

8th Grade Law Education
2017-2018 Course Syllabus

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I. General Overview

This high school credit elective course involves a study of different types of law, their development, and their role in a democratic society. Emphasis will be placed on citizen rights and responsibilities, law enforcement, the judicial system, liberty, and justice. Topics include criminal law, juvenile justice, torts, consumer, family, and housing law, and individual rights and responsibilities. The course focuses on the interpretation of cases and law enforcement procedures. Students will compete in the Middle School Mock Trial regional competition in early November, with the possibility of attending the state competition in December.

II. Learning and Developmental Goals

1. Students will be able to analyze changes in the law and recognize the dynamic nature of law.
2. Students will be able to describe the civil and criminal justice systems, analyze their operations, and assess their effectiveness.
3. Students will be able to distinguish the state from federal justice systems and analyze the relationship between them.
4. Students will analyze the roles and responsibilities, and assess the effectiveness of local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies.
5. Students will be able to assess the effectiveness of the correction system in deterring criminal behavior.
6. Students will analyze conflicts resulting from competing interests, conflicting laws, and conflicting interpretation of the Constitution.
7. Students will learn what it means to be a U.S. citizen and how citizenship is obtained. They will compare and contrast personal and political rights with social responsibilities and personal duties.

III. Instructional Units and Sequencing

This schedule is tentative and subject to change.

First Nine Weeks

- Law and the Legal System
 - Students will understand what law is.
 - Students will know how laws are made in the various branches of government.
 - Students will know how our legal system is organized.
 - Students will know the differences between trials and appeals.
 - Students will know the differences between state and federal court systems.
 - Students will understand the role of a lawyer.
- Criminal Law and Juvenile Justice
 - Students will be able to explain the nature and causes of crime.
 - Students will be able to distinguish between the relationship of crimes against persons and crimes against property.
 - Students will know the criminal justice process.
 - Students will understand court proceedings.

- Students will understand the operation and challenges of the juvenile court system.
- Civil Law
 - Students will be able to describe the purpose of tort law.
 - Students will be able to explain the concept and purpose of liability.
 - Students will be able to describe the general ways in which tort actions are resolved.
- Semester Mid-Term Exam(test grade)

Second Nine Weeks

- Family Law
 - Students will understand how laws affect them from them moment they are born until the end of their lives.
 - Students will be able to explain the legal rights and issues dealing with marriage, separation, divorce, custody, division of property, and support.
 - Students will know the ways the federal, state, and local programs and policies provide economic, health, and educational benefits to assist citizens.
- Consumer Law
 - Students will be able to describe the general right and responsibilities of consumers.
 - Students will be able to explain the general function of consumer law.
 - Students will know the elements of a legally binding contract.
 - Students will know the differences between an express and implied contract and the legality that surrounds them.
 - Students will understand consumer law as it pertains to regulating sellers and protecting consumers.
- Individual Rights and Responsibilities
 - Students will understand the ideas and concepts behind Constitutional law.
 - Students will know the rights guaranteed in each amendment in the Bill of Rights.
 - Students will understand the concept of due process under the law.
 - Students will understand the controversial nature of Constitutional law.
- Semester Final Exam (20% of overall grade)

IV. Materials and Resources

Students are required to have a binder with paper, pens, and pencils for tests. Other helpful supplies include highlighters, colored pencils or markers. Optional classroom needs: Kleenex , hand sanitizer, copy paper, and pencils.

V. Assessing, Evaluating, and Recording Student Progress

Student progress is assessed in a variety of ways, both formal and informal. Daily informal assessment is primarily in the form of question and answer sessions and observations. Formal assessment takes the form of daily class work/ note-taking assessments, notes quizzes, individual assignments, project assignments, and unit tests.

Minor Grades: Homework, Daily Grades, and Quizzes	40%
Major Grades: Projects, Tests, and Midterm Exam	60%

Final grade calculations will be 40% First Quarter Grade, 40% Second Quarter Grade, and 20% Semester Final Exam.

VI. Rules and Procedures

The following class expectations will apply at all times:

1. Be Respectful
2. Be Responsible

Classroom procedures are in place for students to receive the maximum benefits while in my classroom. The following procedures are in place:

1. Come in to the classroom quietly and take out daily materials.
2. Sharpen pencils at the beginning of class.
3. Clean your area and throw trash away at the end of class.
4. Passes will be written for emergency situations only.

Students are expected to follow all rules established in the RMS Student Handbook. There are a series of consequences designed to encourage students to maintain positive classroom behavior.

1st Offense

Student Warning

2nd Offense

Teacher Consequence & Parent Contact

3rd Offense

Administrative Referral

Parent Conferences can be scheduled at teacher or parent request through the guidance department. Teacher Detention will be held as necessary. This may take place at lunch or before school. A record of behavior is kept by the teacher.

VII. Communicating with Parents

Parent contact is made on a regular basis by note, email, or phone. Regular communication serves as a way of redirecting negative behavior or unacceptable performance in the classroom, as well as praising outstanding or positive behavior. I respond promptly to all messages from parents. Messages can be left for me by phone with the school secretary or guidance office or at my email address that is listed at the beginning of this syllabus. A log is kept of all parent communication with the teacher.

VIII. Extra Help

Classwork and homework are essential for student understanding and should be turned in on time. Homework or class work that is not turned in when due will be recorded as NHI (not handed in) in the gradebook. Mr. Fountain offers extra help from 8:00-8:15 or from 3:15-3:45 by appointment. Please make sure to schedule and receive a pass.

IX. Attendance Policy

To receive high school credit in a class, students may not miss more than 10 days in a year-long class and no more than 5 days in a semester class, regardless of the type of absence or grade in the class. Students who accrue more than the allowed absences may be required to make up seat time before or after school. Mock Trial attendance is mandatory.