

Course: Methodology for Academic and Personal Success

(MAPS) PEIMS Code: N1130021

Abbreviation: MAPS1

Grade Level(s): 9-10

Number of Credits: 1.0

Course description:

The course focuses on the skills and strategies necessary for students to make a successful transition into high school and an academic career. Students will explore the options available in high school, higher education, and the professional world in order to establish both immediate and long-range personal goals. After identifying their individual learning styles and abilities, students will build on these abilities by developing critical time-management, organization and study skills. The course focuses on self-understanding, decision-making, resiliency, attitude, character education, and leadership to help students maximize personal achievement. Students will develop the specific strategies necessary to achieve their personal and professional goals. The course emphasizes proactive problem-solving, self-determination, and independent thinking and learning skills. In addition, students will explore and experience collaboration as a tool for creative problem solving. As part of goal setting and leadership activities, students may complete an outside community service learning experience in addition to class assignments.

Essential knowledge and skills:

(a) Introduction

- (1) The course focuses on the skills and strategies necessary for students to make a successful transition into high school and an academic career.
- (2) Students will explore the options available in high school, higher education, and the professional world in order to establish both immediate and long-range personal goals.

(b) Knowledge and Skills

- (1) Learning and Communication Styles. The student explores and analyzes the basic concepts of learning and communication styles based on current research and practices effective communication. The student is expected to:
 - (A) determine the student's personal learning style;
 - (B) determine the student's personal communication style;

- (C) demonstrate effective communication in a variety of situations with varied audiences;
 - (D) formulate and provide effective verbal and nonverbal feedback and respond appropriately to presentations of peers;
 - (E) synthesize research and self-analysis in order to establish individual strategies for academic and personal success;
 - (F) demonstrate tolerance and appreciation of other's motivation and strengths; and
 - (G) identify and monitor behaviors of personal academic success that are critical in maintaining a passing average.
- (2) Self-Discipline and Attitude. The student reviews campus policies and rules of conduct and defines attitude and the effects of personal attitude on conduct. The student is expected to:
- (A) brainstorm and compile a code of conduct for a model campus;
 - (B) demonstrate understanding of existing campus policies;
 - (C) define attitude and explore the potential effects of personal attitude on human interactions;
 - (D) identify the student's personal attitude and the positive and negative effects of attitude on self and others;
 - (E) identify the student's personal ability to adhere to campus policies and design a plan of improvement as needed;
 - (F) define anger and analyze positive and negative methods for handling anger;
 - (G) define change and identify steps necessary to accomplish change; and
 - (H) analyze situations regarding campus policies and rules of conduct to determine the basic issue or problem involved in each, outline possible responses, and propose a positive solution.
- (3) Resiliency. The student reviews and understands personal and environmental resiliency builders to use in establishing and realizing goals. The student is expected to:
- (A) identify and discuss elements of personal and environmental resiliency;
 - (B) explain the concept of self-image and its potential impact on life choices;
 - (C) apply conflict resolution skills both orally and in writing;
 - (D) demonstrate an awareness of and explain primary causes of stress and identify healthy stress management skills;
 - (E) identify and clearly articulate a balanced set of personal and academic goals, including both short-term and long-term goals; and
 - (F) outline an action plan, including a proposed time frame, to achieve a specific goal.

- (4) Time Management and Organization. The student understands the skills of time management and the tools of organization. The student is expected to:
 - (A) demonstrate an understanding of time management skills including prioritizing and scheduling;
 - (B) define and demonstrate responsibility and accountability in time management;
 - (C) describe tools of organization including different methods of organization;
 - (D) prioritize personal and academic goals; and
 - (E) develop a personal organization system, including creating and maintaining an ongoing calendar of assignments and projects for all academic courses.
- (5) Study Skills. The student analyzes the characteristics of a successful student and practices effective study skills. The student is expected to:
 - (A) define the characteristics of a successful student;
 - (B) analyze the benefits of good study habits and the costs of poor ones;
 - (C) discuss and apply the learning cycle;
 - (D) discuss and demonstrate use of a variety of memory techniques;
 - (E) demonstrate the ability to follow directions and to listen for a specific purpose;
 - (F) demonstrate and use reading strategies, including rereading and questioning;
 - (G) demonstrate and practice study strategies such as skimming, note-taking, outlining, and using study-guide questions;
 - (H) discuss and apply test-taking strategies; and
 - (I) present on the use and benefits of one of the study skills.
- (6) Leadership. The student explores and analyzes the role and characteristics of an effective leader in order to demonstrate leadership in a group setting. The student is expected to:
 - (A) define leadership;
 - (B) list and analyze the characteristics of an effective leader, including the interpersonal skills required for leadership;
 - (C) evaluate personal strengths and weaknesses to determine one's own leadership style;
 - (D) define what it means to delegate and identify the purpose and benefit of delegating; and
 - (E) participate in group projects as both the leader and a supporting member.
- (7) Character. The student explores and analyzes positive character. The student is expected to:

- (A) define positive character traits including responsibility, perseverance, caring, self-discipline, citizenship, honesty, courage, fairness, respect, and trustworthiness
 - (B) define character and describe someone in history who can be considered a person of character;
 - (C) identify positive and negative strategies for dealing with failure and with success;
 - (D) evaluate personal strategies for dealing with failure and with success, identifying specific strengths and weaknesses;
 - (E) analyze positive and negative influences that others have on personal action and beliefs;
 - (F) identify areas in which personal responsibility may be exercised or improved;
 - (G) formulate five personal standards of conduct for which the student will not compromise;
 - (H) discuss ethical behavior and integrity;
 - (I) define citizenship and discuss the positive traits that indicate good citizenship; and
 - (J) critique examples of people who display positive traits of citizenship and who fail to display the positive traits of citizenship.
- (8) Academic Exploration. The student explores and analyzes interests and goals in order to establish a plan for academic success that continues throughout high school into postsecondary education. The student is expected to:
- (A) determine individual talents, abilities, skills, and interests;
 - (B) complete a college choice survey;
 - (C) select a university, college, community college, trade school or internship and develop a plan to enter or start selected post high school career plan;
 - (D) identify high school courses related to career choices in the student's interest area;
 - (E) write professional letters requesting information from the programs listed in his/her college choice survey; and
 - (F) write a college entrance essay and complete a college application.
- (9) Career Exploration. The student researches, analyzes, and applies career information. The student is expected to:
- (A) complete a career interest and aptitude assessment or survey;
 - (B) match interests and aptitudes to career opportunities;
 - (C) recognize and understand the impact of career choice on lifestyle, including budget;

- (D) create a personal career portfolio by conducting an in-depth study of the varied aspects of occupations related to the student's interest areas;
- (E) research careers available with and without a college/university degree using print and online resources as well as personal interviews;
- (F) analyze the personal characteristics, knowledge and skills necessary for the workplace;
- (G) learn how to search for a job, collect personal references, complete a job application, or apply for an internship;
- (H) identify and practice the skills necessary for a job interview and participate in a formal mock job interview;
- (I) prepare and deliver presentations individually and in groups to demonstrate knowledge of career possibilities and the decision process involved in identifying career goals; and
- (J) develop a model resume for a career opportunity in the student's area of interest.

Description of specific student needs this course is designed to meet:

The course was created to be a specific venue for developing and practicing the skills and attitudes identified in the course description. As explained in the specific need for the course above, students entering high school continue to need specific instruction in time management, organization and study skills, particularly as those skills apply to the increasing expectations, responsibilities and academic demands of high school. Students also need a structured introduction to and exploration of the personal and academic options available in high school and beyond. It is essential that young people have the format and guidance early in their high school careers that enable them to identify their own particular strengths and interests and to establish their individual goals. At the same time, students develop and practice resiliency, leadership, and self-determination. Even though there are various courses that cover some facets of the content for this course, there is no course that contains all of the specific skills identified along with the specific lesson plans for developing and applying those skills.

Major resources and materials:

Plano ISD MAPS course contains over 150 detailed, comprehensive lesson plans covering: learning styles, discipline, attitude, time management, study skills, resiliency, organizational skills, goal setting, leadership, careers, and character. The lesson plans have been written by master teachers in Plano ISD and revised based on student participation and feedback. The course contains more material and lessons than a teacher can use in the classroom during a one- or two-semester course. However, each campus will select the lessons and customize the course to meet the specific needs of its students. The lesson plans include specific information

for teachers as to timing, materials needed, student activities, discussion questions, follow-up, and evaluation. Activity sheets, handouts, for each lesson are provided for the teacher. For more information on acquiring the Plano ISD MAPS course, please contact Matthew Sipes at matthew.sipes@pisd.edu.

Among the additional resources used in the course are:

- The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens. Covey, S. (1998). The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens. New York: Fireside.

Suggested methods for evaluating student outcomes:

Students will be evaluated on an ongoing basis through their participation in class discussion, completion of individual and group activities, daily quizzes, unit projects and/or unit tests. Students will complete long-range individual and group activities, including a career research project.

Teacher qualifications:

Secondary Teacher certificate appropriate for grade level assignment

Additional information:

Since the 2004-2005 school year, Plano ISD has offered the MAPS course to student in grades 9 or 10 who have been identified as at-risk as they transition to the high school experience. By consistently monitoring the grades of students taking the course, campuses have illustrated that students are being successful in earning credits toward graduation. In addition, ongoing student and teacher surveys have shown that the overall attitude of students toward school and academic performance has improved as have the students' self-concept and sense of personal responsibility.