

2024-2025 Middle School Management of Curriculum Guide

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ACADEMIC GUIDELINES

Week of	Planned Activities
Aug. 1-2	Professional Development/Workdays
Aug. 5-9	Aug. 5-6 Professional Development/Workdays Aug. 7- Quarter 1 begins Aug. 9-Universal Screener Window opens: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● STAR360 Reading/Math (Grade 5 Only) ● IXL (Grades 6-8)
Aug. 12-16	
Aug. 19-23	Aug. 23-Universal Screener Window closes
Aug. 26-30	
Sept. 2-6	Sept. 2-Labor Day (Holiday)
Sept. 9-13	Sept. 12-Parent Report Day
Sept. 16-20	
Sept. 23-27	Sept. 25- Checkpoint #1 (all subjects) window opens
Sept. 30-Oct. 4	Oct. 4- Checkpoint #1(all subjects) window closes
Oct. 7-11	Oct. 7-8 Fall Break Oct. 11- ½ Day Students/Teacher Workday October 11- Quarter 1 Ends
Quarter 1	44 Total Instructional Days
Oct. 14-18	Oct. 14-Quarter 2 Begins Oct. 17-Report Cards
Oct. 21-25	
Oct. 28-Nov. 1	
Nov. 4-8	
Nov. 11-15	Nov. 11- Veteran’s Day (Holiday) Progress Reports this week
Nov. 18-22	
Nov. 25-29	Thanksgiving Holidays
Dec. 2-6	
Dec. 9-13	Dec. 9- Checkpoint #2 (all subjects) window opens
Dec. 16-20	Dec. 19- Checkpoint #2 (all subjects) window closes Dec. 20- ½ Day Students
Quarter 2	44 Total Instructional Days
Jan. 6-10	Jan. 6-Professional Development Day Jan. 7-Quarter 3 begins Jan. 7-Universal Screener Window opens: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● STAR360 Reading/Math (Grade 5 Only) ● IXL (Grades 6-8) Jan. 9- Report Cards
Jan. 13-17	Jan. 17- Universal screener Window closes
Jan. 20-24	Jan. 20- MLK Holiday
Jan. 27-31	

Week of	Planned Activities
Feb. 3-7	Progress Reports this week
Feb. 10-14	Feb. 10- Professional Development Day
Feb. 17-21	
Feb. 24-28	
Mar. 3-7	Mar. 3- Checkpoint #3 (all subjects) window opens
Mar. 10-14	Mar. 14- Checkpoint #3 (all subjects) window closes Mar. 14-Quarter 3 ends Mar. 14- ½ Day Students/Teacher Workday
Quarter 3	47 Total Instructional Days
Mar. 17-21	Mar. 17-Quarter 4 begins Mar. 20-Report Cards
Mar. 24-28	Spring Break
Mar. 31-Apr. 4	
Apr. 7-11	
Apr. 14-18	Apr. 18- Professional Development/No Students
Apr. 21-25	Progress Reports this week
April 28-May 2	Apr. 28-Universal Screener Window opens: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● STAR360 Reading/Math (Grade 5 Only) ● IXL (Grades 6-8) May 2- Universal Screener Window closes
May 5-9	May 5- Checkpoint #4(all subjects) window opens
May 12-16	May 16- Checkpoint #4 (all subjects) window closes
May 19-23	May 22- Last Day for Students May 22-Quarter 4 ends May 22- Report Cards May 23- Teacher Workday
Quarter 4	43 Total Instructional Days
Semester 2	90 Total Instructional Days
SY 24-25	178 Total Instructional Days

Checkpoints

Checkpoints are rigorous common teacher created tests. They include a variety of question types, online testing tools, and DOK levels that would prepare our students for the ACAP. Immediate feedback will be provided to teachers and administrators about students' mastery of standards. Checkpoints will be administered through Edulastic (with the exception of ELA) to every student once per quarter in ELA, Math, Science, and Social Studies as follows:

- Quarter 1 – Checkpoint 1
- Quarter 2 – Checkpoint 2
- Quarter 3 – Checkpoint 3
- Quarter 4 – Checkpoint 4

Special Education students should complete the original assessment in Edulastic. In order to ensure accurate and inclusive data, tests in Edulastic should never be cloned or edited. Any accommodations should be made on paper and students should enter answers in Edulastic.

Gradebooks/Grading

- Teachers are required to maintain a computer grade book using the county-adopted software, PowerSchool.
- **Four to five (4-5) TEST grades** and **eight to twelve (8-12) DAILY grades** must be given each quarter.
- Tests must be categorized as **50%** of the student's grade. (Career Prep A – **60%** for tests.)
- Daily grades must be categorized as **50%** of the student's grade. (Career Prep A – **40%** for daily grades.)
- Teachers must enter grades at least once per week and within 3 days of graded assignments/tests.
- Teachers must have at least 4 daily grades and 1 test grade entered in PowerSchool when mid-term progress reports are sent home.
- Grade audits may be performed periodically at the discretion of the principal or county office.
- Teachers **MUST** identify the standard assessed and date administered for every assignment. Standard reports will be used for standards recovery and RtI.
- Only board employees, student interns under the supervision of their cooperating teacher, and long-term substitutes may use PowerSchool.
- Teachers will follow established policy regarding student confidentiality and should provide parents with grades for their child only.
- All grades entered in PowerSchool should accurately match grades recorded on student papers, rubrics, or spreadsheets.
- Teachers should enter a "0" in PowerSchool for assignments not completed. Once the assignment has been completed, the teacher will update the grade in the PowerSchool grading system.
- Grades must be based upon academic mastery. No grades may be given for school supplies, canned goods, signed forms, signed papers, etc. *NOTE: This list is NOT exhaustive.*
- No extra credit may be assigned or given. Therefore, the gradebook should not have any red cells.
- Assessments measuring student mastery of Alabama Course of Study Standards will be given to all students.
- End-of-term exams should assess knowledge of standards taught and assessed on unit and/or chapter tests.
- Open-book tests are not permitted. Students must master course content to be successful on accountability assessments.
- Scores may not be scaled, dropped, combined with any other grades, or artificially inflated with classwork, homework, or extra credit activities.
- Grades obtained from computer programs, Smart Response Systems (or the like), rubrics, or means other than students' papers will be documented by the teacher and kept on file.
- If study guides are necessary, an outline form must be used. No fill-in-the-blank questions may be used that replicates the test.
- A minimum of 10 items or 8-10 multiple-step items are required on all tests and daily assignments, with the exception of Imagine Learning. Grades cannot exceed 100%.

- Long-term projects, research papers, reading activities, journals, and other extended graded activities will not be assigned during dates set as holidays. It is expected and imperative that all students have access to their teacher’s guidance and assistance to complete major assignments. This includes Advanced Placement, honors/advanced courses, and standard courses.
- At the beginning of the course, teachers will provide students and parents with a hard copy of the course syllabus. The syllabus will also be posted on the teacher website. Each syllabus should contain, at a minimum:
 - course content
 - course requirements
 - grading system based on average
 - test days
- In addition to tests, which measure student mastery of standards, the quarter grade may include the following:
 - homework (1 cumulative grade)
 - daily grades
 - quizzes
 - writing assessments
 - projects
 - presentations
 - group activities, etc.

Physical Education Grading

- All students in grades 5-8 will receive a numerical grade for PE based on the following:
 - 45% - Dress (Dressed/Prepared for active participation i.e.)
 - 45% - Participation (Actively Participates)
 - 10% - Tests/Assessments

Testing Days

The following schedule allows for tests, **specifically Checkpoints**, to be given on specified days to prevent students from having excessive tests on one day. ***This schedule may be modified with principal approval.***

Day	Subject 1	Subject 2
Monday	English	Science
Tuesday	Math	Social Studies
Wednesday	English	Science
Thursday	Math	Social Studies
Friday	English	Math

- Answer documents, rubrics, and assignments counted as grades may be sent home for parental inspection but must be returned and filed for documentation. At any point, parents may make an appointment to view their child’s work upon request.
 - For documentation purposes to validate grades, all student papers should be retained for one academic year, as directed by the State Records Commission/Local Government Records Commission. (Local Boards of Education Functional Analysis & Records Disposition Authority, April 23, 2014, p. 36) **(For example, the 2022-2023 school year**

documentation must be retained until the end of the first quarter for the 2024-2025 school year.)

- To ensure student privacy, all documentation, including, but not limited to, rubrics, test papers and answer documents, must be filed in individual student folders.
- Student papers may be taken temporarily from the school to be graded. However, all student work must be retained by Elmore County Public Schools and may not be filed or stored off the premises. At the conclusion of employment or transfer of a teacher or employee, student files must be retained at the school.
- Students, student volunteers, student workers, or parent volunteers may not file and/or return graded papers to students that have been recorded. According to FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act), papers that are received and recorded by the instructor become “education records”.
 - Peer-grading used as an instructional method is not included in this regulation. As stated in Owasso Indep. Sch. Dist. No. I-011 v. Falvo, 534 U.S. 426 (2002) even though peer-grading results in students finding out each other’s grades, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled, “that this practice does not violate FERPA because grades on students’ papers are not ‘maintained’ under the definition of ‘education records’ and, therefore, would not be covered under FERPA at least until the teacher has collected and recorded them in the teacher’s grade book”.
<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/pdf/ht12-17-08-att.pdf>

Grading/Assignments for ECAP Assignments

Students assigned to ECAP will complete their coursework using Imagine Learning. Assignments will be selected specifically for ECAP so that the program can best meet the instructional needs of the students and adequately align to the coursework in the regular classroom. Teachers will be provided with a handout detailing the classes to use and the process.

Grading Requirements/Categories

Courses	Category 1	Category 2
Career Prep A	60% Test (3-5 grades)	40% Daily (8-12 grades)
All other Middle School courses	50% Test (3-5 grades)	50% Daily (8-12 grades)

Grading Scale

- A – 100-90
- B – 89-80
- C – 79-70
- D – 69-60
- F – 59 and below

IXL

- **Initial Assessment:** IXL Diagnostics will be given at the beginning of the year to establish a baseline of students' proficiency across various topics and skill levels for students in grades 6-8.
- **Mid-Year Snapshot:** It will be administered in January to monitor student progress and adjust learning plans as needed.
- **Year-End Evaluation:** The diagnostic will be given at the end of the year to measure overall growth and mastery of skills.

Progress Reports/Report Cards

- All students will receive a progress report generated by the school office four times per school year. The dates for progress reports for the 2024-2025 school year are as follows:
 - Quarter 1: September 12, 2024 (Parent Report Day)
 - Quarter 2: Week of November 11, 2024
 - Quarter 3: Week of February 3, 2025
 - Quarter 4: Week of April 21, 2025
- Parents are encouraged to utilize the PowerSchool Parent Portal to monitor their child's progress with greater frequency.
- Parents may request in writing or by telephone a detailed progress report showing all graded assignments. The school office will notify the teacher that such a report has been requested and then provide a Comprehensive Progress Report for the student. The requested progress report should be signed by the parent or guardian and returned to the teacher. REMINDER: A signed, returned progress report may not be used as a grade.
- The PowerSchool Parent Portal is a program that allows parents to review information related to grades, attendance, homework assignments, discipline records and other student data for the current year. Any information recorded in PowerSchool is immediately available for parent viewing through the parent portal.
- Student report cards will be generated by each school using PowerSchool software and issued to all students after the end of each grading period.
- The dates for report cards for the 2024-2025 school year are (dates are subject to change):
 - Quarter 1: October 17, 2024
 - Quarter 2: January 9, 2025
 - Quarter 3: March 20, 2025
 - Quarter 4: May 22, 2025

Promotion and Retention

The definitions for promotion and retention for K-8 students are as follows:

- **Promotion:** The assignment of a student to a higher grade level based on the student's achievement of established criteria in the current grade.
- **Retention:** The re-assignment of a student to the current grade level during the next school year. A student may not be retained more than once in grades K-8. Any student who is retained must have individualized, intensive interventions which shall be progress monitored on a continual basis during the next school year.

- Placement: In grades k-4, regarding the Alabama Literacy Act, the assignment of a student to a specific grade level based on the determination that such placement will most likely provide the student with instruction and other services needed to succeed and progress to the next higher level of academic achievement. Any student who is placed in the next grade must have individualized, intensive interventions which shall be progress monitored on a continual basis during the next school year.

Guidelines

- It is expected that with the appropriate instruction, motivation, and attendance most students will be able to achieve at a satisfactory level that will prepare them for instruction at the next grade. A variety of teaching strategies will be used at each grade level to increase the probability of students achieving a level of academic mastery that will enable them to benefit from instruction at the next grade level.

Grades 5-8

- Notification of possible retention must be identified on the 3rd quarter progress report.
- If parents fail to make contact with the school, a follow-up letter will be sent home by the teacher requesting a conference. If parents do not respond to the follow-up letter, the teacher should contact parents by phone.
- Any student in grades 5-8 who is retained must have a personalized learning plan with specific, tiered intervention strategies in place with the next teacher(s). These interventions must be monitored accordingly. The personalized learning plan, along with the applied classroom interventions must be communicated to the legal parent/guardian, and any teacher meetings about student progress in the tiered interventions must include the legal parent/guardian.
- The minimum acceptable average for promotion is 60%.
- Recommendation from the teachers will be presented to the Promotion/Retention Committee, which is made up of the Problem-Solving Team (PST). The committee makes the final decision to promote or to retain a student.

Grades 7 and 8

- In **grades 7 and 8**, a student must pass each academic subject and physical education to take the next grade level course in each subject area. For example, if a 7th grade student fails science, he/she will be promoted to 8th grade but will take a 7th grade science class if not successfully completed in summer school.
 - Passing will be based on the yearly average.
 - Summer school may be available, or the course will be repeated the next year.
- It is strongly recommended that students attend summer school to make-up failed courses.

Renaissance Learning

STAR360 Grades 5

- STAR360 Reading and Mathematics will be given as a Universal Screener at the designated time.
- STAR360 Reading and Mathematics should be used outside the Universal Screener window for progress monitoring.
- STAR360 reports should be used as a part of Data Meetings.
- Teachers will be required to review, monitor, and use STAR360 data to help drive instruction.

Accelerated Reader (AR) Grade 5

- Teachers will be required to set goals in the computer for each student every quarter. Students taking AR quizzes will maintain a reading log.
- **Point goals** will be set for students according to the results of STAR360 and at the discretion of the teacher based upon the reading needs of the students.

AR Practice Procedures (Grade5)

- AR Goals – Not a “One Size Fits All”, rather, individual goals should be set each quarter.
- Percent goals will be set between 85% - 90%. Averages will be rounded; i.e. 85.5% = 86%.
- Individual quarterly goals should be set at 30 minutes daily practice for 7 weeks each quarter.
- Awards for AR Participation should be established at the beginning of the school year and communicated to students and parents/guardians. (SITE-BASED DECISION)
- **Students' Record Reports** may be sent home with the report card each quarter. Parents may access this information through Home Connect. Teachers will provide parents with access to this information. See the librarian for forms and if you have any questions.
- Teachers may be required to submit a **Diagnostic Report** to the principal as needed.

Incorporating AR in the Classroom

- AR will not be a separate part of the reading program.
- AR may be incorporated in small group instruction as a center. Status of the class may be completed at the small group table in reading prior to small group instruction.
- AR can also be utilized as students finish assignments.
- Minimize restrictions on students reading based on ZPD levels only.
- ZPD levels should include a wide range without limiting students. ZPD ranges can be increased prior to STAR360 testing if students have shown success.
- Do not allow students to read lower level books for points only or to increase averages for incentives.
- Encourage students to read for interest thus developing a true love for reading.

Standards Recovery

The Elmore County Public Schools Standards Recovery Policy is based on the philosophy that grades should reflect student mastery of content standards and that individual students learn at different rates and in different ways. Teachers provide multiple opportunities to practice and to demonstrate learning with the belief that all students will meet or exceed standards. Below are our guidelines:

- Students will be given multiple opportunities to demonstrate standards' mastery in each class.
- Multiple opportunities may be in the form of additional assessments given or retakes of specific assessments. Retesting standards must be in a different but equally challenging form. The teacher working with the student will determine which is most appropriate for a given situation.
- When a large percentage of students are unable to successfully demonstrate mastery of content standards, the teacher will need to provide opportunities for reteaching and retesting for all those students.
- For individual students and/or small groups of students who did not demonstrate mastery of content standards, teachers may use Imagine Learning with those students to provide reteaching and retesting of non-mastered standards.

Teaching/Learning Platforms

Elmore county Public Schools offer multiple platforms for optimal student learning for the 2024-2025 school year. Imagine Learning is the online learning program for middle schools.

- Traditional Learning
 - Students physically attend school and are instructed face-to-face by a certified teacher. In addition, students will periodically utilize online learning in the classroom.
- EDGE Virtual Learning
 - Students enroll in EDGE in Elmore County. Students are not attached to a school.

Testing Procedures

- All students will be taught on grade level and tested on his/her grade level.
- Formative and summative assessments measuring student mastery of standards, will be given to all students.
 - Teachers are expected to actively monitor student engagement during tests, but not to coach, answer, or directly impact a response.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

Cheating

It is expected that all academic work completed by any student in the Elmore County School System will be his/her own work. Elmore County Schools will not tolerate cheating in any form. Students will not engage in any act of deception or falsification of work product. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Cheating by receiving unauthorized aid or assistance.
- Giving or receiving an unfair advantage on any form of academic work to include use of electronic device(s) to text/take pictures of/convey exams and/or answer sheets.
- Possessing materials that invalidate any academic course work either during or prior to the work being assigned (test or course work).

Any student completing any academic work dishonestly will receive a zero for that assignment with no opportunity to make it up.

Students who provide information and/or commit cheating will be disciplined in accordance with Class 1 Offense AK (see Student Code of Conduct). The teacher will also contact the parents/guardians of the student and inform them of the student's actions. According to the Elmore County Student Handbook, the policies regulating students enrolled in RAMP may differ from those stated here. Students who enter that program are subject to the rules and regulations agreed on upon entry.

Plagiarism

Teachers in all subject areas must inform and instruct students regarding plagiarism and the seriousness of the offense. Plagiarism of any assignment is considered a form of academic dishonesty and will result in the student receiving a zero with no opportunity to make up or redo work.

According to the *Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary*, to "plagiarize" means:

- to steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own
- to use (another's production) without crediting the source
- to commit literary theft
- to present as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source

All of the following are considered plagiarism:

- copying words or ideas from someone else without giving credit
- failing to put a quotation in quotation marks
- giving incorrect information about the source of a quotation
- changing words but copying the sentence structure of a source without giving credit
- copying words or ideas from a source that makes up the majority of your work, whether you give credit or not

ALABAMA CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PLAN (ACIP)

All schools in Elmore County must complete an Alabama continuous Improvement Plan (ACIP). The ACIP follows specific guidelines as outlined by the Alabama State Department of Education and will be composed using *Cognia*, a computer software program. All information included in the ACIPs will be aligned with the Elmore County Strategic Plan. However, schools may include additional goals addressing individual needs identified through a variety of data sources.

ALABAMA COURSES OF STUDY (ALCOS): COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS STANDARDS (CCRS)

- Teachers are mandated by the Alabama State Department of Education to teach the Alabama Courses of Study (ALCOS): College -and Career- Ready Standards (CCRS).
- It is the responsibility of all teachers in all subject areas and grade levels to teach their subject/grade level specific ALCOS:CCRS to mastery. Therefore, effective lesson plans are data driven based on state requirements and assessments should reflect taught curriculum as well.
- It is understood that these skills are critical and must be taught, assessed, and re-taught if not mastered. Different instructional strategies and materials should be used if re-teaching is necessary. Lessons should be engaging and interactive where students go through the learning process.
- Teachers will employ instructional **best practice strategies** to accommodate various learning styles as well as students' needs and interests. Please be reminded that resources should never replace teacher directed and/or facilitated instruction. You are the change agent in the classroom and everything else is a resource used to help students with content mastery.

ALABAMA NUMERACY ACT

In 2022, the Alabama legislature passed the Alabama Numeracy Act to implement steps to improve mathematics proficiency of public school kindergarten to 5th grade students and ensure that those students are proficient in mathematics at or above grade level by the end of 5th grade by monitoring the progression of each student from one grade to another, in part, by his or her proficiency in mathematics.

Read the full text of the [Alabama Numeracy Act \(AL-SB171\)](#).

CORE COURSES OF STUDY AND CONTENT FRAMEWORKS

The following course descriptions are derived from the Alabama Courses of Study for the core content areas, and provide a summary of the arrangement of the courses and some basic expectations for instruction and learning.

English Language Arts

Mastering the content embodied in the *Alabama Course of Study: English Language Arts* standards empowers students to understand and influence the world around them and prepares them to leverage professional opportunities. The standards guide learners to communicate effectively, develop appreciation for literature, understand diversity in literature and society, and utilize digital resources to function productively in an ever-evolving global community. The standards specify the skills and understandings needed for postsecondary and workforce applications in multiple disciplines.

Standards in the 2021 *Alabama Course of Study: English Language Arts* are categorized into Literacy Foundations, Expression, and Reception, which are adapted from the *Reading Framework for the 2019 National Assessment of Educational Progress* (NAEP) and the essential learning established in the Alabama Literacy Act. The Alabama Literacy Act outlines “steps to improve the reading proficiency of public school kindergarten to third grade students and ensures that those students are able to read at or above grade level by the end of the third grade” (Alabama Literacy Act, #2019-523). The act provides the means for learners to develop a strong foundation in literacy and be fully prepared for secondary, postsecondary, and workplace learning.

The standards fully support early literacy foundations by defining literacy, fostering an appreciation for literature, encompassing diversity of literature, incorporating digital literacy, and integrating literacy into all content areas. Assessing literacy and providing professional learning for elementary educators, as required in the Alabama Literacy Act, are important supports for the 2021 Alabama Course of Study: English Language Arts 1 implementation of standards. This intense focus on reading and writing enhances the acquisition and development of knowledge in all subject areas, thus creating well-rounded readers who are fluent with varied types and complexities of texts. The standards encourage a broad view of literacy that promotes knowledge-building across categories and subjects, making integration of content and collaboration among educators much easier to achieve.

All standards contained in this document are:

- written in a clear, understandable, and consistent format to be relatable and applicable to learners’ lives;
- organized in ways that are appropriate for their particular grade band;
- designed to include rigorous, focused, and critical content and application of knowledge through high-order skills;
- grounded on sound, evidence-based research; and
- designed to ensure that all students are prepared to succeed in our global economy and society.

Standards are written at various levels utilizing criteria from Marzano's Instructional Framework, the revised Bloom's Taxonomy, and Norman Webb's Depth of Knowledge (DOK). The standards set high expectations for student learning by requiring substantial attention to foundational reading, mandating comprehension of all kinds of text, and encouraging the development of advanced reading proficiency through increasingly complex texts.

Writers of the standards took into consideration the science of reading, which is a body of research on how the brain learns to read that has emerged from multiple disciplines, such as cognitive psychology, neuroscience, and linguistics. These findings provided guidance on the structuring of standards that explicitly define content to support students as they learn to become proficient readers.

The *Alabama Course of Study: English Language Arts* includes a set of essential, recurring standards for each grade band, designated as Recurring Standards for English Language Arts. The Recurring Standards represent content that is so integral to English Language Arts that it is emphasized in multiple grade levels. By prescribing that this content be included in more than one grade, the Course of Study affords students an opportunity for deep, rich learning that is scaffolded to meet diverse learning needs. Because content increases in rigor throughout the Course of Study, the recurring standards change from one grade band to the next, reflecting the increasing scope and complexity of the scaffolded content.

Universal Screener

STAR360/IXL will be utilized for diagnostic purposes in reading. Screener dates will be announced and will be common among all middle schools in the district.

Literacy Standards

Literacy skills are essential in the development of global learners and the development of critical historical thinkers. To ensure this, **teachers are required to incorporate Standards for Literacy** in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects. This must be documented in lesson plans and included in the overall quarterly grade. [5-8 ELA SS SC Literacy Standards Correlation.docx](#)

Grade 5 Curriculum

Teachers will follow the district Curriculum Framework/Pacing Guides designed to include multiple resources, including, but not limited to E3 Curriculum, Novel-Based Teaching Guides, online resources, and county-adopted textbooks to teach standards to mastery. Curriculum materials can be accessed in the Middle School Google Classroom. Use this link: <https://classroom.google.com/c/ODIwMjI3NjY5Nzha>

Grading/Assessments

- Four - Five **Test Grades** (categorized as 50%)
 - one district required Checkpoint per quarter
 - one district required Common Writing Assessment (Narrative, Informational/Explanatory, Argument) quarters 1-3 to be assigned via Pear and graded with the DRC rubric provided in Google Classroom. The quarter 4 Research Writing assessment will be teacher created.
 - one district required grammar test per quarter
 - one district required cumulative spelling grade

- Eight - Twelve **Daily Grades** (categorized as 50%)
 - grades should be representative of instruction in vocabulary, grammar, reading and writing
 - vocabulary grades should not exceed two per quarter (may be cumulative)

ELA Grading Requirements/Categories for Grade 5

50% Test (4-5 grades)
50% Daily (8-12 grades)

Grades 6-8 Curriculum

Teachers will follow the district Curriculum Framework/Pacing Guides designed to include multiple resources, including, but not limited to E3 Curriculum, Novel-Based Teaching Guides, online resources, and county-adopted textbooks to teach standards to mastery. Curriculum materials can be accessed in the Middle School Google Classroom. Use this link: <https://classroom.google.com/c/ODlwMjl3NjY5Nzha>

Grading/Assessments

- Four - Five **Test Grades** (categorized as 50%)
 - one district required Checkpoint per quarter
 - one district required common writing assignment (Narrative, Informational/Explanatory, Argument, Research) per quarter assigned via Pear and graded with the rubric provided in Google Classroom. The quarter 4 Research Writing Assessment will be teacher-created.
 - one district required grammar test per quarter
 - one district required Novel test **per semester**
- Eight - Twelve **Daily Grades** (categorized as 50%)
 - grades should be representative of instruction in vocabulary, grammar, reading and writing
 - vocabulary grades should not exceed two per quarter (may be cumulative)

ELA Grading Requirements/Categories for Grades 6-8

50% Test (4-5 grades)
50% Daily (8-12 grades)

Mathematics

Mathematics content is rigorous and aligned throughout the grades, thus providing students with the necessary steps to acquire the knowledge and skills for developing a strong foundation in mathematics.

CCSS Standards for Mathematical Practice

These standards describe varieties of expertise that mathematics educators at all levels should seek to develop in their students.

- make sense of problems and persevere in solving them
- reason abstractly and quantitatively
- construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others
- model with mathematics
- use appropriate tools strategically
- attend to precision
- look for and make use of structure
- look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning

NCTM Principles

These principles reflect basic tenets fundamental to the design of a quality mathematics program that allows all students the opportunity to reach their mathematical potential.

- equity
- curriculum
- teaching
- learning
- assessment
- technology

7-8 Domains of Study

Content describing what students should know and be able to do for each grade or course.

- counting and cardinality
- operations and algebraic thinking
- number and operations in base ten
- measurement and data
- geometry
- number and operations: fractions, ratios and proportional relationships
- the number system
- Expressions and equations
- Statistics and probability
- Functions

Curriculum

5th Grade – AMSTI

Teachers will follow the district Curriculum Guide that includes pacing for use with AMSTI teaching resources and strategies. Savvas enVision Math will be used as a resource to teach standards to mastery. The Curriculum Guides and all math resources can be found using this link:

<https://classroom.google.com/c/ODIwMjI3NjY5Nzha>

Grades 6-8 – E3 (Formerly referred to as Laying the Foundation)

Math teachers will follow the district Curriculum Guide that includes resources from Laying the Foundation Curriculum. Student success begins with the teacher. E3 provides instructional resources specifically designed to raise the level of instructional rigor. The goal is to increase the number of students equipped to succeed in rigorous coursework, and ultimately, college and the workforce. E3 instructional resources along with AMSTI resources are effective in changing the teaching paradigm and instructional practice of all teachers and opening the door for more students to engage successfully in instruction across the content areas. AMSTI resources, E3 instructional resources, and the math textbook will be used as a resource to teach standards to mastery.

Pre-Task Assessment

Pre-task assessments will be given at the beginning of each unit. This is a formative assessment that will be used to target instruction in the classroom to assess if students are ready to move to proficiency level 3 material.

Proficiency Scales

Proficiency Scales will be used to assist students with assessing their levels of understanding. Teachers will provide each student with a copy of the proficiency scale(s) as they are introduced in each math unit. These scales must be an entry in their math journals or notebooks and be an integral part of the daily instructional routine. These scales can be used to guide the learning progression and serve as an accountability tool for the students as they navigate through the units or kits.

Progress Monitoring

Teachers may also use STAR360 Mathematics as a progress monitoring tool as needed.

Grading/Assessments

5th-8th Grade

- Four – Five **Test Grades** (categorized as 50%)
 - one district required Checkpoint assessment (Edulastic) per quarter
- Eight – Twelve **Daily Grades** (categorized as 50%)

Other teacher made assessments can also be used as test grades, not to exceed a total of 5 test grades.

Universal Screener

STAR360 will be utilized for diagnostic purposes. Screener dates will be announced and will be common among all middle schools in the district.

MATH Grading Requirements/Categories for Grades 5-8

50% Test (4-5 grades)
50% Daily (8-12 grades)

Science

The goal of Alabama's K-12 science standards is the achievement of scientific and engineering literacy by all students. A scientifically literate person possesses the following:

- A foundation in scientific knowledge
- A technological understanding of problem solving
- The ability to design scientific solutions
- We will have one Writing Prompt Daily Grade per quarter. This grade will come from the writing question on the grade level checkpoint. For example, if the student scores 3 of 4 points on the written response question from the checkpoint, then the Writing Prompt Daily Grade will be 75. A written response question will be included on each checkpoint for all grade levels.
- Each teacher is expected to conduct a minimum of two labs per quarter and they must be listed in lesson plans. Students are expected to utilize note booking/journaling as a best practice.

- Each teacher is expected to teach and assess Safety procedures during the first two weeks of school and administer a safety assessment that should be entered in the gradebook and listed in the lesson plans. This may be embedded in instruction.
- Teachers will employ instructional **best practice strategies** to accommodate various learning styles as well as students' needs and interests. Please be reminded that resources should never replace teacher directed and/or facilitated instruction. You are the change agent in the classroom and everything else is a resource used to help students with content mastery.
- We will administer one checkpoint per quarter. All answers, including the accommodated test responses, must be entered into Edulastic for district data retrieval. Data meetings and student advisory days will include the results of each checkpoint as well as action steps for both intervention and enrichment opportunities.

Alabama's curriculum is accomplished through a study of the three dimensions of science:

- Scientific and engineering practices – A set of skills and tools used by students to investigate, construct models, design and build systems, and develop theories about the world in which they live. The Scientific Method will be taught during the first week of school and science experiments and projects are to be used to extend and enrich concepts taught.
- Crosscutting concepts – Unifying themes that link scientific and engineering ideas across all domains of science.
- Disciplinary, core ideas – Ideas in the four domains of Physical Sciences, Life Sciences, Earth and Space Sciences, and Engineering Technology, and Applications of Science are broad concepts that provide students with foundational knowledge.

These three dimensions can be supported utilizing the Five E+IA Instructional Model which includes the following:

- **Engage:** Student interest is stimulated and connections are made to prior knowledge and between past and present experiences. Student thinking is focused on learning outcomes as they become mentally engaged in the practices, crosscutting concepts, and core ideas of the unit or lesson.
- **Explore:** Students investigate initial ideas and solutions in a context within which they can identify. Using investigation, research, discourse, text, and media, students actively explore situations and build common experiences that serve as a basis for developing an understanding of the concept within context.
- **Explain:** Students are provided the opportunity to collaborate, communicate, and construct meaning from their experiences based on an analysis of the exploration. This phase emphasizes the importance of students developing evidence-based explanations founded upon their observations and experiences obtained through investigations. Teachers clarify understanding through definitions, labels, and explanations for abilities, concepts, practices, and skills.
- **Elaborate:** Students reflect upon, expand, and apply conceptual understanding of scientific concepts to new and unfamiliar situations in order to cultivate a broader and deeper understanding of concepts through new experiences within new contexts and situations.
- **Evaluate:** Students are assessed on understanding of scientific concepts. Assessment provides opportunities for teachers to evaluate understanding of concepts and practices identified in the standards. This phase helps teachers know if students are learning for appropriate next steps to occur.
- **Intervene or Accelerate:** When some students do not learn the first time, intervention strategies may be implemented to further explain and elaborate upon concepts to a greater extent to

clarify understanding. Students who have demonstrated proficiency may be able to enrich or accelerate learning through more challenging, engaging, and exploratory experiences.

AMSTI

Teachers will follow the district Curriculum Guide that includes pacing for use with AMSTI teaching resources and strategies.

Curriculum

Teachers will follow the district Curriculum Framework/Pacing Guides designed to include multiple resources including, but not limited to, teaching guides, online resources, and county-adopted textbooks to teach standards to mastery. These resources can be accessed in the Middle School Google Classroom. Use this link: <https://classroom.google.com/c/ODIwMjl3NjY5Nzha>

It is expected that each science classroom engages in labs, projects, and not booking or interactive journals. These can be completed using various formats and must be notated in weekly lesson plans.

All graded activities entered in the gradebook must include an abbreviated reference to the standard of focus. For example, *8.1 Activity 10* in the gradebook indicates that activity 10 is assessing Standard 1 for 8th grade. Additionally, any virtual assignment grade must have the activity's name as listed in the virtual platform. A copy of each virtual assignment's class roster with each student's grade must be filed with the student papers. It is suggested to maintain a separate file folder for each class with the class individual folders.

Labs

It is expected that every science classroom provides hands-on lab experiences for their students. Labs will count as two cumulative daily grades each quarter and must be included in the interactive journal/notebook, lesson plans and the gradebook. At least two labs must be conducted and recorded in PowerSchool. This is non-negotiable.

Literacy Standards

Literacy skills are essential in the development of global learners and the development of critical historical thinkers. To ensure this, **teachers are required to incorporate** Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects. This must be documented in lesson plans included in the overall quarterly grade. [5-8 ELA SS SC Literacy Standards Correlation.docx](#)

Proficiency Scales

Proficiency Scales will be used to assist students with assessing their own levels of understanding. Teachers will provide each student with a copy of the proficiency scale(s) as they are introduced in each unit or kit. These scales must be an entry in their interactive journals or notebooks and must also be used as an integral part of the daily instructional routine. These scales can be used to guide the learning progression and serve as compass for the students as they navigate through the units or kits.

Grading/Assessments

5th - 8th Grade

- Four – Five **Test Grades** (categorized as 50%)
 - one district required Checkpoint assessment (Edulastic) per quarter
- Eight – Twelve **Daily Grades** (categorized as 50%)
 - one district required Common Writing Prompt per quarter

SCIENCE Grading Requirements/Categories for Grades 5-8

50% Test (4-5 grades)
50% Daily (8-12 grades)

Social Studies

To be responsible citizens in today's world, students need to be knowledgeable about the economic, geographic, historical, and political perspectives of the world and its people. Responsible citizens are informed and active citizens. They are aware of and participate in various levels of civic responsibility. Mastering standards included in the ALCOS provides all students with essential knowledge regarding economics, geography, history, and civics and government. With this mastery, students develop an international perspective necessary for living wisely in a world that possesses limited resources and that is characterized by cultural diversity.

The course of study presents the academic content, concepts, and skills using the following strands:

- economics
- geography
- history
- civics
- government
- current events

Seventh and eighth grade course content incorporates the strands of economics, geography, history, and civics and government with an emphasis on the history and geography strands. These courses emphasize the knowledge and skills necessary for developing a geographic perspective of the world and its people and events. Geography is a strong component of the content for these grades, as students are required to become knowledgeable about the spatial aspects of human existence.

Students use geographic knowledge, tools, and technologies to pose and answer questions about spatial processes and to compare human and physical patterns on Earth. Real maps and mental maps are also utilized by students to answer geographic questions.

Effective teachers incorporate a variety of instructional techniques and assessment strategies into plans for student learning. The classroom environment, activities, assignments, and assessments should foster the following:

- skills for acquiring information and manipulating data
- developing and presenting policies, arguments, and stories
- constructing new knowledge
- participating in groups
- technology integration to explore historical and geographic concepts and to enable students to compete, connect, and collaborate globally
- opportunities for authentic learning through analyzing and debating complex issues
- conducting social studies research
- participating in civic affairs
- developing historical-thinking skills
- differentiated instruction that includes student presentations, use of primary sources, written analyses of information, collaborative group activities, simulations, and interactions with electronic and print media

Teachers will incorporate Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical subjects in the classroom instruction to include writing. This must be documented in lesson plans and writing assignments must be included as part of the overall quarterly average.

[5-8 ELA SS SC Literacy Standards Correlation.docx](#)

Curriculum

Teachers will follow the district Curriculum Pacing Guides and other resources located in Middle School Google Classroom. Use this link: <https://classroom.google.com/c/ODlwMjl3NjY5Nzha>

Additional resources may be found in Alabama Insight at alex.state.al.us

- Teachers will incorporate Literacy Standards in classroom instruction. Components of the Strategic Teaching Format should be in lessons throughout the course. For example, TWIRL (Talking, Writing, Investigating, Reading, and Listening).
- Vocabulary should not be taught in isolation, but it should be taught in context, and demonstrated through student writing and drawings. Students should not look up academic vocabulary words in the glossary or dictionary as a seatwork activity.
- Students will keep notes in a notebook for Social Studies which may be used as a tool for study guides. This notebook could include graphic organizers, diagrams, outlines, etc.
- Study sheets or guides should be relevant to the standards that are being taught in each quarter; however, study guides should not be organized to mimic the assessment.
- Document Based Question (DBQ) Essay is optional for Grade 8.

Grading/Assessments

5th – 8th Grade

- Four – Five **Test Grades** (categorized as 50%)
 - one district required Checkpoint assessment (Edulastic) per quarter
- Eight – Twelve **Daily Grades** (categorized as 50%)
 - one district required Common Writing Prompt per quarter

SOCIAL STUDIES Grading Requirements/Categories for Grades 5-8

50% Test (4-5 grades)
50% Daily (8-12 grades)

Computer Science

Grade 5 Computer Science Requirement

- In 2019, the Alabama legislature passed Alabama Act #2019-389. The act states that each public elementary school (K-5) shall offer instruction on the basics of CS and computational thinking. Courses that teach computer science should be integrated into the curriculum.
- All 5th grade elementary students must have computer science (computational thinking) instruction during the school year.
- All Elmore County middle schools will use the Code.org Progression of CS Fundamentals – Course F as the CS curriculum and platform for 5th grade students.
- All 5th grade students will have CS instruction through a “specials” teacher (librarian, tech teacher, etc.) that sees all students adding CS standards to their instruction.

Grades 6-8 Computer Science Requirement

- In 2019, the Alabama legislature passed Alabama Act #2019-389. The act states that each public middle school (6-8) shall offer instruction in computer science courses by the 2021-2022 school year.
- 6th grade course offerings – 6th grade middle school students receive instruction in one or both of the following Project Lead the Way courses: App Creators and/or Design & Modeling.
- 7th-8th grade course offerings – 7th & 8th grade middle school students have the option to choose from one or more of the following courses: Computer Science for Innovators and Makers, Medical Detectives, Automation & Robotics, and Energy & Environment.

MIDDLE SCHOOL ASSESSMENT SCHEDULE 2024-2025

Assessment	Grade/Subject	Testing Window
STAR360 Universal Screening	5 Reading & Math	August 9-23, 2024 January 7-17, 2025 April 28-May 2, 2025
IXL Universal Screening	6-8 Reading & Math	August 9-23, 2024 January 7-17, 2025 April 28-May 2, 2025
ACCESS for ELLs (online)		January 13-March 14, 2025
Alternate ACCESS for ELLs		January 13-March 14, 2025
NAEP (selected schools & grades only)		TBD
ACAP Summative (refer to Alabama Student Assessment Decision Chart)	5-8 ELA* & Math 6 & 8 Science <small>*ELA includes Language, Reading, and Writing for grades 5-8</small>	March 17-April 25, 2025
ACAP Alternate (refer to Alabama Student Assessment Decision Chart)	5-8 ELA* & Math 6 & 8 Science <small>*ELA includes Language, Reading, and Writing for grades 5-8</small>	March 3-April 4, 2025

ATTENDANCE

For students who attend the Elmore County Virtual School (EDGE), the virtual attendance policy will apply. EDGE virtual attendance is measure in the following manner:

- Each student in the Elmore County Virtual School (EDGE) will be assigned an advisor.
- Advisors will monitor student progress in Imagine Learning daily via software dashboards, reports, assignments, and assessments.
- Advisors will monitor student usage weekly to monitor attendance (each Monday) in Imagine Learning via dashboard and reports.
- Students are not allowed to fall below 15% progress or have a grade below 60%.

In cases in which students are off-pace, the principal and/or administrative staff, as well as attendance officer, will intervene consistent with the schedule presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Elmore County Virtual School (EDGE) Intervention Schedule

Percentage off-pace in the course	Student Intervention
15%	<p>When the student is fifteen (15%) percent behind in the course or have a grade below 60%, advisors will make contact with the student and/or guardian(s).</p> <p>If progress is not corrected, student is required to report to tutoring via Zoom or directly at the center with a certified teacher.</p> <p>If student fails to report to tutoring, progress has not improved, or contact cannot be made by the advisor, a supervisor will attempt contact with student and guardian(s) and possibly report the student to the Elmore County Truancy Officer.</p> <p>If the student continues to not meet the required criteria, students will be released from the Elmore County Virtual Program to the base school and will no longer be considered for the Edge Virtual Program.</p>

BLENDING ATTENDANCE

Our blended attendance is a combination of both traditional attendance and virtual attendance. Blended attendance is measured through the completion of lessons/assignments consistent with the student’s customized learning plan and developed for students in every course that includes the target dates for each assignment.

- Blended attendance is only allowed with prior approval from the principals for trips, special events, non-school related extracurricular activities, etc.
- Prior permission must be granted for trips, special events, non-school related extracurricular activities, etc.
- Doctor’s notes are required for illnesses upon return to school.
- The attendance clerk will be responsible for properly documenting attendance.
- The teacher will assign lessons through the virtual platform, Imagine Learning.
- Students are required to complete all assignments for the assigned day with a minimum score of 60% to be considered present and in attendance.
- Simply logging into the virtual platforms, Imagine Learning is not considered “attending” for purposes of Alabama’s Compulsory School Attendance Law.
- Progress will be monitored weekly for students out more than five (5) school days.
- All assignments must be completed within three (3) days after returning back to school.

AUDIO-VISUAL MATERIALS

To ensure that audio-visual materials used in the schools of our school system are best suited to the educational needs, age, and maturity of students, the following guidelines govern the use and review of all audio-visual materials to be shown in any classroom or school setting.

1. **Selection of Instructional Materials**

- The principal or designee will collaborate with certified teaching staff in selecting appropriate instructional materials for various grade levels and content areas.
 - All digital resources, including e-books, online magazines, streaming media, and other digital teaching aids, located in individual school libraries/media centers must be examined and approved by the principal or designee before being made available to students and teachers.
 - The local school principal or designee (librarians/media specialists) will be responsible for library/media center acquisitions at each school.
- 2. Usage of Digital Resources**
- Digital resources such as online videos, interactive media, and digital presentations will not be used in their entirety unless directly relevant. Teachers should extract only the material relevant to the Alabama Course of Study (ALCOS) standards being taught.
 - All audio-visual materials must directly relate to the ALCOS and school system curriculum, serving as a means of teaching a specific objective.
 - All digital resources must be documented in lesson plans and aligned with the ALCOS.
- 3. Preview and Approval Process**
- All audio-visual materials must be previewed in their entirety by the teacher.
 - Digital resources not housed in the media center must be approved by the librarian and receive written approval from the school principal prior to being used in a classroom setting.
 - A written request for approval must be submitted to the principal ONE WEEK PRIOR to viewing. The Approval of Audio-Visual Materials Form (see Appendix) should be used to grant permission. Both the teacher and principal should retain a copy of the written approval documentation.
- 4. Incentive-Based Viewing**
- Viewing of entire movies or lengthy digital content as incentives must be pre-approved by the administration and follow the same guidelines previously described.

By adhering to these updated guidelines, we aim to enhance the educational experience while ensuring that all materials are current, appropriate, and effective for our students' learning.

CLASSROOM REQUIRED POSTED ITEMS

- class schedule – time and subject – posted inside and outside classroom
- learning targets aligned to CCRS
- daily class assignments
- homework assignments, if applicable
- rules/consequences/rewards
- Age appropriate, content specific, and relevant word walls that are adjusted according to content standards being taught should be posted. The word wall should play an active role in classroom instruction throughout the school year. Once words are taught, they may be placed in an interactive folder, journal, or binder for student reference.
- Projects posted in the hallways should include a posting of all ALCOS:CCRS number and description. Work posted in the hallway communicates to all stakeholders that students have achieved the goals set by the teacher or that work is on-going.

CONFERENCES

- It is the responsibility of each teacher to develop a positive rapport with parents and to communicate with parents on a regular basis.
- If a student is not making satisfactory progress, it is the responsibility of the teacher to make contact with the parent/guardian of the student in order to develop a plan for academic improvement.
- Teachers are to keep documentation of parental notes, telephone calls, and conferences.

DYSLEXIA INFORMATION

Dyslexia is a general term for disorders that involve difficulty in learning to read or interpret words, letters, and other symbols, but that do not affect general intelligence. Elmore County utilizes PST for students who are struggling academically. Based on the Problem Solving Team Manual, students who experience difficulty in the area of reading may be given a Dyslexia screener. Elmore County does NOT diagnose Dyslexia, but does look for traditional dyslexic characteristics. Students who are determined to have dyslexic tendencies will be taught using multi-sensory strategies. Visit the Dyslexia Resource Guide at www.alsde.edu for more information on dyslexia.

Students who provide documentation of outside the system testing with a Dyslexia diagnosis will be brought before the school level Problem Solving Team. If the student is experiencing academic difficulties, then the PST will determine whether the student should undergo further testing for Special Education services or seek to qualify for a 504 Evaluation. Forms needed for any of the above actions are available in the Elmore County Problem Solving Manual.

ENGLISH LEARNER (EL) ACCOMODATIONS

Teachers should be encouraged to maintain high expectations for student learning and should accommodate and adapt instruction, assignments, and assessments so that English Learners (ELs) can progress. Daily assignments and tests will be administered *with* accommodations as needed and are documented in the Individualized English Language Plan (I-ELP). The I-ELP can be viewed within *ELlevation*.

All students are to be taught on grade level. For ELs in grades K-12, the WIDA English Language Development (ELD) Standards should be referenced when determining appropriate accommodations according to the English Language Proficiency (ELP) level attained on the *ACCESS for ELLs* assessment or WIDA Screener along with classroom performance. (Resources available at www.wida.us .) *Grading is based on accommodated work.*

Grading Procedures for English Learners (ELs)

Grading of ELs should be based on students' level of English proficiency. The teacher ensures the continual use of high-quality instruction and assessment as well as instructional and assessment

accommodations in accordance with the student's I-ELP. This complies with the federal law, Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Appropriate instruction and differentiation must be adjusted according to language proficiency level to appropriately accommodate the student. Documentation of these components (lesson plans, work samples, and ongoing assessments) should be maintained by the classroom teacher.

Retention of English Learners (ELs)

Retention of ELs shall not be based solely upon level of English language proficiency (Section I, Part G, Guidelines to Satisfy Legal Requirements of *Lau v. Nichols*). Prior to considering retention of an EL, the following points should be addressed in consultation with the EL Committee.

- What is the student's level of English language proficiency?
- Has an Individual English Language Plan (I-ELP) been implemented to document classroom accommodations and student progress?
- To ensure meaningful participation, are classroom accommodations being made in the areas of:
 - Teacher lesson delivery at student's level of English proficiency?
 - Activities and assignments?
 - Homework?
 - Formal and informal assessments (e.g., quizzes and tests)?
- How much individual English language development instruction is the student receiving during the school day?
- Has an alternate grading strategy been implemented (e.g., a portfolio, checklist, teacher observation, or rubric assessment on content and language objectives)?
- Has the student's classroom teacher been adequately trained with EL instructional and assessment strategies specifically designed for students learning English?
- Do the report cards indicate that students were graded according to their I-ELPs?

***Consultation with the Director of Federal Programs and District ESL Coordinator is required before retaining an EL student.**

Accelerated Reader Goals for English Learners (ELs)

Teachers of ELs must use their professional judgment to determine Accelerated Reader goals. It is recommended that the Minimum Average Percent Correct be held at 85% and accommodations be made for Points and Minimum Average Book Level. These accommodations should be stated in the I-ELP.

FIELD TRIPS

The process of procuring transportation for field trips and other off-campus activities is as follows:

- Teachers will fax the Field Trip Activity Form, **to include nurse and principal signature** to the Department of Secondary Education at 334-514-2804.
- This must be submitted at least **two weeks** prior to the planned activity.

- Once submitted and approved, subsequent information will be sent by Lee Arant, Assistant Supervisor in the Transportation Department, to the teacher responsible for organizing the trip.
- For transportation questions, please contact Lee Arant, ext. 21010.
- Teachers must remain in proximity of all students to monitor student behavior and direct planned field trip activities.
- Teachers will complete a Field Trip Activity Form (found in the Appendix and online at <https://www.elmoreco.com/districtcurriculumdocuments>) listing activities that will occur before, during, and after ALL field trips and explain how the planned trip is aligned to the Alabama course of Study standards.
- Any off-campus field trips deemed as a safety issue such as skating, inflatables, etc. will not be approved.
- On-campus activities are allowed; however, students may not be charged a fee to attend on-campus activities during school hours. **Any on-campus inflatable or other similar activities must have an insurance quote and the insurance must be in effect on the event date.**
- All out-of-state field trips must be approved by the principal and superintendent. All field trips after May 1 must be approved by the principal and superintendent.
- **Biscuits Ballgame incentive field trip is reserved for grades 5-8.**
- It is recommended that teachers plan for no more than two field trips per class per year.

Off-Campus Events

The following information can be found in the Elmore County Board of Education Policy Manual. Student participation in and travel to off-campus events, concerts, functions, and activities, and the use of school buses or other transportation for such purposes may be authorized under and subject to the following terms and conditions:

- a) The destination is an activity, event, or function that services a bonafide educational or related extracurricular purpose, or is an athletic event or function sponsored or sanctioned by the school or the school system and the state athletic association;
- b) Adequate information regarding the trip (e.g. destination, duration, purpose, educational purpose, mode of transportation, nature and extent of student participation) has been provided to the principal, program director, and superintendent;
- c) Adequate arrangements are made for supervision and other risk management considerations (e.g. parental permission, medical treatment authorization, special insurance requirements);
- d) Properly certified and qualified drivers have been selected and arrangements for the costs of the trip (e.g. salary, fuels, maintenance, lodging) have been made; and
- e) Principal approval of the trip is obtained. In addition, superintendent's approval is required for out-of-state trips.

The superintendent is authorized to develop additional specific requirements for participation in and travel to and from official events and activities that are consistent with the terms of this policy.

5th – 8th Grade Field Trip Criteria

Principal-approved Field Trips OR Choices from suggested trips below.

List is *not* exhaustive.

*** 2 field trips per year ***

5th Grade

- American Village at Montevallo
- Davis Theater
- Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts

- Shakespeare Festival
- STARBASE (Grade 5, selected school)
- Alabama Department of Archives & History
- Alabama Nature Center/Lanark
- Freedom Riders Museum

6th Grade

- Davis Theater
- McWane Science Center (Birmingham)
- Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts
- Rocks & Minerals Show
- Rosa Parks Museum
- Shakespeare Festival
- U. S. Space & Rocket Center
- W. A. Gayle Planetarium
- Ropes Course (6th grade ONLY)
- Alabama Nature Center/Lanark
- Elmore County Black History Museum

7th & 8th Grades

- Alabama Artists Gallery, Montgomery
- Alabama Department of Archives & History
- Alabama Nature Center/Lanark
- Armory Learning Arts Center
- Davis Theater
- Elmore County Black History Museum
- George Lindsey UNA Film Festival
- Huntingdon College Art Department
- Montgomery Advertiser Press Room
- Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts
- Wetumpka Depot
- Field trips required for course credit
- Other professional productions in the area of study
- Service projects

*Field Trip Activity and Release of Liability for Field Trip Participation Forms can be found in the Appendix.

HOMework

- Homework is an important component of every student's instructional program.
- Students, teachers, and parents should have a clear understanding of the objectives to be accomplished through homework and the role it plays in meeting curriculum requirements.
- Homework reflects practices that have been taught in the classroom and provides reinforcement and remediation for students.
- It should be student-managed, and the amount should be age-appropriate, encouraging learning through problem solving and practice.
- At every grade level, homework should mirror classroom activities and experiences.

- Independent and collaborative projects that foster creativity, problem-solving abilities, and student responsibility are appropriate.
- Parental support and supervision reinforce the quality of practice or product as well as skill development.
- Under no circumstances will homework be used to punish students.
- Homework is a FORMATIVE assessment used to evaluate student understanding.
- If graded, homework may be counted as one (1) cumulative grade per quarter.
- Homework documentation must be kept outside of PowerSchool.

HONOR ROLL

Honor Roll for grades 5-8 will be calculated using grades from core curriculum, physical education, and all electives except for those with an “aide” descriptor.

LESSON PLANS

- Teachers are required to complete weekly lesson plans. These plans must be submitted to the principal and/or posted to PowerSchool by 8:00 a.m. each Monday.
- The 5th – 8th grade lesson plan format must be approved by each principal. The format may be unique to each school.
- Lesson planning with grade-level peers is encouraged; however, each teacher should customize lesson plans to meet the needs of the diverse population of each individual classroom.

SUBSTITUTE/EMERGENCY LESSON PLANS

A Substitute Folder with an emergency lesson plan must be available. Teachers must ensure that the information left for substitute teachers is general in nature and does not violate student privacy. It should be noted that student medical information as well as special education information is highly confidential.

An emergency lesson plan should include all relevant information, such as:

- class schedule
- bus lineup and information
- fire and tornado drill directions
- library schedule
- lunch schedule
- list of students
- duty schedule
- hall passes
- materials to be used
- special admonitions (student illness, behavior)

LIBRARY PROGRAM

Books and reference materials are located in the library/media center. Students are encouraged to check out and read books. Students visit the library/media center either as a group or as an individual on an

unlimited, as-needed basis during times specified by the classroom teacher. In an effort to remind students of the importance of returning books in a timely manner, a library fine may be charged to students. Each library/media center follows the board approved criteria: Grades K-4: no fines charged; Middle Schools: \$.10 per day; High School: \$.25 per day with a cap of \$5. You may contact the school principal or librarian for more information.

Librarians are partners in education with community stakeholders, administrators, teachers, and students. They provide access to information for students and staff that is appropriate to student development and features diversity in perspective, format, and interest. They collaborate with teachers so every student learns to access, evaluate, and use information through activities that are planned and assessed in ways that help them achieve classroom instructional objectives. They join others in the learning community to encourage every student to read, view, and listen for information and enjoyment, realizing these practices are necessary for literacy and form the basis for a successful and productive life. They administer a planned program that provides a welcoming environment conducive to learning and promotes students' intellectual and personal growth. (Literacy Partner: A Principal's Guide to an Effective Library Media Program for the 21st Century)

- The librarian, with the assistance of the administration, sets the schedule for the library media center; the schedule is posted and available at all times.
- The library should not be closed for non-library purposes.
- Forty percent (40%) of the librarian's time is spent in the administration of the library media program. During this time, no classes are scheduled for instruction by the librarian, although students and teachers may still use the library.
- Sixty percent (60%) of the librarian's time spent with students may include, but are not limited to:
 - assisting students to locate books within the library media center
 - providing a lesson with the classroom teacher (collaborative approach) to support classroom lessons
 - conducting lessons with the aid of classroom teachers or volunteers
 - selecting books and other educational resources for teachers to use with students in the classroom
 - promoting the love of literature through creating library displays and delivering morning announcements to highlight books across a variety of genres
- Each librarian is scheduled a lunch time and a planning time. These times should be scheduled during a time in the day when the library is not heavily attended by students to access information.
- Teachers and the librarian should collaborate to develop enhanced curriculum units.
- Librarians will open libraries as soon as possible, but no later than the second week of school for orientation to the library and will begin book circulation as soon as possible, but no later than the third week of school.
- Librarians will close the library to take inventory of their collection the last two weeks of school.
- Library lessons (fixed scheduling) will not be made up for the following reasons: field trips, holidays, or failure of teacher to bring students at the scheduled time.

Schools earning units for Library Media paraprofessionals

- Library paraprofessionals will only work in the library during their designated library assignment and may not be pulled for additional school duties during this time.

MAKE-UP WORK

- Students have three (3) days to provide a written note documenting an excused absence.
- Students may have the opportunity to complete make-up work through Imagine Learning. Please refer to the Attendance section in the Elmore County Student Handbook & Code of Conduct for further information regarding Blended Attendance.
- No make-up work can be given for unexcused absences.
- In the case of excused absences, the teacher and student should agree on a time for the work to be made up and teachers should document the due date. Students may be required to sign acknowledgement of the agreed upon time.
- Teachers may construct make-up tests in a different format from the original assignment.
- Students not completing make-up work will be given a zero (0) until work is made up.

OBSERVATIONS AND CLASSROOM EVALUATIONS

- Walkthroughs, instructional rounds, *ELEOT*, *ATOT* observations and formal classroom evaluations will be conducted at all schools.
- Administrators are expected to provide appropriate feedback to teachers following any classroom visit.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- The State Department of Education requires students to receive P.E. instruction daily for thirty (30) minutes.
- As part of a comprehensive, quality Physical Education Program, every student enrolled in Physical Education in Grades 2-6 will participate in the Alabama Physical Fitness Assessment (APFA).
- **Students who have an approved P.E. waiver are responsible for completing the APFA.**
- The data for students in grades 2-6 will be recorded and may be accessed in PowerSchool.
- Sixth grade students will participate in the Marshall Anderson Challenge Course (MACC) which is contingent upon financial resources and personnel.

Physical Education Grading

This grade should be based on standards outlined in the 2009 ALCOS: Physical Education. For easy access to the Instructional Guide, use the following link.

<https://www.alsde.edu/sec/sct/COS?2019%20Alabama%20Course%20of%20Study%20Physical%20Education.pdf#search=2019%20COS>

Conduct should not affect the P.E. grade; however, a conduct grade for P.E. can be noted in the comment section of the PowerSchool Report Card.

All students in grades 5-8 will receive a numerical grade. Nine-week grades will be categorized as follows:

- 45% - Dress Dressed/Prepared for active participation i.e.
- 45% - Participation Actively Participates
- 10% - Tests Assessments

Physical Education Requirement (Grades K-8)

Daily physical education instruction is required for a minimum of thirty (30) minutes for Grades K-5, and a minimum of fifty (50) minutes for Grades 6-8 with no exceptions or substitutions and may not be combined with lunch time. Recess time may not be substituted for physical education and should not take place immediately before or after physical education class time. (Code of Alabama 1975, §16-40-1)

Options for Middle School Physical Education Programs

In those schools where Grades 7 and 8 are housed with other elementary grades, the school may follow the time requirement listed for Grades 4-6 or the time requirement listed for Grades 7-12. Grades 7 and 8 may have a minimum of thirty (30) minutes of physical education daily when these grades are housed with Grades 4-6. It is recommended, however, that students in Grades 7-8 receive a minimum of fifty (50) minutes of physical education daily.

POWERSCHOOL PARENT PORTAL

PowerSchool is a program that allows parents to review information related to grades, attendance, homework assignments, discipline records and other student data from the current year. In order to access records, a student must be enrolled in Elmore county Schools. The information viewed is live data.

Each parent/guardian will have one login to view each child's information and data. Information for logging in is prepared annually through the school office and this information is sent home with the students.

RESPONSE TO INSTRUCTION (RtI)/MULTI-TIERED SYSTEMS OF SUPPORT (MTSS)

- RtI is based on data and documentation of appropriate instruction. The team will conference to determine how to best meet student needs.
- Tier I instruction is basic instruction provided for all students daily.
- Tier II instruction is additional instruction provided for at-risk and/or identified students. This instruction is provided during small group time or differentiated instruction by the classroom teacher.
- Tier III instruction should be an intensive, individual research-based intervention program.
- RtI/PST is used for regular education students with academic and/or behavior challenges in general education classes, career technical and alternative education classes.
- PST is NOT used with students who already have a Plans for Programs, 504 Plan, or I-ELP.
- See the Problem-Solving Team Manual for additional information.
- Problem -Solving Teams will use standards mastery reports from PowerSchool to determine areas of non-mastery and focus intervention strategies and content.
- See the 2024-2025 Elmore County Multi-Tiered System of Support Manual for step-by-step directions, resources, and forms for PST.

SCIENCE FAIR

- Science experiments and projects are used to extend and enrich concepts taught.

- Students in Grades 4-12 will be given the opportunity to compete in the school Science Fair.
- Each school will have a Science Fair Coordinator to ensure that students receive information to participate in this event.
- Science Fair projects will first be judged at the school level.
- School winners in each category will compete in the Elmore county Science Fair during the third quarter.

SPECIAL EDUCATION/GRADING PROCEDURES

- Elmore County tests are written on grade level and all teacher-designed assessments are to be on grade level.
- Checkpoints will be administered to Special Education students. These exams can be accommodated as specified in the student's Individualized Educational Program (IEP). Please follow the IEP as it is written.
- No test can be read to a student unless a reading accommodation has been explicitly defined in a student's IEP Section 504 Plan. An accommodation cannot supplant the skill the test is designed to measure.
- Ongoing assessment is vital to the improvement of instruction and learning. Immediate and corrective feedback is important to learning and will be shared with students, parents, and/or guardians in a timely manner.
- General education teachers should receive graded accommodated assignments within a week for them to post as required.

SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES AND SECTION 504 REQUIREMENTS

- All teachers have the responsibility to recognize the needs of individual students, particularly those who meet Special Education and Section 504 criteria.
- Teachers will participate in the development of IEPs (Individualized Education Programs) or Section 504 Plans to ensure that the guidelines are implemented for IDEA.
- Students must be given the opportunity to be actively engaged in learning the content and standards that define the general education curriculum.
- Accommodations will be provided for students eligible for Section 504 Services.
- Accommodations and/or modifications will be provided for students eligible for Special Education Services.

Recording of IEP and Section 504 Meetings (February 2018)

The recording of an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 meeting is prohibited unless a parent/guardian, authorized representative of a parent/guardian is unable to understand or meaningfully participate in the IEP or Section 504 process, or the planning of the relevant student's educational program, due to a disability, language barrier, or some other impairment.

If a parent/guardian believes that recording an IEP or Section 504 meeting is necessary, the parent/guardian should notify the principal or designee in writing at least five (5) school days before the IEP or Section 504 Team meeting, of the request to record the meeting and the reason the recording is

required. The principal or designee will notify the parent/guardian at least two (2) school days before the meeting of the grant or denial of the parent/guardian's request to record the meeting.

If the principal or designee denies the request to record the IEP or Section 504 meeting, the reasons will be stated in writing for the denial. Authorized exceptions to the general prohibition against the recording of IEP or Section 504 meetings involve situations when a parent/guardian, or authorized representative of a parent/guardian, is unable to understand or meaningfully participate in the IEP or Section 504 process or the planning of the relevant student's educational program due to a disability, language barrier, or some other impairment.

If a parent/guardian is permitted to record the meeting, the parent/guardian must use his or her own audio recording device. If the school district records an IEP or Section 504 meeting, the resulting recording shall become a part of the student's educational record and will be maintained in accordance with state and federal law.

For purposes of this policy, a recording is defined as the capture of moving visual images, voices, and other ambient sound electronically, digitally, or by any other means for the purpose of retrieval and review.

Video recording, including recording of visual images, at an IEP or Section 504 meeting is strictly prohibited.

The use of court reporter services at an IEP or Section 504 meeting is strictly prohibited.

SPELLING BEE

The Spelling Bee tradition improves students' spelling skills and increases their vocabularies. Bee participation also provides valuable experience in developing poise – a necessary skill for public speaking, performing arts, and athletics.

- Each middle school will have a coordinator to plan and implement a school Spelling Bee for students in Grades 5-8. Each middle school will send **one** school winner to compete in the Elmore County Spelling Bee, generally held in early February.
- School coordinators will attend a meeting at the beginning of the school year and will be provided with a schedule of events to be prepared to participate in the Elmore County Spelling Bee.
- Each middle school will be responsible for paying a fee to participate in this Spelling Bee. The one winner of the Elmore County Middle School Spelling Bee participates in the Scripps National Spelling Bee in the Washington, D.C. area.
- School coordinators will receive information when it is released from Adventure Travel regarding the Spelling Bee fees and schedule of events. Scripts, rules, and guidelines will be utilized at the county level and are designed to assist Spelling Bee officials and spellers.

STATE ASSESSMENTS

The Alabama Comprehensive Assessment Program (ACAP) will be administered in the spring. Students in Grades 5-8 will be assessed in ELA, Writing, and Mathematics. In addition, students in Grades 6 and 8 will be assessed in Science.

SUPERVISION OF STUDENTS

Students must always be supervised. At no time should students be left unattended.

VIRTUAL SCHOOL

Students in Grades 3-12 can apply to be accepted into the Elmore County virtual school, The EDGE. For more information contact Cindy Hines at 334-514-3931 extension 27001.

WEEKLY PAPERS

- Weekly papers will not be sent home.
- Progress reports will be sent home each quarter.
- Parents may view grades in the PowerSchool Parent Portal.
- Parents may view student papers upon request.

APPENDIX

1. Request for Approval of Audio-Visual Materials Form
2. Field Trip Activity Form
3. Release of Liability for Field Trip Participation Form

Elmore County Board of Education
Request for Approval of Audio-Visual Materials Form

NOTE: This review process is to be completed only when the audio visual is obtained from sources external to the school library or school system and is designed to protect the students, teachers, and the school system This form must be submitted ONE WEEK prior to viewing.

Requesting Teacher _____ School _____

Title of Audio Visual _____

Commercial rating, if applicable _____

Obtained from (source) _____

Curriculum Objective and Standard (explain) _____

Follow-up activity(ies) _____

Date to be shown _____ Grade level/age _____

I certify that I have previewed the above listed audio-visual material in its entirety and request that it be approved for showing in my class(es).

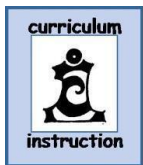
Teacher Signature _____ Date _____

Approved

Disapproved

Principal Signature _____ Date _____

FIELD TRIP ACTIVITY FORM



Planning for a field trip is essential to enhance and connect learning that is being conducted in the classroom to real events. Prior to any reservations made for a field trip, this form must be completed, submitted and approved by the principal and appropriate central office personnel.

Teacher's Name _____ School _____

Field Trip Destination _____

Date of Proposed Field Trip _____ Number of field trips your students have taken this year _____

Please mark the appropriate boxes below:

- This field trip is on the approved field trip list at the appropriate grade level.
- This is an out-of-state field trip.
- Bookkeeper's approval of funds available _____

Mode of transportation: School bus Charter bus

Explain how this field trip is aligned to the Alabama Course of Study Standards:
List planned activities prior to the proposed field trip:
List planned activities during the proposed field trip:
List closure activities planned once students have returned to school:

Nurse required? Yes No Undecided (*determined by final roster*) Nurse's Signature _____

***Teacher will provide an accurate student roster of attendees to nurse two weeks prior to field trip.**

Teacher Signature _____

Approved Not Approved Principal's Signature _____

Field trips MUST have the approval of principal and Elementary or Secondary Education Director.

N/A Approved Not Approved Director's Signature _____

All out-of-state field trips must be approved by the principal and Superintendent.

N/A Approved Not Approved Superintendent's Signature _____

Elmore County Board of Education

PARENTAL PERMISSION/RELEASE OF LIABILITY FOR FIELD TRIP PARTICIPATION

School _____ Child's Name _____

Teacher in Charge _____ Cost to Your Child _____

Trip Date _____ Destination _____

Departure Time _____ Expected Return Time _____ Method of Transportation _____

I understand that my child's participation in the activity is a privilege, and not a right. I acknowledge that I have spoken with my child about my child's need to comply with the specific rules and requirements established for this activity, all Elmore County Board of Education policies and procedures, rules of conduct set forth in the Student Code of Conduct, and state and federal regulations and laws. I understand that all Elmore County Board of Education rules and policies apply to my child and the other students during the course of the field trip.

I also understand that this field trip may expose my child to some risks. On behalf of my child, I assume any such risk that may arise therefrom. I accept full responsibility for all medical expenses for any injuries that might occur to my child by reason of his/her participation.

By signing this form, I hereby release the Elmore County Board of Education, its members, employees, assigns, agents and volunteers ("released parties") from and against any and all claims, demands, actions, complaints, suits or other forms of liability that any of them may sustain: (a) arising out of my child's failure to comply with local, state and federal laws and Elmore County Board of Education policies, procedures, and the Student Code of Conduct; or, (b) arising out of any damage or injury caused by or to my child arising out of my child's participation in the field trip. This release of liability includes accident, injury, loss or damages to my child, as well as to the other individuals or property which may result from my child's travel to and from, and participation in the field trip. I also agree to indemnify and hold harmless the released parties from the released claims, including any and all related costs, attorney fees, liabilities, settlements and/or judgments.

I confirm that I have carefully read this RELEASE OF LIABILITY FOR FIELD TRIP PARTICIPATION and agree to its terms knowingly and voluntarily. I also confirm that I am the parent or legal guardian of the child or I am a student 19 years or older.

Emergency Contact Name & Phone _____

Hospital Insurance Company _____ Policy No. _____

Students will not be permitted to go on field trips without a signed Field Trip Parental Permission Form on file.

Student's Signature (as appropriate) Date _____

Parent's/Guardian's Signature Date _____