

John T. Baker Middle School Grade 8



2020 - 2021 Course Bulletin

We prepare our course bulletin early in the year, therefore changes may occur. Please refer to the course bulletin on the Baker website to view any changes and/or updates for the 2019-2020 school year.

www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/bakerms/

John T. Baker Middle School

25400 Oak Drive, Damascus, Maryland 20872

www.bakerms.org

Dear Parents,

Welcome to another exciting year at Baker Middle School! You will find that this is one of the finest middle schools in all of Montgomery County! Baker offers your child a wide range of academic possibilities. We pride ourselves in being responsive to all of our children's needs. Our programs offer courses for gifted and talented, special education, and on-level students in every subject area. In all classes, students are challenged to perform at a level commensurate to their ability and intellectual growth.

Our goal at Baker is "to improve student achievement by promoting high expectations, developing a strong student work ethic, and increasing academic rigor." Giving our students the academic tools and organizational habits that will prepare them to pursue future goals is a responsibility of all of us. This begins by making wise choices for your child's academic program. I am hoping that you will review the choices outlined within this booklet, attend the informational parent meetings, and make decisions based on what is best for your child. Proper placement of children ensures that they will be encouraged to work to their potential without being defeated by unrealistic goals. The school counselors will be willing to help in any decision you need to make.

I look forward to joining with you and your family in a close working partnership to ensure your child's academic success while providing a pleasant and productive experience for you at Baker.

Sincerely

Principal John T. Baker Middle School

Dr. Louise Worthington

BAKER'S MISSION

John T. Baker Middle School seeks to be an exemplary learning community school. We build the foundation of this community through meaningful relationships, relevant and engaging learning, and effective communication. We challenge ourselves to be better than we think we can be, and advocate for the greater good of our community. Our success in this mission will build lifelong, confident learners, who have the tools necessary for success in a changing world.

ADMINISTRATION 240-207-2440

Dr. Louise Worthington, Principal Dr. Vaughn Bradley, Jr., Assistant Principal

Ms. Melanie Pique, Assistant Principal

SCHOOL COUNSELORS 240-207-2410

Ms. Lori Headdings, Resource Counselor, 8th Grade

Ms. Corinne Whited 6th Grade, Ms. Lindsey Buffum, 7th Grade and Ms. Caleine Ajusma, All Grades

BAKER MIDDLE SCHOOL
Registration Procedure for Students 2020-2021

REGISTRATION INFORMATION FOR RISING 7th and 8th GRADE STUDENTS The Course Bulletin for all grades are available on-line at the website listed below:

<http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/bakerms>

1. The counselors have met with students and given them registration forms and course information. Each registration form is specific for the student named on the form. The current math teachers have made the course level recommendations for the student. Students must register for the course level that is recommended by their teacher.
2. The Baker MS Course Bulletin is available on-line at the above website on the counseling page. (If you do not have computer access, printed copies are available in the counseling office.) Please review the registration form card with parents/guardians. After reviewing this information, if there are any questions about the courses, please contact the student's current teacher or call the counseling office at 240-207-2410 and speak to the grade level counselor. This needs to be done by **January 23, 2021**. If the registration form is lost, you can download and print a blank copy, found on the BMS webpage (the above website).
3. **THE DUE DATE FOR STUDENTS TO RETURN THEIR COMPLETED REGISTRATION FORM BACK TO THEIR WORLD STUDIES TEACHER IS JANUARY 17th.** Registration forms must be completely filled out. Students must schedule themselves for a total of 7 periods and will be entering their selections on the computer with their counselors. This will take place between **January 9, 2021 through January 14, 2021**. Students going into grade 7 and 8 also need to select one to two alternative courses in case they cannot get into any requested electives. If a student does not select any alternative courses and they cannot be scheduled into a requested course, then the counselor will schedule a course without their input. A completed registration form must have the parent's/guardian's signature. Baker Middle School counselors will review the completed registration cards for accuracy and completeness.
4. **Choosing electives must be done thoughtfully and based on interest. We cannot honor changes after the start of the school year. We base the number of classes we offer on what you choose now.**
5. Classes are heterogeneously grouped for 7th and 8th graders in **Historical Inquiries in World Studies/Advanced US History**, Advanced English and Investigations of Science. Within these classes, teachers will differentiate. Only students with an IEP and teacher approval will be placed in the supported classes.

MyMCPS Parent Portal –

This school year, MyMCPS Parent Portal replaced Edline as the primary home-to-school communication vehicle for schools to share information regarding Student Emergency Contacts, Grades, Attendance, Scheduling and more. The MyMCPS Parent Portal is live for all parents and students! During the beginning of the **2019-2020** school year, letters were mailed. This letter gave instructions on how to access the Parent Portal with assigned Login Access Codes.

Currently, the Parent Portal is closed for parents to make changes to Student Contact and Emergency/Medical. The Parent Portal will re-open sometime in Spring/Summer of 2021.

Pride Program – Grades 6/7/8:

The Pride Program is an early intervention program at Baker Middle for at-risk students. Students are identified at grade level team meetings for entry into the program. Criteria for identification include, but are not limited to, factors such as attendance, grades, and other academic concerns such as study or organizational skills development. Pride offers academic support and reinforcement of basic skills for the students in the program. In addition, time management, organization, self-management and study strategies are supplemental areas of focus. The program is intended to promote and reinforce those skills necessary for a smooth transition to upper grades and high school.

Reading Programs:

Reading is an intensive intervention for students who are reading below grade level and have an IEP. MCPS uses the decoding strand combined with comprehension practice. Students take a placement test to an appropriate instructional level. This program helps students who have trouble identifying words, who don't understand how the arrangement of letters in a word relates to its pronunciation, and who struggle with reading fluency. Students participate in tightly sequenced, carefully planned lessons that give them the structure and practice necessary to become skilled, fluent readers.

Read 180/Read 180 Flex is an intensive reading intervention program designed to help students make measurable gains in reading achievement. Students are assigned to the course based on a variety of assessments, including MAP-R and teacher recommendation. The program consists of nine different workshops using high-interest non-fiction and fiction texts. The duration of each workshop is a minimum of three weeks. Each workshop provides instruction in reading skills, vocabulary development, writing and grammar skills, and "real-life" functional reading skills.

Special Education Programs:

The special education program at Baker Middle School supports the inclusion of students with special needs in the comprehensive school program, to the fullest extent possible in order to meet the individual needs of students identified for special education services. Programs are driven by a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP), and classes are selected according to the goals and objectives on the IEP. Teachers then provide the consistent application of instructional methods and adaptations throughout the student's day so that IEP goals and instructional objectives can be met. The optimal learning environment may be the general education classroom, with special education services delivered within that classroom; however, specialized instruction can also be delivered in a more structured setting. Services are also provided by a speech pathologist, occupational therapist and physical therapist. Student services in these areas are provided within the regular education classroom during instruction, in small groups or individual settings. These service providers consult with the school staff in order to identify ways to effectively work with students within their areas of expertise to best support instruction.

ESOL Programs:

StudySync is a comprehensive English Language Arts curriculum that is designed for today's learners just like your student. StudySync combines print books with a digital platform for reading and writing. Your student will have their own online digital binder where they will receive their assignments, store their writing, and receive teacher and peer reviews. Each grade level is broken down into 6 Units of study.

Lessons within StudySync are designed to build your students' ability to work both collaboratively and independently. Multimedia such as the StudySync® TV episodes model for your student how to participate in a critical discussion of literature, how to support their viewpoint with text evidence, and how to skillfully use academic vocabulary – all while collaborating with their peers.

StudySync's digital platform ensures equitable access for all students. Lessons can be customized for each learner's needs. Students are supported each step of the way with a variety of scaffolds, with passages in supplemental languages, audio of each text with highlighting to follow along, and slide-in sentence frames to support written responses.

Grade 8 Course Descriptions 2018-2019

Mathematics 8

Mathematics 8 extends students' understanding of mathematical concepts developed in Mathematics 6 and 7. Instruction at this level will focus on three critical areas: (1) formulating and reasoning about expressions and equations, including modeling an association in bivariate data with a linear equation and solving linear equations and systems of linear equations; (2) grasping the concept of a function and using functions to describe quantitative relationships; and (3) analyzing two- and three-dimensional space and figures using distance, angle, similarity, and congruence, and understanding and applying the Pythagorean Theorem. Students who successfully complete this course will be ready for Algebra 1 in Grade 9. Mathematics 8 focuses on the Standards for Mathematical Practice to build a climate that engages students in the exploration of mathematics. The Standards for Mathematical Practice are habits of mind applied throughout the course so that students see mathematics as a coherent, useful, and logical subject that makes use of their ability to make sense of problem situations.

Algebra 1 HS credit

Algebra 1 is designed to analyze and model real-world phenomena. Exploration of linear, exponential, and quadratic functions form the foundation of the course. Key characteristics and representations of functions—graphic, numeric, symbolic, and verbal—are analyzed and compared. Students develop fluency in solving equations and inequalities. One- and two-variable data sets are interpreted using mathematical models. C2.0 Algebra 1 focuses on the Standards for Mathematical Practice to build a climate that engages students in the exploration of mathematics. The Standards of Mathematical Practice are habits of mind applied throughout the course so that students see mathematics as a coherent, useful, and logical subject that makes use of their ability to make sense of problem situations.

Honors Geometry HS credit

Honors Geometry formalizes and extends students' geometric experiences from the elementary and middle school grades. Students explore more complex geometric situations and deepen their understanding of geometric relationships, progressing toward formal mathematical arguments. Instruction at this level will focus on the understanding and application of congruence as a basis for developing formal proofs; the relationship among similarity, trigonometry, and triangles; the relationship between two- and three-dimensional objects and their measurements; exploration of geometric descriptions and equations for conic sections; and application of geometric concepts in modeling situations. Honors Geometry focuses on the Standards for Mathematical Practice to build a climate that engages students in the exploration of mathematics. The Standards of Mathematical Practice are habits of mind applied throughout the course so that students see mathematics as a coherent, useful, and logical subject that makes use of their ability to make sense of problem situations.

Advanced English 8:

Advanced English 8 for StudySync Schools

This course integrates the five English/language arts processes (reading, writing, listening, speaking, and viewing) and the two contents (language and literature) in a thematic organization of six units. It builds on the students' experiences in English 7, involving greater rigor and challenge in the instructional approach to the study of English. Students in English 8 examine language and literature in the context of the challenges people face. Students read, analyze, and study different genres related to each of the themes and complete required common tasks. Core texts include multicultural, contemporary, and classic titles. The common tasks focus primarily on the writing process for three types of writing—argument, narrative, and informative/explanatory—and they include the use of information, word processing, and presentation technology to address a variety of language skills. Students have opportunities to present their work orally and using various technology tools. Instruction in reading and writing strategies, grammar, and vocabulary is embedded throughout every unit. All students develop portfolios and revisit their compositions as they work to strengthen their writing skills. English 8 prepares students—through activities integrated into each thematic unit—for county, state, and national assessments.

Investigation in Science 8 (IS8):

IS8 is a problem/project based curriculum. Instruction is interwoven around a relevant problem/project to allow a focus on student learning. This course emphasizes the dynamic processes of systems on and inside the Earth and its surrounding space environment. Topics include the interrelated systems—hydrosphere, cryosphere, geosphere, biosphere, and atmosphere. Problem solving and online investigations are used continually to allow students to investigate real world problems and reinforce science concepts. Through differentiated instruction all students are given an opportunity to reach their maximum potential by engaging in a challenging and rigorous science curriculum. Also, 8th grade students will take the MISA, (Maryland Integrated Science Assessment), a required state assessment.

Historical Inquiry in US History 8:

Students explore the history of the United States from colonization to post Civil War Reconstruction and Industrialization while extending their understanding of political, economic, geographic and cultural systems. Throughout the course students analyze multiple perspectives and study how the diverse populations of Americans, including Native Americans, African Americans, women, immigrants, and Mexican Americans contributed to and were impacted by events. Connections to current issues help students identify patterns and themes that have shaped America in the past and continue to shape the nation today. Students extend their literacy practices by using the historical thinking skills learned in Grades 6 and 7 to build effective, evidence based historical arguments. This course prepares students for continuing their study of U.S. History in Grade 9.

Historical Inquiry into American Studies 8 (2122) (available at 20 select middle schools 2020-2021)

This course is built around the core Grade 8 social studies curriculum, Historical Inquiry in US History 8, that includes historical content from colonization to post Civil War Reconstruction and Industrialization. In addition to the content in the core curriculum, students will learn in greater depth about the social and cultural history of America including how the historical legacy of racism and discrimination continue to affect American society today. Students will also strengthen their writing through Document Based Questions, and enhance their learning through relevant literature connections. They will also participate in local or national competitions that allow them to connect their learning to broader themes of American democracy.

Physical Education 8:

Middle school physical education instruction focuses on standards-based content that has been categorized into three measurement topics: health-related fitness, movement skills and concepts, and personal and social responsibility. The learning tasks in physical education emphasize and teach problem-solving and decision-making skills. Middle School student participate in learning tasks that are organized into personal development and tactical games activities. These activities provide opportunities for student to learn specific criteria aligned to each measurement topic. Personal development activities center on creative expression or individual gains through participation in learning tasks. Tactical games activities concentrate on the application of tactics and strategies to the learning tasks.

Health Education 8:

Comprehensive Health Education promotes positive health-related attitudes and behaviors that support self reliance and self-regulation while developing health literacy and lifelong wellness. The following seven units will be taught on all levels: mental and emotional health; tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs; nutrition and fitness; safety and injury prevention; family life and human sexuality; and disease prevention and control. Students receive nine weeks of health education. The family life and human sexuality units require parent permission. Students whose parents do not wish for them to take this portion of the class will complete an independent-study alternative unit of health education that does not include information about human sexuality or disease prevention, including HIV/AIDS.

8th Grade Electives 2019-2020

Students will have the opportunity of selecting 2 elective options. Choosing electives must be done thoughtfully and based on interest. We cannot honor changes after the start of the school year. We base the number of classes we offer on what you choose.

World Languages:

Students choosing foreign languages as an elective will learn meaningful communication in both spoken and written form. The foreign language program emphasizes language as it is used in real-life situations that students are most likely to encounter. All foreign language classes taught in middle school are high school credit bearing courses with the same guidelines and expectations as the high school classes and must pass the course to earn credit. Learning a foreign language is a rigorous undertaking that requires a serious commitment on the part of the student.

Foreign language enrollment for grade 7 and grade 8 students will be based on student recommendations for reading or math support classes. Students who have been recommended for a Reading class may not select a foreign language elective. (Disclaimer: a minimum of 20 students need to register, in order for the class to open)

Guidelines for GT Foreign Languages 1A/B Placement

- Students taking Foreign Language for the first time need to have a MAP-R Lexile Score of 1130 or higher.
- Achieving A's and B's in Advanced English
- Able to handle the fast paced curriculum

GT Spanish 1 A/B:

This full year course is accelerated and enriched course that combines the Level 1 A/B courses. Students who successfully complete Level 1A continue on to Level 1B in the next semester. Students who select Level 1 are expected to demonstrate strong English/language arts skills. In Level 1B students continue to develop oral and written communication skills. Emphasis remains focused on vocabulary development, simple grammatical structures, the application of language skills to daily life, and the basic culture of the people. High school credit is given upon successful completion of levels 1A and 1B.

GT French 1 A/B:

This full year course is accelerated and enriched, that combines the 1A and 1B section into a single year. Students begin to learn to communicate orally and in writing in a culturally appropriate manner about topics related to daily life. They interpret basic information when listening and reading. Vocabulary and basic grammatical structures are taught within the context of these familiar topics. Culture is embedded throughout the course. High school credit is given upon successful completion of both semesters.

GT Spanish 2 A/B:

Prerequisite: Successful completion (with a C or above) of Spanish 1 A/B Students in this course will continue to develop their listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. The themes studied in Spanish 1 are expanded to include more extensive vocabulary instruction and more advanced grammar instruction. Enrollment in Spanish 3 or higher will occur in collaboration with Damascus High School.

BAKER MUSIC PROGRAM

MS Chorus 2 for 7th & 8th (Full Year):

MS Chorus 2 is open to any 7th or 8th grade student who enjoys singing regardless of previous choral singing experience. Students will develop their vocal skills by practicing and performing various choral literature pieces at a beginning level. Emphasis is placed on musicianship skills, ear training, as well as rhythmic and melodic sight reading proficiency. Students perform in concerts for the school and community as well as in festivals as a requirement of this course. Students participating in Chorus are eligible to audition for MCPS Honors Chorus

MS Chorus 3 for 7th and 8th grade (Full Year):

By audition MS Chorus 3 is open to students with previous choral singing experience at the middle school level. Students will continue to develop their vocal skills by practicing and performing various choral literature pieces at an intermediate level. Emphasis is placed on musicianship skills, ear training, as well as rhythmic and melodic sight reading proficiency. Students perform in concerts for the school and community as well as in festivals as a requirement of this course. Students participating in MS Chorus 3 are eligible to audition for MCPS Honors Chorus.

MS Band 3 - Concert Band 8 (Full Year):

This course is open to eighth grade woodwind, brass and percussion students with at least three years of experience who demonstrate a high level of proficiency on their instrument and/or by teacher recommendation. This group performs five to ten mandatory concerts each year, including festivals and field trips. Advanced Orchestra for 7th and 8th grade (Full Year) This class is designed for students who have had previous experience with a string instrument (violin, viola, cello, or string bass). Several evening performances and participation in the MCPS Orchestra Festival are a required part of this class.

MS Orchestra 2 - Advanced Orchestra (Full Year):

This class is designed for students who have had previous experience with a string instrument (violin, viola, cello, or string bass). Several evening performances and participation in the MCPS Orchestra Festival are a required part of this class.

8th GRADE FULL YEAR/SEMESTER ELECTIVES

****Students preferences are taken into consideration but due to staffing and class size, we cannot guarantee students' first choices.****

Foundations of Computer Science (Semester A/B):

This course is a part of the MSDE-approved 4-credit Program of Studies in Computer Science. The course provides an engaging introduction to computing concepts through a nationally-developed curriculum, offered through a unique partnership with Code.org. The course focuses on the conceptual ideas of computing so that students understand why tools and languages are used to solve problems through a study of human computer interaction, problem solving, web design, programming, data analysis, and robotics. **(0.5 credit per semester)** students taking this course should have a strong background in math and English.

MS Studio Art 8 (Semester):

Students in Grade 8 Art refine their skills and develop their own artistic style. Students work to improve craftsmanship and enhance the creative processes through units in; design, drawing, painting, sculpture, printmaking, and collage. In addition to hands-on experiences, students will explore the relationship of what they are doing in the classroom to that of artists within the field.

Materials fee to be determined (not to exceed \$5.00).

Family and Consumer Sciences - (FACS) (Semester):

Family and Consumer Sciences (FACS) in grade 8 includes units in cooking, sewing , nutrition, child care and budgeting. Students will be involved in hands on activities to expand their learning Materials fee to be determined (not to exceed \$7.50).

MS Theatre 3 (Semester):

Students in Grade 8 with prior theatre experience may continue with Level 3 in the curriculum sequence. In Middle School Theatre Level 3, students will have the opportunity to refine their craft while exploring ideas about CONFLICT. CONFLICT drives drama. When a character faces an obstacle, the tension created, the decisions made, and the consequences portrayed on stage engage the audience and artists in deeper reflection of the world around them. There are many types of conflicts that theatre artists face both onstage and off. The way conflicts are handled and developed reveal much about the agents involved. This course is aligned with new frameworks for a level 3.

Computer Science Fundamentals (Semester):

In this course, students will investigate problem-solving techniques and discuss societal impacts of computing and the internet. By the end of the course, students will have created interactive stories and games that they can share with their friends and family. Students learn to create computer programs that will help them learn to collaborate with others, develop problem-solving skills, and persist through difficult tasks. They will study programming concepts, computational thinking, digital citizenship, and develop interactive games or stories they can share.

CSD Unit 2 - Web Development (Semester):

In Computer Science Discoveries Unit 2, you'll learn how to create and share the content on your own web pages. After deciding what content you want to share with the world, you'll learn how to structure and style your pages using HTML and CSS. You'll also practice valuable programming skills such as debugging and commenting. By the end of the unit, you'll have a personal website that you can publish to the Internet.