling role under section 1233 or 1233a selected by the high school principal and shall be based on a career pathways program or similar career exploration program." (MCL 380.1278a)

The EDP is a secondary/post-secondary planning tool that directs the educational plan and career planning activities schedule for the final six years of a student's K-12 learning career. In their EDP, students identify a career pathway and write employment, education, and training goals. They also identify a course of study (the credits that will be taken) intended to provide the skills and competencies needed to be successful in the next steps after high school. EDP's are "living" documents that are updated as students' age and their interests and abilities become more obvious and focused. It is recommended that the EDP be updated at least annually in conjunction with other planning activities designed to support student achievement. (MDE MMC Guidelines v.12.07)

Forest Hills students begin planning for their EDP in seventh grade during classroom guidance. Students are introduced to a web-based career and post-secondary exploration program called **Naviance**. Students are issued an individual login so they may access the program from home as well as at school. Students complete state requirements for the EDP during eighth grade.

VIRTUAL LEARNING

All traditional/seated courses listed in this course catalog are allowed to be adapted for delivery in a virtual or blended format by Forest Hills Public Schools.

STUDENT SCHEDULE EXAMPLES (more possibilities exist)

*All students will have 4 core and 2-4 elective classes depending on their preferences.
Core classes will be automatically scheduled.
Electives are 1 Semester (S) or Year-long/2 semesters (Y).*

Example 1

<u>4 core classes</u>		<u>Electives</u>
Language Arts		Elective (Y)
Math	+	Elective (S)
Science		
Social Studies		Elective (S)

Example 2

<u>4 core classes</u>		<u>Electives</u>
Language Arts		Elective (S)
Math	+	Elective (S)
Science		Elective (S)
Social Studies		Elective (S)

Example 3

<u>4 core classes</u>		<u>Electives</u>
Language Arts		
Math		Elective (Y)
Science	+	Elective (Y)
Social Studies	4	

CORE CLASSES

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS 7 (2 Semesters)

In the seventh grade, students are exposed to a variety of selections in literature (e.g., mystery, poetry, drama, mythology, legends, etc.), as well as outside readings. Students develop reading and writing strategies, academic vocabulary, spelling skills, and speaking and listening skills. Understanding thematic units and thesis support writings are a focus at this grade level.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS 8 (2 Semesters)

In the eighth grade, a continued development of composition skills occurs with emphasis on writing from selected topics. Speaking, listening, grammar, writing, and reading comprehension are strongly emphasized. Extended learning in poetry, short stories, and dramatic techniques through selected topics in literature are three major units of study.

CHALLENGE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS 8 (2 Semesters)

Pre-requisite: Demonstrated proficiency in Challenge English Language Arts 7 or students who apply and meet the entrance criteria. The highest qualifying students will be admitted. Students must maintain a B average in the course during the school year to remain in the course. Students will explore multiple genres of literature and informational text through a thematic lens. Diverse types of writing will be examined and students will utilize the grammar, usage, and mechanics learned to develop ideas and themes. Competency will be assessed through a variety of tools, including research, writing, collaborative projects, class discussions, and presentations. Students must **maintain a B average** in the class during the school year to remain in the class.

MATHEMATICS

MATH 7 (2 Semesters)

Math 7 develops mathematical concepts and skills in four important mathematical strands: Number and Operations, Geometry and Measurement, Data Analysis and Probability, and Algebra and Functions. Students will engage in a research-based, problem-centered learning environment to develop proficiency in both mathematical reasoning and communication.

MATH 8 (2 Semesters)

Math 8 develops mathematical concepts and skills in major areas of study that include the Number System, Expressions and Equations, Functions, Geometry, and Statistics and Probability. Student will engage in a research-based, problem-centered learning environment to develop proficiency in both mathematical reasoning and communication.

MATH 7/8 (2 Semesters)

This is the first course of a two-year accelerated path that covers three years of math curriculum, including Math 7, Math 8, and High School Algebra I academic standards. Students are required to test in and must **maintain a B average** in the class during the school year to remain in the class. After successful completion of this two-year path, students are prepared for high school Geometry.

ALGEBRA I (2 Semesters)

Prerequisite: Demonstrated proficiency in Math 7/8 standards

This is the second year of a two-year course. Students must **maintain a B average** in the class during the school year to remain in the class. After successful completion of this two-year course, students are prepared for Geometry. Students enrolled in this course will also be eligible to take the Advanced Placement Calculus or the Advanced Placement Statistics course during their senior year of high school. **Upon successful completion at the end of eighth grade, both the letter grade and credit for Algebra I will be recorded on the student's permanent high school transcript and applied to high school graduation requirements.**

SCIENCE

SCIENCE 7 (2 Semesters)

Our seventh-grade science course builds upon sixth-grade learning, continuing the process of reading, writing, talking, and "doing" science. This student-driven inquiry experience includes units around Chemistry (how can I make new stuff from old stuff?), Physics (why do some things stop while others keep going?), Earth (what makes the weather change?), and Life (what is going on inside me?).

SCIENCE 8 (2 Semesters)

Our eighth-grade science course caps off the 6-8 learning band and prepares students for continued learning in high school. This student-driven inquiry experience includes units in Chemistry (how does food provide my body with energy?), Life (why do organisms look the way they do?), Earth (how is the Earth changing?), and Physics (how will it move?).

SOCIAL STUDIES

WORLD HISTORY 7 (2 Semesters)

Social Studies 7 encompasses World History from the beginnings of human society through 300 C.E. Students will learn geographic, environmental, biological, and cultural processes that influenced the rise of the earliest human communities, the migration and spread of people throughout the world, and the causes and consequences of the growth of agriculture. Students will discover the innovations and social, political, and economic changes that occurred through the emergence of classical civilizations in Africa and Eurasia, and their impact on our world yet today.

US HISTORY 8 (2 Semesters)

Social Studies 8 encompasses major themes of the 18th and 19th centuries in American History. Students will learn about the fight for independence from Britain and the forging of a new nation. Moving into the 19th century, students will investigate the underlying causes and results of westward expansion, and its consequences for American Indians and enslaved African Americans. Students will also study reform movements such as abolition and women's suffrage, sectional tensions that contributed to the Civil War, and the successes and failures of Reconstruction.

ELECTIVES

Elective course offerings are dependent on student interest, staffing, and configuration within the Master Schedule.

Academic Enhancement

ENHANCEMENT (1 or 2 Semesters, 7th and 8th grades)

For students who systematically need assistance in achieving academic success, this course provides teacher-directed support with core subject learning. **Collaborative discussions with family, teachers, counselor, and/or administrators occur in order to place students into this course.**

ENHANCEMENT MATH 7 (1 or 2 Semesters)

Taken concurrently with Math 7, this elective is for students who need additional assistance with mathematical concepts as they are taught. This course provides pre-teaching, post-teaching, and homework assistance.

ENHANCEMENT – MATH 8 (1 or 2 Semesters)

Taken concurrently with Math 8, this elective is for students who need additional assistance with mathematical concepts as they are taught. This course provides pre-teaching, post-teaching, and homework assistance.

Citizenship/Leadership

PEER TO PEER (1 Semester, 7th and 8th grades)

Peer to peer support programs increase opportunities for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder to access general education settings and curriculum. Peers model typical academic and social behavior in educational environments throughout the school day and provide support for students with ASD to promote independence and socialization. Peer to peer support programs and inclusion of students with ASD not only affects outcomes for the students with ASD, but can also impact a number of outcomes for typical peers and at risk students.

WITH LIBERTY AND JUSTICE FOR ALL (1 Semester, 7th and 8th grades)

This hands-on course explores the American court system, and leadership for global citizens. Students will study intolerance from a social-science perspective, and then progressively use their learning to work in the school and district to further the mission of respect for all people. The class includes a “law school” study of the courts and culminates in a simulation trial. Students will participate in investigations and ultimately play the parts of prosecutors, defendants, defense attorneys, witnesses, and jury members in trial proceedings.

MUSIC

All members of the EMS music department are expected to wear a white tuxedo shirt (can be ordered from the school), black pants, black shoes, black socks, cummerbund, and bow tie for all performances. The school will supply the cummerbund and bow tie. Families requiring financial assistance should contact a school administrator.

BAND 7 (2 Semesters)

Recommended Prerequisite: Demonstrated proficiency in Band 6 and/or one year of study on the instrument that he/she is planning to play in Band 7.

A variety of band literature is studied and performed. Practice at home and attendance at all performances are expected. The bands perform several concerts throughout the year and may attend music festivals. Additional opportunities exist through solo and ensemble festivals. ***Students are scheduled into this course for the entire year.***

BAND 8 (2 Semesters)

Prerequisite: Demonstrated proficiency in Band 7.

This course is for students who have completed two previous years of band. Students new to Forest Hills should contact the school office to determine appropriate placement. A variety of band literature is studied and performed. Practice at home and attendance at all performances is expected. The Band performs several concerts throughout the year and may attend music festivals. Additional opportunities exist for participation in solo and ensemble festivals. ***Students are scheduled into this course for the entire year.***

CHOIR 7 (2 Semesters)

Choir students will develop the ability to sing with good tone and diction, to sing and read parts, to learn to read music, and to develop a greater understanding of music. Activities include sight-reading exercises, daily choral rehearsals, and performances. All students learn the basics of music theory, music history, sight-reading, and proper vocal production. Several concerts are given each year. Performance demeanor, responsibility to the group, and teamwork are stressed. Attendance at all performances is expected. ***Students are scheduled into this course for the entire year.***

CHOIR 8 (2 Semesters)

Choir students will develop the ability to sing with good tone and diction, to sing and read parts, to learn to read music, and to develop a greater understanding of music. Activities include sight-reading exercises, daily choral rehearsals, and performances. All students learn the basics of music theory, music history, sight-reading, and proper vocal production. Several concerts are given each year. Performance demeanor, responsibility to the group, and teamwork are stressed. Attendance at all performances is expected. ***Students are scheduled into this course for the entire year.***

MUSIC cont'd

ORCHESTRA 7 (2 Semesters)

Recommended Prerequisite: Demonstrated proficiency in Orchestra 6 and/or one year of study on the instrument that he/she is planning to play in Orchestra 7. A variety of orchestra literature is studied and performed. Practice at home and attendance at all performances are expected. The orchestras perform several concerts throughout the year and may attend music festivals. Emphasis is placed on gaining technical skill through performance of different types of literature, and on music theory as it relates to string playing. **Students are scheduled into this course for the entire year.**

ORCHESTRA 8 (2 Semesters)

Recommended Prerequisite: Demonstrated proficiency in Orchestra 7. A variety of orchestra literature is studied and performed. Practice at home and attendance at all performances are expected. The orchestras perform several concerts throughout the year and may attend music festivals. Emphasis is placed on refining and improving an individual's music skills to a higher degree of proficiency. A variety of orchestral literature is studied and performed. **Students are scheduled into this course for the entire year.**

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

You are required to take one semester of P.E. one time during your two years at EMS. However, you may also elect to take P.E. more than once.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION (1 or 2 Semesters, 7th and 8th grades)

The physical education curriculum focuses on recreational/life-long activities, individual, and group sports. The program's activities encourage physical fitness, student responsibility, self-discipline, respect for self and others, and cooperation.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

RESOURCE/SUPPORT (1 Semester, 7th and 8th grades)

Focuses on self-advocacy, strategic academic skills, executive function skills, and recurrent instruction in certain core subject lessons. Placement is based on students' Individualized Education Program (IEP) requirements.

PROJECT BASED LEARNING

ART (1 Semester, 7th and 8th grades)

Students will find their creative self with a class designed to explore a variety of methods and materials in art. Students will have the opportunity to create unique art forms using paints, pastels, drawing pencils, markers, and sculptural materials. Explore cultural art, famous artists, cartooning, and graphic design along with a variety of art styles and techniques.

DRAMA (1 Semester, 7th and 8th grades)

Students will participate in many forms of drama such as storytelling, mime, improvisation, skits, monologues, and interpretive reading. Acting techniques are taught through creative interactions with classmates.

PLTW: Flight and Space (1 Semester, 7th and 8th grades)

Get ready to take off! Investigate, innovate, and use creative thinking and problem solving to learn how scientists and engineers make traveling around the globe and beyond possible. The exciting world of aerospace comes alive through Flight and Space. Students become engineers as they design, prototype, and test models to learn about the science of flight and what it takes to travel and live in space. They solve real-world aviation and space challenges and plan a mission to Mars.

PROJECT BASED LEARNING cont'd

PLTW: Medical Detectives (1 Semester, 7th and 8th grades)

Apply experimental design, creative thinking, and problem solving to investigate the inner-workings of the human body, diagnose disease, and improve human health. In Medical Detectives, students play the role of real-life medical detectives as they collect and analyze medical data to diagnose disease. They solve medical mysteries through hands-on projects and labs, measure and interpret vital signs, possibly dissect a sheep brain, investigate disease outbreaks, and explore how a breakdown within the human body can lead to dysfunction.

YEARBOOK (2 Semesters 7th & 8th grades)

The main focus is the publication of our EMS yearbook. Page design, layout, photography, copy writing, sale, and distribution are some of the components of yearbook publication. Students should have strong writing skills and be able to work independently. Some time commitment outside of the scheduled class period (before and after school) is also expected.

CREATIVE WRITING (1 Semester, 7th and 8th grades)

Have you always wished you could write about whatever you wanted in school? This is the class for you! Build your skills as a writer and communicator through creativity. Students will enjoy daily journaling, poetry, a multi-genre writing project, writing using art and photographs, and more. A student-led approach to self-expression and discussion will be highlighted in this exciting class.

World Language

INTRO TO SPANISH (1 Semester, 7th and 8th grades)

This one semester course bridges students' previous World Language exposure to a future high school Spanish experience. Students will engage in reading, speaking, listening, and writing in Spanish. Students will also participate in activities, games, songs, and utilize technology to enhance their skills.

INTRO TO FRENCH (1 Semester, 7th and 8th grades)

This one semester course provides exposure to reading, speaking, listening, and writing in French as students contemplate a high school world language experience. Students will also participate in cultural activities, games, songs, and utilize technology to enhance their skills.

SPANISH 1 (2 Semesters, 8th grade)

This course is equivalent to high school Spanish 1. During the first year of daily Spanish class, students will experience the cultures of Spanish-speaking people both abroad and in the US. Students will develop skills in listening, speaking, reading and writing, as well as study common vocabulary and grammar patterns. The *Realidades* series that we use offers many varied opportunities for students to practice all aspects of language acquisition through audio, video, CD, text and workbook components. This class is very important in forming a strong base for future study in the language. **Eighth grade students who have selected Spanish I will have both their grades and the credit earned for the class reflected on their high school transcript and applied toward the high school graduation requirements.**

FRENCH 1 (2 Semesters, 8th grade)

This course is equivalent to high school French 1. During the first year of daily French class, students will experience the cultures of French-speaking peoples around the world through vocabulary units using cultural backgrounds. Students will develop skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing, as well as common vocabulary and grammar patterns. The *Bien Dit* series that we use offers many varied opportunities for students to practice all aspects of language acquisition through audio, video, CD, text, and workbook components. This class is very important in forming a strong base for future study in the language. **Eighth grade students who have selected French I will have both their grades and the credit earned for the class reflected on their high school transcript and applied toward the high school graduation requirements.**

EARNING HIGH SCHOOL CREDIT (MCL 380.1278)

The Michigan Merit Curriculum lays out a new foundation for “credit” by requiring that credit be awarded not by the commonly used Carnegie unit, which is based on seat time, but based on a student’s demonstration that he or she has successfully met the content expectations for the credit area.

A credit is a completed unit of study as measured by proficiency in a predetermined set of content expectations (e.g., Algebra I, Biology). Students earn credit – students take a course.

Students may earn credit if they successfully demonstrate mastery of subject area content expectations or guidelines for the credit. The assignment of credit must be based, at least in part, on student performance on subject area assessments, which measure the extent to which they meet the credit expectations and guidelines. Credit can be granted in a variety of ways (e.g., end-of-course exams with a passing score; dual enrollment; testing out with a minimum score of 77% per state law, accelerated, honors, and/or advanced placement (AP) courses; summer school makeup classes).

Middle school students who successfully complete one or more high school credits before entering high school and meet the same expectations and proficiency level as high school students will receive high school graduation credit.

Once a student registers for and attends a class, he or she agrees to the district’s requirements for earning a grade in the class, including attendance, homework, etc. However, the district must grant credit if a student passes an end of course exam, which the district has determined measures a student’s proficiency in meeting the Michigan Merit course/credit content expectations.

A student will not be granted more than 1 credit per course for a course/credit area required under the Michigan Merit Curriculum, with the exception of Algebra II, which the law explicitly allows to be delivered over two years.

If a student fails a required course for graduation, credit is not granted and the class must be made up. Since there is little room in a student’s schedule each year for makeup classes, the failed credit can be recovered in various ways.

Courses taken in middle school for high school credit may affect the student’s high school G.P.A. but may not be accepted for credit by some post-secondary institutions. It is recommended that college choices be researched on this topic for clarification prior to enrollment.

NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY

It is the policy of the Forest Hills Public School District that no person shall on the basis of race, age, color, religion, national origin, sex or handicap be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program of the District, including employment.

Any questions concerning Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, including athletic issues, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex, or inquiries related to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of handicap, should be directed to:

Ms. Christine Annese
Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources
Forest Hills Public Schools
6590 Cascade Road, SE
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49546
Telephone: (616) 493-8805