

TCSS ACADEMIC SCHOLARS COURSES – 2018-2019

As part of our mission to educate and empower all students to be college and career ready graduates, eligible students in middle school can participate in *Academic Scholars courses*, which are strengthened, rigorous classes for our high-achieving students. Offered in all four academic core disciplines in grades seven (7) and eight (8), the classes provide intellectual and creative challenges to help students become skilled problem solvers and critical thinkers. In addition, they incorporate project-based activities to give hands-on opportunities for students to learn, fostering the development of skills for communication, understanding, and team building, qualities that are essential for life in the 21st century.

What are the basic facts of the courses?

- Provided at the middle school level in grades 7 and 8.
- Offers courses in all four core disciplines: English, mathematics, science, and social studies.
- Eligibility determined by *new criteria for 7th and 8th grades for 2018-2019*
- Emphasis on project-based learning and “Science and Technology interpreted through Engineering and the Arts, all based in Mathematical elements” (STEAM).
- Goal of producing students who are problem-solvers and have high critical thinking skills.
- Provision for training and sustaining new, experienced, and expert teachers on providing appropriate, challenging instruction (differentiated) for higher achieving students while still challenging all students to reach and exceed potential for *all* students.

How will students qualify?

The Academic Scholars courses are reviewed annually by a system team composed of school administrators, teachers, counselors, instructional coaches, and central office personnel. The team’s recommendations for 2018-2019 are as follows:

| <i>Methods of Qualifying to Receive an Invitation to Enroll in Academic Scholars Classes</i> | |
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| <i>Invitation Based on Gifted and Talented Status</i> | Students who have been identified as “gifted and talented” through the Special Education Referral Process will automatically qualify for at least one Academic Scholars course. |
| <i>Invitation Based on State Assessment</i> | Students who score at least 90% of the scaled score on the state assessment will be invited to enroll in Academic Scholars classes. The most recent available assessment results will be used for qualifications. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• If students score 90% or higher on the math portion, they will be invited to enroll in AS math and science.• If students score 90% or higher on the reading portion, they will be invited to enroll in AS English and social studies. |
| <i>Invitation Based on Rubric*</i> | Students who earn at least 13 points on the Academic Scholars Rubric will be invited to enroll in Academic Scholars classes. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• If students earn 13 points for the math and science sections of the rubric, they will be invited to enroll in AS math and sciences classes.• If students earn 13 points for the English and social studies sections of the rubric, they will be invited to enroll in AS English and social studies classes. |

Requirements and Expectations for Academic Scholars Participation

- Significantly increased rigor with assignments, class activities, and assessments
- Additional outside class responsibilities
- Frequent writing assignments
- Creation of a digital portfolio to chronicle the entire year
- Presentation of portfolio at least twice during the year

How will students who are *currently* in the Academic Scholars program continue to qualify?

- *Students in 6th and 7th grades in 2017-2018 may continue in Academic Scholars’ Courses in 2018-2019 by maintaining an 80% yearly average in each core course (English, math, science, and social studies).*

What about students who do not meet eligibility for Academic Scholars’ courses?

All 7th and 8th grade students, whether part of Academic Scholars courses or not, will be taught following the Alabama College and Career Standards and provided with rigorous, appropriate, project-based learning and instruction, with differentiation occurring within each classroom to meet the needs of the variety of middle school learners. STEAM curriculum will enable collaboration and real-world application of problem-solving skills for *all* students.

Parents may choose to request a waiver for their child to enroll in any of the four Academic Scholars courses during course registration; however, they should *carefully weigh the high demands of Academic Scholars coursework* with their child’s demonstrated academic ability, extracurricular obligations, motivation, and work ethic to determine if Academic Scholars coursework is the best choice. If a student is waived into an Academic Scholars course, *he/she will be required to remain in the course for the entire school year.*

***TCSS Academic Scholars Rubric 2018-2019**

Section A: State Assessment

| Math (NPR) | Points |
|-------------------------|--------|
| 90 – 100 | 5 |
| 85 – 89 | 4 |
| 80 – 84 | 3 |
| 75 – 79 | 2 |
| 70 – 74 | 1 |
| Number of Points Earned | |

| Reading (NPR) | Points |
|-------------------------|--------|
| 90 – 100 | 5 |
| 85 – 89 | 4 |
| 80 – 84 | 3 |
| 75 – 79 | 2 |
| 70 – 74 | 1 |
| Number of Points Earned | |

Section B: Core Course Averages

| Math | Points |
|-------------------------|--------|
| 97 – 100 | 5 |
| 93 – 96 | 4 |
| 89 – 92 | 3 |
| 85 – 88 | 2 |
| 80 – 84 | 1 |
| Number of Points Earned | |

| English | Points |
|-------------------------|--------|
| 97 – 100 | 5 |
| 93 – 96 | 4 |
| 89 – 92 | 3 |
| 85 – 88 | 2 |
| 80 – 84 | 1 |
| Number of Points Earned | |

| Science | Points |
|-------------------------|--------|
| 97 – 100 | 5 |
| 93 – 96 | 4 |
| 89 – 92 | 3 |
| 85 – 88 | 2 |
| 80 – 84 | 1 |
| Number of Points Earned | |

| Social Studies | Points |
|-------------------------|--------|
| 97 – 100 | 5 |
| 93 – 96 | 4 |
| 89 – 92 | 3 |
| 85 – 88 | 2 |
| 80 – 84 | 1 |
| Number of Points Earned | |

| Total Points Awarded using Points from Section A | | Total Points Awarded using Points from Section B | | | |
|--|-----------------------------|--|------------------------------------|--|--|
| Math (M-NPR + M-AVG) | Science (M-NPR + SC-AVG) | English (R-NPR + E-AVG) | Social Studies (R-NPR + SS-AVG) | | |
| | | | | | |

Student's Name: _____

Evaluator's Signature: _____