



PA Distance  
Learning  
CHARTER SCHOOL

**7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Course Catalog**

## 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grade Students

Welcome to the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade! At PA Distance Learning, we use a blended learning model, which means middle school students are expected to attend live-learning sessions and also work independently to complete asynchronous lessons that are assigned daily for each course. Pennsylvania public school regulations require every middle school student to spend a minimum of 5.5 hours on their academics each school day, which equates to spending approximately 45 minutes completing daily lessons in each class.

### **7<sup>th</sup> Grade English Language Arts**

Course length: Full-year

Curriculum Resources: *StudySync* and *Stargirl*

In 7<sup>th</sup> grade English Language Arts, students will use an interactive online textbook and novel to read literary and informational texts that explore themes such as conflict, relationships, dreams, and change. Students will practice close reading and analysis to delve deep into the texts. A variety of creative projects, discussions, and activities will be used to assess comprehension and analysis skills. Writing will also be a focus with students writing narratives, persuasive essays and completing a research project.

### **7<sup>th</sup> Grade Math**

Course length: Full-year

Curriculum Resource: *enVision Realize*

Seventh grade math offers a fun and exciting curriculum that builds and strengthens students' foundational math skills. Students in this course will have access to interactive curriculum and resources that help will help them demonstrate mastery. With a heavy focus on critical thinking, analysis, and real-world problem solving, students will begin with an expansion of their knowledge of the number system by studying rational number operations. They will analyze and apply proportional relationships and percent to solve real-world scenarios. Expressions and equations will be explored by means of translating, generating and solving problems on the topic, and students will learn about statistics and probability by drawing inferences about populations and the investigation of chance processes to develop, use, and evaluate probability models. Lastly, students will study geometry through drawing, constructing, describing and comparing geometric figures and solving real-world mathematical problems involving measurement.

### **7<sup>th</sup> Grade Science**

Course length: Full-year

Curriculum Resource: *Acellus*

Life Science is the study of all living organisms. Students will begin the year with the scientific process and tools of science. They will study the characteristics of living things, cells, cell processes, classification, and kingdoms of living things, human body systems, and ecology. A variety of activities including in class demonstrations, writing assignments, projects, and intervention labs for extra help will enhance the learning experiences in Life Science.

## **7<sup>th</sup> Grade Social Studies**

Course length: Full-year

Curriculum Resource: *Acellus*

Seventh grade Social Studies examines the geography of the world and the great events in history shaped by it. Course topics include people, economy and culture, government, looking at the past, North America, South America, Central America, Ancient Greece and Rome, Middle Ages, Renaissance, Exploration, Revolution, Europe, Russia, West Africa, East Africa, North Africa, the near and far East, and Oceania. Students will build map skills, learn key events in world history, and practice critical thinking and writing skills as we travel the world together. Students will complete a variety of writing, reading, and critical thinking activities.

## **7<sup>th</sup> Grade Art**

Course length: Semester

This elective course meets the Pennsylvania Art Standards for grades 7-8 and builds upon knowledge learned in K-6th grade art. Work in the course is primarily project based. Lessons are located in the course delivery. The course will continue to focus on the elements of art and principles of design as well as major art movements in history and significant artists of these movements. Guided practice, videos and quizzes will also support the subject matter taught through the online curriculum. This class requires daily work to be completed in order to be successful. Art supplies are provided to complete all assigned projects

## **7<sup>th</sup> Grade Music**

Course Length: Semester

Music in this Seventh Grade elective course is designed to cycle through four major topics: Music History, International Music, Composition and Theory, and Music Technology. These fields are in higher demand in the workforce. In 7th grade, students discover and research the Baroque Period 1600 to 1750 and the Classical Period 1750-1830. Students are also introduced to the musical structure of Africa and its culture, an introduction to Music Theory scales, modes and intervals, an exciting exploration of Music Technology, and, finally, the physics behind the sounds and the studios in which they are made.

## **7<sup>th</sup> Grade Computing Ideas**

Course length: Full-year

Curriculum Resource: *Code HS*

This elective course is a first computer science course introducing the basics of programming with Karel the Dog, the basics of designing a web page, and how information and images are represented with computers. Students will learn to code using blocks to drag and drop, but they can switch between blocks and text as desired. Students will create a portfolio on the web of projects they build throughout the course. With a unique focus on creativity, problem solving and project based learning, the course also gives students the opportunity to explore several important topics of computing using their own ideas and creativity and develop an interest in computer science that will foster further endeavors in the field.

## **7<sup>th</sup> Grade Health and Wellness**

Course length: Full-year

In 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Health and Wellness, students will focus on gaining a greater awareness about what constitutes their physical, mental, and social wellbeing. Students will be provided knowledge and skills that will enable them to make responsible decisions and maintain a healthy lifestyle, which benefits adolescents in all

aspects of their growth and learning. Work in this course will meet PA Academic Standards for Health, Safety and Physical Education with age appropriate topics such as concepts of health, personal choice and disease, decision making skills, the environment, first aid, injury prevention, nutrition, MyPlate exploration, eating disorders, managing conflict and the immune system. In addition, students will focus on completing the Presidential Youth Fitness Program to assess their overall fitness levels, as well as, engage in daily physical activity by completing a Weekly Fit Log.

### **7<sup>th</sup> Grade Assessments**

During orientation, students will complete a Universal Screener in Reading and Mathematics with the STAR360 diagnostic tool to help monitor and make adjustments to their learning progression. Seventh Grade students are also required to participate in Benchmark Assessments administered through the Scantron Performance Series platform three times a year, and the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) in the areas of English Language Arts and Mathematics.

### **7<sup>th</sup> Grade Homeroom**

Course length: Full-year

Required for 7<sup>th</sup> grade level students, this course is co-taught with teachers and the 7<sup>th</sup> grade school counselor. School Counselors and teachers will facilitate lessons and discussions promoting students' social and emotional learning (SEL). Topics such as anxiety, decision making, self-esteem, healthy relationships, positive thinking, bullying, digital safety, communication skills and other topics that follow the ASCA (American School Counseling Association) national model will be presented and discussed. Teachers and counselors will foster relationship building and create a shared sense of community through all of the unique backgrounds, experiences and interests of the students. Homeroom sessions will also include activities to promote positive school behaviors (the Core 4: attendance, organization, self-advocacy, and independence), discuss Digital Citizenship, examine Financial Literacy, and explore Career Education and Work. Homeroom teachers and counselors will ensure that all students create annual goals and have a documented career plan (Student Annual Goal Sheets).

## **8<sup>th</sup> Grade English Language Arts**

Course length: Full-year

Curriculum Resource: *The Outsiders*, *StudySync*

This course is designed and delivered with equal emphasis on both reading and writing skills. It builds upon previously learned skills and serves to prepare students for high school level English courses. To strengthen reading comprehension skills, lessons are focused on analyzing the use of literary elements in fiction, non-fiction, and poetry. Students will practice these skills through reading and evaluating short stories, essays, poetry, and the novel *The Outsiders* by *S.E. Hinton*. The writing portion of the course works with students to produce coherent and focused multi-paragraph essays that feature varied sentence structure, as well as, follow grammar and usage, spelling, punctuation and other conventions. Additionally, the course is designed so students are able to select and use different forms of writing for specific purposes. These include: expository, argumentative, narrative, research-based, and text-dependent analysis.

## **8<sup>th</sup> Grade Math**

Course length: Full-year

Curriculum Resource: *enVision Realize*

In 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Math, students will focus on pre-algebraic curriculum to help students prepare for Algebra I and high school math. Students in this course will explore all domains of math with a focus on critical thinking, analysis, and problem solving skills. Students will learn about ratios and proportional relationships, the number system, expressions and equations, functions, geometry, and statistics and probability. Throughout the school year, students will be given the chance to share mathematical dialogue with their peers.

## **8<sup>th</sup> Grade Social Studies**

Course length: Full-year

Curriculum Resource: *Acellus*

This course is a survey of historical, cultural, political, economic, and institutional factors and events that have shaped United States history from colonization through the Reconstruction era following the Civil War. The course takes a chronological approach with an emphasis on major themes throughout history that have impacted the development of our nation. Additionally, students will analyze how continuity and change has influenced U.S history by evaluating primary source documents. Throughout the year, students will compare the role that groups and individuals have played in the social, political, cultural, and economic development of the United States and the effects this change still has today.

## **8<sup>th</sup> Grade Science**

Course length: Full-year

Curriculum Resource: *Acellus*

In Physical Science, students learn the basic concepts of chemistry and physics. Students will study the composition of matter and the elements, magnetism, electricity, waves, sounds, light, forces and motion, machines and sources of alternate energy. Students will be engaged in class demonstrations, labs and activities to enhance their understanding of the key concepts.

## **8<sup>th</sup> Grade Health and Wellness**

Course length: Full-year

Throughout the Health and Wellness course, students will be able to meet PA Academic Standards for Health, Safety and Physical Education by engaging in lessons that focus on the following categories: concepts of health, healthful living, safety and injury prevention, physical activity and concepts, principles and strategies of movement. To meet the physical activity standards, students are responsible for engaging in daily physical activities by completing a weekly fit log. This approach makes fitness very personal and individualized by giving the students the freedom to choose their own fitness activities. In addition to the weekly fit log, students will focus on completing the Presidential Youth Fitness Program to assess their overall fitness levels. Students will also learn the importance of decision-making skills, nutritional choices, the body systems, disease prevention, and skills related fitness and principles of training.

## **8<sup>th</sup> Grade Music**

Course Length: Semester

Music in this Eighth Grade elective course is designed to cycle through four major topics of Music History, International Music, Composition and Theory, and Music Technology as these fields are in higher demand in the workforce. In 8<sup>th</sup> grade, students discover the Romantic Period 1830-1900 and 20<sup>th</sup> Century Music 1900-2000, students are introduced to the musical structure of Europe and Asia and its culture, an introduction to Music Theory chords, cadences and melody writing, and finally an exciting exploration of Music Technology. Platforms for electronic music making are used as well as tools used in the trade of music editing.

## **8<sup>th</sup> Grade Introduction to Art**

Course length: Semester

This introductory, elective course in the arts builds upon the Pennsylvania Art Standards learned in Grades K-7. This course offers opportunities for artistic expression and development. Students will explore a wide variety of art methods, techniques, and skills such as drawing, painting, sculpture, computer graphics, and crafts with emphasis on design and creativity. Art history and art appreciation are incorporated as various time periods, movements, and styles are introduced. Students will work in the course delivery system to learn about these concepts. Hands-on projects, videos and quizzes will also support the subject matter to deliver this well-rounded curriculum. This class requires daily work to be completed in order to be successful. Art supplies are provided to complete all assigned projects.

## **8<sup>th</sup> Grade Web Design**

Course Length: Full-year

Curriculum Resource: *CodeHS*

In today's world, web pages are the main medium for sharing ideas and information. Learning to design websites is an incredibly useful skill for any career path. This course is a project-based course that teaches students how to build their own web pages. Students will learn the languages HTML and CSS, and will create their own live homepages to serve as portfolios of their creations. By the end of this course, students will be able to explain how web pages are developed and viewed on the Internet, analyze and fix errors in existing websites, and create their very own multipage websites.

## **8<sup>th</sup> Grade Assessments**

During orientation, students will complete a Universal Screener in Reading and Mathematics with the STAR360 diagnostic tool to help monitor and make adjustments to their learning progression. Seventh Grade students are also required to participate in Benchmark Assessments administered through the Scantron Performance Series platform three times a year, and the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) in the areas of English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science

## **8<sup>th</sup> Grade Homeroom**

Course length: Full-year

Required for 8<sup>th</sup> grade level students, this course is co-taught with teachers and the 8<sup>th</sup> grade school counselor. School Counselors and teachers will facilitate lessons and discussions promoting students' social and emotional learning (SEL). Topics such as anxiety, decision making, self-esteem, healthy relationships, positive thinking, bullying, digital safety, communication skills and other topics that follow the ASCA (American School Counseling Association) national model will be presented and discussed. Teachers and counselors will foster relationship building and create a shared sense of community through all of the unique backgrounds, experiences and interests of the students. Homeroom sessions will also include activities to promote positive school behaviors (the Core 4: attendance, organization, self-advocacy, and independence), discuss Digital Citizenship, examine Financial Literacy, and explore Career Education and Work. Homeroom teachers and counselors will ensure that all students create annual goals and have a documented career plan (Student Annual Goal Sheets).