

Melrose Veterans Memorial Middle School

Program of Studies

2016-2017



Grades 6, 7 & 8

350 Lynn Fells Parkway

Melrose, MA 02176

781-979-2100

www.melroseschools.com/mms

Introduction

Melrose Veteran's Memorial Middle School is a nearly 900-student school that sits attached to Melrose High School forming the Secondary Schools Campus. Constructed in 2007, the building features many amenities that provide outstanding educational and enrichment opportunities to students. The staff is a highly trained, dedicated group of professionals who are committed to the concept of middle school education. The students are supported as they explore a variety of course topics and are provided with rigorous curricula that leverages strong instructional practices. With a goal of educating the whole child, students are also exposed to a wide variety of exploratory and elective classes that build upon the core content and expose them to the many learning opportunities. Technology is utilized in classrooms everyday with SMART Boards in every classroom, student Google accounts, Chromebooks, Nooks, and various other tools for learning.

The School and district leadership team has worked with the staff in recent years to revise course content, sequencing, assessments and instruction to align with the MA 2011 Curriculum Frameworks <http://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/current.html> and to help prepare students to be college and career ready. This process is always ongoing with a constant review of curriculum and programmatic offerings to meet the needs of all students. This Course Description Guide provides a comprehensive outline of core content classes, criteria for some leveled classes, and a variety of elective and exploratory classes.

MVMMS Leadership Team

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|--|
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Schedule Overview

In the 2016-17 school year MVMMS will continue the use of a modified seven-day waterfall schedule. This schedule allows for 57 minute classes with one class in the student's schedule not meeting each day. The goal of this schedule is to provide our students with more time on learning in the classroom, opportunities for students at all levels to experience more varied course offerings according to their learning needs, and the potential to build a bridge between the middle school and high school to create a more inclusive campus. The schedule also aligns with the High School and presents many opportunities for staff and students to take advantage of the different learning experiences that exist in each building. This helps to further the district's goal of creating a Secondary Schools Campus.

Description of the types of classes

- **Core Content** – Each student is assigned to one of three teams at each grade level. A team is comprised of four content area teachers, English, history, math and science. Students take their core content classes within their team, and the four content area teachers are working with the same group of students. Some of the math and English classes have levels for more advanced students, and criteria exist for student placement in these classes. Global Languages becomes the fifth Core Content class in the seventh and eighth grades, while offered as an elective in the sixth grade.
- **Elective Classes** – Students in all grades take elective classes in two different blocks per day. Electives vary widely from grade to grade and in the frequency they meet. Some electives meet every other day all year, some are every other day for one trimester. Physical Education is the only required elective. Student selection of their electives does have an impact on other electives they can take during the year. Chorus, band, orchestra, art, health and wellness, and technical education are some of the content areas that are included in electives.
- **A Block Classes** – A Block class is the only fixed block in the schedule as the first period every day. Teachers in all grades and core content areas teach one A Block class per day as either an intervention class in math, English, or organizational/study skills, or as a Challenge class that builds on core content areas. Intervention classes are driven by student performance data and need. Intervention classes focus on critical needs in reading, writing and math skills and content knowledge. Challenge classes are designed to expose students to new ways of thinking about problems and the world and require students to use higher order thinking skills while expanding the content we deliver. Students are randomly assigned A Block Challenge classes.

Schedule of Classes

- **Full Year – every day:** These are core content classes that meet every day for the entire year (except on the drop day in the seven-day rotation).
- **Full Year – 3x Cycle:** These classes are elective classes (Performing Arts and Global Language in seventh grade, and Physical Education) that meet during the same block all year but half the time, meaning only three days in the seven-day cycle.
- **Trimester – A Block:** These classes meet five days in the seven-day cycle for one trimester (60 school days). The sixth day is for extended team time and the seventh day, the class is dropped.
- **Trimester – 3x Cycle:** These classes are typically elective classes that meet three times in a seven-day cycle during the same block for one trimester.

Middle School Structure & Teams

The Middle School divides its students into three teams at each grade. Each team is between 80-100 students.

- Teams are named A, B, and C team. This is simply a means to identify each team.
- Team placement is random and there is no leveling or prioritizing in team placement.
- Each team consists of four core content teachers (English, math, history and science).
- A student placed on a team will only have core content classes within those four classrooms and with the other students placed on that team.
- Special Education students are placed on all three teams.
- Teams are clustered into a portion of each hallway with all lockers and four classrooms in the same location.
- Each grade is located on one floor, with teams A and B in two separate sections of one hallway, and Team C in a hallway on the other side of the building.
- Each team has a Team Leader and a dedicated Guidance Counselor, both of whom can serve as a primary contact point for students and families.
- Students have three other class blocks of elective courses, A Block courses, support classes, or global language classes in which they interact with students from other teams.
- When necessary, to meet the needs of an individual student, cross-team or cross-grade placement may take place.

Student/Parent Handbook: Each year a Student/Parent Handbook is distributed as part of a student agenda book to every student in the building. The Handbook contains much more information regarding the procedures, protocols and the Code of Conduct for MVMMS. The Handbook can also be found on the MVMMS website at <http://mvmms.melroseschools.com/our-school/policies-and-information/#sthash.izIgkbFn.dpbs>

In the Program of Studies, classes are assumed to be yearlong classes meeting daily (except on the drop day in the seven-day cycle) unless otherwise noted in each course description.

Course Descriptions

Grade 6

Core Content Classes

These classes meet every day for the full year

Course: English 6

Course Description: This course emphasizes preparation in critical thinking, reading comprehension, and the writing process. Literary works include *Call of the Wild*, *Joey Pigza Swallowed the Key*, *Love That Dog*, *Shipwreck at the Bottom of the World*, *Roll of Thunder Hear My Cry* and selected poetry, classic short stories, and select nonfiction texts. Students will also participate in literature circle reading activities and will complete independent reading assignments. In addition, students will continue to develop grammar skills and build vocabulary. Students are expected to complete one to three hours of homework weekly, and study is aligned with the Massachusetts Frameworks (2011).

Primary Course Materials: * indicates a required text or unit of study

Anthology: *Daniel, Kathleen, ed. *Elements of Literature: Introductory Course*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 2000.

Novel/Novella: **Joey Pigza Swallowed the Key* Jack Gantos, *Roll of Thunder Hear My Cry*, Mildred Taylor, *Shipwreck at the Bottom of the World*, Jennifer Armstrong, and other texts.

Independent Reading

Short Stories: *"The Tell-Tale Heart" Edgar Allan Poe, *"The Monkey's Paw" W. W. Jacobs

Poetry: **Love That Dog* Sharon Creech, *"The Red Wheelbarrow" William Carlos Williams, *"Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" Robert Frost, *"The Tiger" William Blake, *"The Pasture" Robert Frost, *"Street Music" Arnold Adoff, *"Love That Boy" Walter Dean Meyers, *"Dog" Valerie Worth, *"The Apple" S. C. Rigg

Essays/Nonfiction: *"An Island Is Born" Patricia Lauber, *"Stopping the Alien Invaders" Sneed B. Collard III, *"Pattern for Freedom: Women's Quilts as Art" Susan Goldman Rubin

Folktales/Fairy Tales/Imaginative Reservoir Literature: *"Athene's City" Olivia Coolidge

Drama: *"The King and the Bee" An Israeli folktale Virginia Payne Whitworth

Grammar: **Grammar for Writing: Level Purple Grade Seven* Beverly Ann Chin, ed. New York: Sadlier-Oxford, 2007.

Course: Social Studies 6: Geography

Course Description: Geography students will review and reinforce the physical geographical concepts introduced in grades K-5 and develop a broader understanding of cultural geographic concepts as outlined in the Massachusetts State Frameworks. This course will help students discern the global patterns of physical and cultural characteristics such as landforms, climate, population, transportation and communication, economic systems and types of governments, and cultural diffusion. Ultimately the course provides a strong foundation for continuing an education in the Social Studies.

The primary focus of study is on human and cultural geography that deals with how the activities of different cultural groups affect the use and form of the landscape. Students explore a variety of themes including the human use of the habitat and its resources, the human impact on the ecology of the earth, the origin and spread of cultures, environmental perception or the geography of settlement forms. Regions selected for study will vary, but will primarily focus on the physical and cultural geographies of Africa, the Middle East, South and East Asia, Oceania, South America, and Europe. These studies are set in their regional context and exemplify important geographic concepts or problems.

Primary Course Materials: Textbook: *National Geographic: World Cultures and Geography*. The textbook will also be available online. Students are given a username and password to access the text online. Online texts can be viewed using any browser or Smartphone.

Course: Math 6

Course Description: This course covers standards as described in the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks in Mathematics (©2011). Students will gain knowledge in the following domains: Ratios and Proportional Relationships, The Number System, Expressions and Equations, Geometry, and Statistics and Probability. Topics include: expressions and properties; operations with decimals; fractions, and integers; solving equations; ratios, rates, and proportions; percent, data and graphs; measurement, area, volume, and surface area. Students are expected to develop the skills to compute with accuracy and efficiency in arithmetic processes including dividing multi-digit whole numbers, operations with decimals, and dividing fractions. Students will enhance their problem solving and communication skills, as well as their proficiency with the mathematical practices.

Primary Course Materials: Textbook: *Pearson EnVision Math*. The textbook is available for use online. Students will receive a username and password to access the text online. A basic four-function calculator is required.

Course: Science 6

Course Description: The integration of Earth and space, life, and physical sciences with technology/engineering gives grade 6 students relevant and engaging opportunities with natural phenomena and design problems that highlight the relationship of structure and function in the world around them. Students relate structure and function through analyzing the macro and microscopic world, such as Earth features and process, the role of cells and anatomy in supporting living organisms, and properties of materials and waves. Students use models and provide evidence to make claims and explanations about structure-function relationships in different science and technology/engineering domains. Students enhance their problem solving and communication skills as they complete laboratory experiments that will include a focus on student design and inquiry skills.

Primary Course Materials: Textbook: *Pearson Interactive Science (Cell Structure and Function, Earth's Surface, Astronomy and Space Science, Sound and Light, Introduction to Chemistry, Forces and Energy)*. The textbook is available for use online. Students will receive a username and password to access the text online.

Course: Global Language Electives, Grade 6

Global Language Exploratory, Grade 6: French

Global Language Exploratory, Grade 6: German

Global Language Exploratory, Grade 6: Italian

Course Description: This exploratory course is for sixth grade students and meets three out of seven days in the cycle for one trimester. This course introduces students to the basic principles of proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing, as well as the culture of the language of study. Students are expected to participate actively in class through skits, written practice, and authentic, active listening. In addition, students are expected to spend 10-15 minutes daily outside of class time engaged in independent practice. Students will be assessed through class work and other performance-based activities such as skits, quizzes, tests, and projects.

Primary Course Materials:

Assorted texts, primarily Exploring French, Exploring German, Exploring Italian

Authentic cultural connections including music, maps, posters, videos, and other online resources

Challenge Classes

The duration of each course is one trimester meeting every day.

Challenge English 6

Course # 1: Expository Writing for the Press

Course Description: Our world is filled with information. Did you ever think about being someone who provides that information? If so, this exciting class is for you! Explore the major types of news formats from brief historical beginnings through our ever-changing, fast-paced, mass-media news culture. Learn how to analyze, evaluate and create dynamic journalistic pieces.

Course #2: Graphic Novels

Course Description: Graphic novels and comics give the impression of being simple to read and easy to understand. But this impression is deceptive; for each frame, a complex set of decisions has been made. In this class students will learn to appreciate the skill that creators and graphic novelists have to possess in order to effectively tell their story. Students will see how this special “language”—a combination of pictures, words, and symbols—takes us to new worlds. Students will also analyze the stars of the show: the superhero and villain (male *and* female). Finally, students will be tracing the history of comics in the 20th century and comparing comics and graphic novels to other forms of literature, art, and entertainment.

Primary texts: *Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art* by Scott McCloud and works by Gareth Hinds.

Course #3: African American Literature

Course Description: In this course, students will read a variety of African-American literature, focusing mostly on the literature created during the period of slavery. From folktales to narratives to non-fiction pieces, students will read and study literature, learning about the history of slavery and the effect it had on society. Also, students will analyze audio recordings of actual slave narratives, studying dialect and the aspects involved in storytelling. Through these studies, students will focus on the education of slaves, their family relationships, their relationships with slave owners, and many other topics.

Course#4: Greek Mythology

Course Description: Joseph Campbell, an American mythologist, writes, “Mythology teaches you what’s behind literature and the arts; it teaches you about your own life.” Through research, literary analysis, and discussion, this course investigates mythology’s key function in ancient Greek society as well as in modern art and literature. We explore narratives, maps, interactive scripts, and visual art in connection with the following Greek myths: “Prometheus,” “Pandora’s Box,” “Origin of the Seasons,” Orpheus, the Great Musician,” Daedalus and Icarus,” Echo and Narcissus,” The Twelve Labors of Hercules,” and “Medusa’s Head.”

Challenge Social Studies 6

Course #5: The Geography of North America

Course Description: In The Geography of North America, students will learn about the physical, political, economic, and cultural aspects of past and present day North America. The first half of the term focuses on how the geography of North American regions has impacted each region’s history, while the second half concentrates on modern-day North America, concluding with an extensive research project on immigration.

Primary Course Materials: *National Geographic: World Cultures and Geography*. Students will also utilize newspapers, the Internet, and educational magazines.

Course #6: The Middle East

Course Description: Students will research and learn about the history and current events of the Middle East. The course is aligned to the reading and writing standards from the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks, and utilizes NOOK e-readers to incorporate 21st-century skills alongside historical thinking and inquiry. Major assignments include creating a Google Site, presenting an audio-visual product online, and participating in full-class, student-led discussions.

Primary Course Materials: TBD

Course #7: History through Literature

Course Description: Students will take an interdisciplinary journey through two important decades in our country's history. Using primary sources and a historical fiction novel with a multimedia approach, students will explore common themes of racial segregation, human rights, nationalism, and war and protests of the 1950s and 1960s.

Primary Course Materials: *Fire from the Rock*, Sharon Draper; *Eyes on the Prize* documentary

Challenge Science 6

Course #8: Tunnel Vision

Course Description: Learn about how tunnels are utilized around the world. Explore how tunnels are constructed and build models to demonstrate knowledge. Learn from the mistakes of professional tunnel builders. Plan, demonstrate and reflect on each portion of the engineering design process with your physical models.

Course #9: Bridges and Skyscrapers

Course Description: Learn the basics of building structurally sound bridges and skyscrapers. Apply what you learned to design and build your own. Learn from your mistakes and redesign as needed. Get inspired from unique structures on the internet. Plan, demonstrate and reflect on each portion of the engineering design process with your physical models.

Course #10: Architecture - basics

Course Description: Learn about the characteristics of basic structures. Infrastructure, post and lintel, parts of a building, projections on an architectural drawing, working scale models, tension and compression, the study of ancient buildings, Classical, Medieval, Renaissance and modern architecture

Intervention Classes Grade 6

Course: Intervention Math

Prerequisite/Criteria: Placement is based on performance on state standardized assessments and teacher recommendation. Course placement is revisited in the middle and end of each trimester using student progress data.

Course Description: Students will receive structured, targeted instruction on foundational concepts that are critical to students' development of mathematical knowledge. Some of the modules that are covered are decimals and powers of 10, unit fractions and operations, equivalent fractions, adding and subtracting fractions, using operations to solve complex problems, and understanding area and perimeter. This class supports students by filling in critical gaps of understanding and addressing misconceptions.

Schedule of Class: The class meets daily during A Block.

Course: Math Lab

Prerequisite/Criteria: Placement is based on a student's need for added support and time on learning to master current concepts in the sixth grade math class.

Course Description: This course is designed to support students who have demonstrated a need for additional instruction and practice with the content in their current math class. Teachers will re-teach or review the material that students are struggling with and provide students with individual support and guided practice that will aid students' success in their current math class. Teachers will address students' misconceptions and errors and present the information in alternative ways that will help students understand the material, including the use of manipulative and visuals. This course affords students additional time to practice and process the math content that they are currently learning.

Schedule of Class: The class meets daily during A Block or may be scheduled three times a cycle during an off team block.

Course: Intervention ELA Grade 6

Prerequisite/Criteria: Placement is based on performance on state standardized assessments and teacher recommendation. Course placement is revisited in the middle and end of each trimester using students' progress data.

Course Description: Using the Literature Circle model, students will work in small learning groups to improve reading comprehension and facility. Readings will include nonfiction texts, dynamic fiction, essays, poetry, short stories, and a variety of other print materials. Student will focus on retrieving specific ideas, making inferences, interpreting and integrating information and ideas, and examining and evaluating text features. Participation in the class is intended to be fluid: the course provides support to students who read and write below their class level, but cyclic testing allows students to place out of the class when they have mastered these skills.

Schedule of Class: The class meets daily during A Block.

Course: Organization and Study Skills Intervention

Prerequisite/Criteria: Placement is based on established skill deficit or need and teacher recommendation. Course placement is revisited in the middle and end of each trimester using students' progress data.

Course Description: Students will learn how to organize themselves for the demands of middle school. Utilizing tools, such as the agenda book and online organizational tools, they will be guided on how to maintain a schedule and how to plan for projects and assignments. This is a class that helps students learn to organize, study and master information learned in the classroom and beyond. This course will teach students the tools and techniques they need to successfully learn the curriculum and increase their ability to apply these strategies to new learning situations. The goal is help students learn and enhance their skills, integrate new knowledge with previous learning, learn independently, and apply skills and knowledge to both new and familiar situations.

Schedule of Class: The class meets daily during A Block.

Electives

Course: Physical Education – Grade 6

Course Description: During all Physical Education classes, students are expected to actively participate to the best of their ability with a positive attitude and respect for their classmates and teachers. The Physical Education Department at the Middle School seeks to provide all students with an appreciation and foundation for lifetime fitness and participation in activity through the medium of movement. The primary goals of the program will be the acquisition of physical, social, psychological and intellectual skills necessary for the appreciation and enjoyment of lifetime skills and recreational participation. Students will participate in a variety of individual, dual and team activities, each emphasizing the basic components necessary for participation. Exposure to a number of movement experiences, particularly those that may be unfamiliar to the student, will allow participants to select meaningful lifetime fitness and recreational activities in the future. Students will demonstrate their proficiency through test taking, peer/teacher assessments, and participation in the Fitness-gram. Students are required to wear athletic sneakers that are laced and tied and comfortable clothing.

Schedule of Class: Students meet every other day for a full year.

Course: Fitness – Grade 6

Course Description: Fitness/ physical activity is an important component of the Middle School curriculum. Good health is critical to the overall quality of life, and it is through health and physical education that students acquire knowledge and develop positive attitudes and behaviors that promote lifelong well-being. This course meets every other day for one trimester. The goals are: increase the quality and length of life; help develop responsibility and accountability towards personal fitness; and develop proper nutrition choices. All course content and skills will be developmentally appropriate for students at the sixth-grade level.

Schedule of Class: This is a trimester class that meets every other day.

Course: Health – Grade 6

Course Description: Students will develop a fundamental understanding of physical, social, and mental health. They will explore topics such as the Health Triangle and the interconnection of physical, social, and mental health; good self-image for overall health; and the digestive system and ways to keep it healthy. Students will also study current nutrition guidelines, alcohol and other drugs, the link to addiction, the vulnerability of the pre-teen/teenage brain to these substances, and high-level decision-making and refusal skills. Also covered are the developmental stages of the life cycle, with an emphasis on the physical and emotional changes connected with puberty, and the various types of violence, its impact, and the skills needed to prevent violence. Students are expected to participate actively in class through listening, speaking, writing, reading, small group work, presentations, and skits. Students will demonstrate their proficiency through test taking, in-class and out-of-class written assignments, and presentations. All course content and skills will be developmentally appropriate for students at the sixth-grade level.

Schedule of Class: This is a trimester course that meets every other day.

Course: Chorus – Grade 6

Course Description: In Chorus, students learn to sing music from a wide variety of musical genres and cultures. Students will learn the basics of vocal production, music reading, and performance skills. Students will focus on unison and two-part repertoire in class. Performance opportunities will arise in the form of choral concerts.

Schedule of Class: This class meets three times per cycle for the entire year.

Course: Band – Grade 6

Course Description: Students learn to play a wide variety of Band music together. Students will learn the basics of musical literacy and performance skills. Performance opportunities will arise in the form of band concerts.

Schedule of Class: This class meets three times per cycle for the entire year.

Course: Orchestra – Grade 6

Course Description: Orchestra is open to all students in grades 6-8 who play a stringed instrument (violin, viola, cello, bass), and meets by grade level. Orchestra provides an academic opportunity for participation in instrumental ensemble playing. Special attention is given to forming proper habits regarding ensemble routine. Students will work to develop their tone production, intonation, rhythm, critical listening, instrumental technique, and musical interpretation through skill study and participation. Exercises and repertoire explore major key signatures up to three sharps and flats. Throughout the middle school sequence, students will begin to develop shifting technique, the ability to tune their own instrument, and increasingly complex bow technique. Students will study and perform music from a variety of genres and time periods. In addition to evening concerts, students have the opportunity to perform at two school-wide assemblies throughout the year.

Schedule of Class: This class meets three times per cycle for the entire year.

Course: Art – Grade 6

Course Description: Students will expand their repertoire of 2D and 3D art processes, techniques, and materials with a focus on the range of effects possible within each medium. Students deepen their understanding of basic art materials such as acrylic paint, clay, watercolor, drawing, and printmaking by examining each material in long-term assignments that scaffold skills and ideas studied in elementary school. Students will be able to recognize and utilize the elements of art and principles of design in their own work, and discuss the elements and principles for other students' work and historical artwork. Students will learn the appropriate use for and safe handling of art tools and materials, and will demonstrate the proper maintenance of a personal workspace and supplies.

Schedule of Class: This is a trimester course that meets every other day.

Course: Drawing – Grade 6

Course Description: In this art class, students will build drawing skills that are fundamental to all art making. This includes representational and non-representational approaches. Emphasis will be on line and value. Students will experiment with new drawing techniques such as linear perspective, grid transfers, and gesture drawing to create work from both observations of the natural world as well as their own imagination.

Schedule of Class: This is a trimester course that meets every other day.

Course: Technology Engineering – Grade 6

Course Description: Using a hands-on approach with tools and equipment, students will explore the Engineering Design Process (EDP) through a series of small projects in order to communicate, design, build, and produce unique solutions to engineering challenges. Students must apply their knowledge of the properties of materials in order to meet design specifications, which are within acceptable tolerances, and meet quality standards. Students will utilize the computer lab to conduct research, draw three-dimensional designs of possible solutions, to virtually design and test structural elements, and to communicate their findings.

Schedule of Class: This is a trimester course that meets three times during a seven-day cycle.

Course: Industrial Design – Grade 6

Course Description: Students in Industrial Design will be given a design task and must select appropriate materials based on specific properties needed in the construction of a solution. Students will be able to choose and safely use appropriate measuring tools, hand tools, fasteners, and common hand-held power tools used to construct a prototype. Students will communicate a design solution to an intended user, including design features and limitations of the solution. Students will have the opportunity to accurately interpret and apply scale and proportion to visual representations. Examples of visual representations can include sketches, scaled drawings, and orthographic projections. Examples of scale can include $\frac{1}{4}'' = 1'0''$ and $1 \text{ cm} = 1 \text{ m}$. Students will analyze and compare properties of metals, plastics, wood, and ceramics.

Schedule of Class: This is a trimester course that meets every other day.

Course: Computers and Digital Literacy – Grade 6

Course Description: Students develop skills in technology literacy guided by the Massachusetts Technology Literacy Standards. By the end of middle school, students should be proficient in the use of computers and applications including hardware, software, and connectivity; be able to use technology in a responsible, ethical, and safe manner; and utilize technology for research, critical thinking, problem solving, decision-making, communication, collaboration, creativity, and innovation.

In sixth grade, the goal is to increase basic skill levels among all students through creative project work that increases their knowledge and comfort level, while allowing them to see the value in mastering technology tools. Students will be exposed to the following during the trimester course: proper keyboarding techniques and touch typing; keyboard shortcuts; basic troubleshooting; creating folders, moving-copying-deleting files/folders and saving to a flash drive; basic use of Paint and clipart creation; the fundamentals of word processing including planning, composing and revising writing via Microsoft Word/Docs; basic computer terminology; creation of digital graphic organizers via Google Docs Add on features; introduction to PowerPoint/Slides; and an introduction to the awareness of the nine elements of Digital Citizenship. Students will quickly realize that what they are learning in this course can be applied to all of their classes, as computer skills are life skills. Students are assessed via homework, quizzes, and project based assignments.

The content aspect of this course will be on-going and continually revised as the District's educational process continues to use information, technology, and other tools to enhance student learning. It is the Computer Education Program's objective to support all school curricula in the development of students who are problem solvers, information seekers and users, and effective communicators within both the real and digital world.

Schedule of Class: This is a trimester course that meets every other day.

7th Grade Classes

Core Content Classes

These classes meet every day for the full year

Course: English 7

Course Description: This course emphasizes preparation in critical thinking, reading comprehension, and the writing process. Required literary works include *A Christmas Carol*, *The Miracle Worker*, *Chasing Lincoln's Killer*. Additional texts include, *The Outsiders*, *Lyddie*, *The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, selections from other texts, selected poetry, short stories, nonfiction texts, grammar study, and vocabulary building.

Students work through five independent Literature Circle units and focus on narrative, informational, and persuasive writing. Speaking and listening standards are embedded into each unit. Study is aligned to the Learning Standards from the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks (2011) and students focus on reading and writing skills centered on the creation of Prose Constructed Responses, research projects, and writing that is scored on the Melrose Public Schools shared writing rubrics.

Primary Course Materials: * indicates a required text or unit of study

Anthology: Daniel, Kathleen, ed. *Elements of Literature: First Course*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 2000.

Novel/Novella: **A Christmas Carol* Charles Dickens, *The Outsiders* and *Lyddie*.

Independent and Literature Circle Reading texts include (but are not limited to):

Hope was Here, Joan Bauer

Inside Out and Back Again, Thanhha Lai

Life as We Knew It, Susan Beth Pfeffer

I Am Malala, Malala Yousafzai

Riot, Walter Dean Myers

Stargirl, Jerry Spinelli

Brown Girl Dreaming, Jacqueline Woodson

The Lion, The Witch, and The Wardrobe, C.S. Lewis

That Was Then, This Was Now, S.E. Hinton

The Contender, Robert Lipsyte

The House of the Scorpion, Nancy Farmer

The Skin I'm In, Sharon G. Flake

Things Not Seen, Andrew Clements

Unbroken, Laura Hillenbrand

Counting by 7s, Holly Goldberg Sloan

Essays/Nonfiction: *The Narrative of Frederick Douglass*, Frederick Douglass, *Chasing Lincoln's Killer*, James L. Swanson

Drama: **The Miracle Worker* William Gibson

Course: Ancient Civilizations – Grade 7

Course Description: The course covers the early history of humanity from the dawn of prehistory to the height of the Roman Empire. Topics include the origin of civilization in the river valley societies, the development of written language, the continuity and change of cultures of the Ancient World, as well as Classical Greece and its influence on Rome. Emphasis is placed on the acquisition and mastery of critical reasoning and writing skills as well as an introduction to primary source documents.

Primary Course Materials: *History Alive! The Ancient World*. The textbook is available for use online. Students will receive a username and password to access the text online.

Course: Math - Grade 7

Course Description: This course covers the learning standards for Grade 7 Math as described in the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. Students will gain knowledge in all content standards: Ratios and Proportional Relationships, The Number System, Expressions and Equations, Geometry, and Statistics and Probability. Topics include operations with rational

numbers and integers, solving one- and two-step equations, proportional relationships, percent, scale drawings, area, surface area and volume, probability, and drawing inferences. Students are expected to develop the skills to compute with accuracy and efficiency in arithmetic processes including operations with rational numbers, as well as build fluency with solving multistep problems and one-variable equations. Students will enhance their problem solving and communication skills as well as their proficiency with the mathematical practices.

Primary Course Materials: Textbook: *Kendall Hunt Math Innovations*. The textbook is available for use online. Students will receive a username and password to access the text online. A basic four-function calculator is required.

Course: Math- Grade 7/8 Compacted

Prerequisite/Criteria:

- An 85% or better score on the district placement test **AND** 3 of the 4 of the following criteria:
 - Average grade of “A-” or better in Grade 6 Advanced class or Average grade of “A” or better in Grade 6 Math class
 - An 85% or better on the mid-year
 - Advanced score on Math MCAS/PARCC
 - Teacher recommendation
- Students scoring above an 85% on the placement test, but not meeting 3 of the 4 criteria, will have their placement reviewed with the Department Placement Team (Department Director, Principal, and Teacher)
- Students scoring between and 80% and 84% and meeting 3 of the 4 other criteria will have their placement reviewed with the Department Placement Team (Department Director, Principal, and Teacher)

Students will be required to complete additional preparatory work over the summer.

Course Description: This course covers all standards from Grade 7 Math and a majority from Grade 8 Math as described in the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. Students take this course in preparation for Algebra 1 in eighth grade. This course expects a high degree of procedural fluency and conceptual understanding in K-6 math content as well as proficiency with mathematical practice standards. In this course, students are working to achieve mastery of the content. Students will gain knowledge in all content standards: Ratios and Proportional Relationships, The Number System, Expressions and Equations, Geometry, Statistics and Probability, and Functions. Seventh grade topics include operations with rational numbers and integers, solving one- and two-step equations, proportional relationships, percents, scale drawings, area, surface area and volume, probability, and drawing inferences. Eighth grade topics include operations with radicals and exponents, solving linear equations, systems of equations, linear functions, and bivariate data. Students are expected to achieve fluency with operations with rational numbers, solving multistep problems with positive and negative rational numbers, and solving linear equations as well as develop a solid foundation of proportional reasoning. Students will enhance their problem solving and communication skills as well as their proficiency with the mathematical practices. Since three years of content will be covered in two academic years, the pace of this course will be significantly faster than Grade 7 Math.

Primary Course Materials: Textbook: *Kendall Hunt Math Innovations*. The textbook is available for use online. Students will receive a username and password to access the text online. A basic four-function calculator is required.

Course: Science – Grade 7

Course Description: Students in grade 7 focus on systems and cycles using their understanding of structures and functions, connections and relationships in systems, and flow of matter and energy developed in earlier grades. A focus on systems and cycles are complex and interactive. They gain experience with plate tectonics, interactions of humans and Earth processes, organism systems to support and propagate life, ecosystem dynamics, motion and energy systems, and key technological systems used by society. Through grade 7 students begin a process of moving from a more concrete to an abstract perspective since many of the systems and cycles studied are not directly observable or experienced. This also creates a foundation for exploring cause and effect relationships in more depth in grade 8. Students enhance their problem solving and communication skills as they complete laboratory experiments that will include a focus on student design and inquiry skills.

Primary Course Materials: Textbook: *Pearson Interactive Science (Diversity of Life, Ecology, Earth’s Surface, Earth’s Structure, Introduction to Chemistry, Forces and Energy)*. The textbook is available for use online. Students will receive a username and password to access the text online.

Course: French - Grade 7

Course Description: This introductory course develops the foundation of basic proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Students are expected to participate actively in class through skits, written practice, and authentic, active listening. In addition, students are expected to spend 10-15 minutes daily outside of class time engaged in independent practice. Students will be assessed through common midyear and final exams that include speaking, listening, writing, and reading. Students will demonstrate their proficiency through the completion of one culture-based open response assignment in English, and one open response assignment in French of 3-5 sentences in length. Students will also demonstrate proficiency through one core assignment presented as a research project fusing digital literacy and presentation skills in English, and one core assignment in French.

Schedule of Class: Yearlong, meeting every other day.

Primary Course Materials: Primary text: *Bien Dit*; Additional resources: online supporting text resources; authentic cultural connections including music, maps, posters, videos; and other online resources.

Course: German - Grade 7

Course Description: This introductory course develops the foundation of basic proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Students are expected to participate actively in class through skits, written practice, and authentic active listening. In addition, students are expected to spend 10-15 minutes daily outside of class time engaged in independent practice. Students will be assessed through common midyear and final exams that include speaking, listening, writing, and reading. Students will demonstrate their proficiency through the completion of one culture-based open response assignment in English, and two open response assignments in German of 3-5 sentences in length. Students will also demonstrate proficiency through one core assignment presented as a research project fusing digital literacy and presentation skills in English, and two core assignments in German.

Schedule of Class: Yearlong, meeting every other day.

Primary Course Materials: Primary text: *Komm Mit*; Additional resources: online supporting text resources; authentic cultural connections including music, maps, posters, videos; and other online resources.

Course: Italian - Grade 7

Course Description: This introductory course develops the foundation of basic proficiency in the competencies of listening, reading, speaking, and writing. Students are expected to actively participate in class through authentic, active listening, individual and group oral presentations, and written practice. Furthermore, students are expected to spend approximately 10-15 minutes daily outside of class engaged in independent practice. Students will be informally evaluated periodically during each trimester through a series of oral and written quizzes/tests. In addition, students will be formally assessed through common mid-year and final examinations that include listening, reading, writing and speaking sections. Students will demonstrate their proficiency through the completion of one culture-based open response assignment in English, and two open response assignments in Italian of 3-5 sentences in length. Students will also demonstrate proficiency through one core assignment presented as a research project fusing digital literacy and presentation skills in English, and two core assignments in Italian.

Schedule of Class: Yearlong, meeting every other day.

Primary Course Materials: Primary text: *Salve!*; Additional resources: authentic cultural connections including music, maps, posters, videos; and other online resources

Course: Latin - Grade 7

Course Description: This introductory course develops the foundation of basic proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Students are expected to participate actively in class through skits, written practice, and authentic, active listening. In addition, students are expected to spend 10-15 minutes daily outside of class time engaged in independent practice. Students will be assessed through common midyear and final exams that include speaking, listening, writing, and reading. Students will demonstrate their proficiency through the completion of one culture-based open response assignment in English, and one open response assignment in Latin of 3-5 sentences in length. Students will also demonstrate proficiency through one core assignment presented as a research project fusing digital literacy and presentation skills in English, and one core assignment in Latin.

Schedule of Class: Yearlong, meeting every other day.

Primary Course Materials: Primary text: Cambridge Latin Course; Additional Resources: online supporting text resources

Course: Spanish - Grade 7

Course Description: This introductory course develops the foundation of basic proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Students are expected to participate actively in class through skits, written practice, and authentic, active listening. Furthermore, students are expected to spend additional time daily (10-15 minutes) outside of class engaged in independent practice. Students will be formally and informally assessed through common mid-year and final exams that include speaking, listening, writing, and reading sections. Students will demonstrate their proficiency through the completion of one culture-based open response assignment in English, and two open response assignments in Spanish of (minimum) 3-5 sentences in length. Students will also demonstrate proficiency through one core assignment presented as a research project fusing digital literacy and presentation skills in English, and 1 core assignment in Spanish.

Schedule of Class: Yearlong, meeting every other day

Primary Course Materials: Primary text: *Avancemos!*; Additional resources: online supporting text resources; authentic cultural connections including music, maps, posters, videos; and other online resources.

Challenge Classes - Grade 7

The duration of each course is one trimester meeting every day, unless otherwise noted

Challenge English 7

Course #1: Folktales and Fairy Tales

Course Description: Students will examine the development of the folk tale from the oral form to what is known as the literary fairy tale. They will explore the global, historical and cultural origins of folk and fairy tales and analyze the universality of folk tales by examining the role that they play in several cultures. The course will include an introduction to folk tales, literary fairy tales, critical essays, and films in order to come to a greater understanding of the complex cultural significance of folk and fairy tales.

Course #2: Poetry

Course Description: Students will read a variety of poetry representing many forms of poetry and writing from several cultures. They will study narrative and lyric poetry and try their hand at compositions in a wide variety of forms both stylized and free form. They will read and investigate the writing of several poets and, choosing one, they will compile a collection of poems by that poet as well as their personal responses to the work of that author. The culminating activity will be to present this collection.

Course #3: Creative Writing

Course Description: Creative writing classes are designed to provide opportunities for students to explore the creative process by working with multiple genres and appropriate literary devices to make something new and different, blending real-world experiences and memories of the writer to form imaginative pieces of writing. The curriculum emphasizes the integration of skills involving reading, writing, listening, and speaking with an eye to individualizing expectations for all student writers.

Course #4: Introduction to the Theater

Course Description: Students will learn about the history, styles, and fundamentals of stage performance. Along the way, they will read and act out scripts written by professional playwrights. The culminating activity is acting out a scene with a group. Students will study the value of plays throughout history and our modern society. They will compare and contrast some written genres versus their performed counterparts. Students will also learn the tools that playwrights and actors use to engage and orient an audience, establish a point of view, create conflict, and all of the essential elements of successful narrative writing.

Challenge Social Studies 7

Course #5: History's Mysteries

Course Description: In this course, students learn to "think like a historian." Employing many written sources as well as media, historical legends and mysteries are analyzed and discussed. Students overarching questions, hypotheses, evidence, and deductive reasoning to develop theories and draw conclusions. The course is assessed through class participation, discussion, and projects.

Course #6: Foundations of Belief: Introduction to Global Religions and Philosophy

Course Description: Curriculum for this is an introduction to the world's religious traditions and spiritual practices as well as the basic tenets of western and eastern philosophies. Topics of study may include the history, common origins, and belief systems of Judaism, Christianity, Islam; the monotheistic traditions of Hinduism and Shinto; the polytheistic basis of the Greco-Roman, Native American, African, and Aboriginal Australian mythologies; and lastly, New Age belief systems, the concepts of radical fundamentalism, and religious extremism.

In addition to an examination of religions, this course will also explore the foundational principles and practices of philosophy. Topics may include metaphysics, epistemology, political philosophy, ethics, and the philosophy of religion. With a historical lens we will read and reflect on texts by major Western and non-Western thinkers including Buddha, Confucius, Plato, Aristotle, Epicurus, Marcus Aurelius, Saint Anselm and Saint Aquinas, René Descartes, John Locke, Friedrich Nietzsche, Karl Marx, Jean-Paul Sartre, Albert Camus, William James, and Viktor Frankl.

The course aims to not only familiarize students with religions, philosophies, and their leaders but to also improve their ability to think critically about various issues, develop unique ideas about them, and express these ideas clearly and persuasively in writing. Curriculum for this course is meant to be an overview and academic understanding of religion and philosophy without advocating any one belief or system. Students are expected to complete 2-3 hours per week of independent practice such as homework, reading, and projects.

Ultimately we aim to consider some rather "Big Questions" about our world, our beliefs and how we fit into them. Keeping Project-Based Learning in mind such questions include: What characteristics make up a religion? What characteristics make up a philosophy? How does society impact religion and philosophy? How do religions and philosophies impact societies? Even more challenging will be the questions of self-examination and belief such as: What is the nature and purpose of existence? How can we best organize ourselves? What should we do with our lives? The answers to these questions are difficult and often elusive, however

the value for this course is found in the academic processes of our studies. In other words, it really will be all about the journey rather than the destination.

Course #7: Classical Thought

Course Description: The course focuses on developing critical thinking and public speaking skills for students eager to embrace a rigorous and demanding curriculum exploring the roots of modern history, science, and philosophy. Students will begin by exploring the origins of Western Civilization through a look at Greek culture and thought, investigating in depth topics such as government, philosophy, and history. Emphasis is placed on the acquisition and development of critical thinking through the inquiry process. Students will be encouraged to use research skills to develop their own topics of interest, investigating them thoroughly, and using this information to develop sophisticated presentations.

Primary Class Materials: Primary and Secondary Sources relating to the development of philosophy in Classical Athens, including selections from Plato's Republic and Apology.

Challenge Science 7

Course #8: Interactive Physics Lab

Course Description: How can you describe an object's motion? How do objects react to forces? How do machines make it easier to do work? How does an electric circuit work? How do magnets work? These are some of the essential questions students will be investigating during this class. Students will explore the concepts of motion, forces, work and machines, energy, electricity and magnetism. Inquiry based labs, interactive activities and projects will be the cornerstone of student learning. Students should be ready to become active participants in their physics education.

Intervention Classes – Grade 7

Course: Intervention Math

Prerequisite/Criteria: Placement is based on performance on state standardized testing and teacher recommendation. Course placement is revisited in the middle and end of each trimester using students' progress data.

Course Description: Students will receive structured, targeted instruction on foundational concepts that are critical to students' development of mathematical knowledge. Some of the modules are positive rational numbers, multiplying and dividing fractions, expressions, ratios and rates, and percents. This class supports students by filling in critical gaps of understanding and addressing misconceptions.

Schedule of Class: The class meets daily during A Block.

Course: Math Lab

Prerequisite/Criteria: Placement is based on a student's need for added support and time on learning to master current concepts in the seventh grade math class.

Course Description: This course is designed to support students who have demonstrated a need for additional instruction and practice with the content in their current math class. Teachers will re-teach or review the material that students are struggling with and provide students with individual support and guided practice that will aid students' success in their current math class. Teachers will address students' misconceptions and errors and present the information in alternative ways that will help students understand the material, including the use of manipulative and visuals. This course affords students additional time to practice and process the math content that they are currently learning.

Schedule of Class: The class meets daily during A Block or may be scheduled three times a cycle during an off team block.

Course: Intervention ELA Grade 7

Prerequisite/Criteria: Placement is based on performance on state standardized testing and teacher recommendation. Course placement is revisited in the middle and end of each trimester using students' progress data.

Course Description: Using the Literature Circle model, students will work in small learning groups to improve reading comprehension and facility. Readings will include nonfiction texts, dynamic fiction, essays, poetry, short stories, and a variety of other print materials. Students will focus on retrieving specific ideas, making inferences, interpreting and integrating information and ideas, and examining and evaluating text features. Participation in the class is intended to be fluid: the course provides support to students who read and write below their class level, but cyclic testing allows students to place out of the class when they have mastered these skills.

Schedule of Class: The class meets daily during A Block.

Course: Organization and Study Skills Intervention

Prerequisite/Criteria: Placement is based on established skill deficit or need and teacher recommendation. Course placement is revisited in the middle and end of each trimester using students' progress data.

Course Description: Students will learn how to organize themselves for the demands of middle school. Utilizing tools, such as the agenda book and online organizational tools, they will be guided on how to maintain a schedule and how to plan for projects and assignments. This is a class that helps students learn to organize, study and master information learned in the classroom and beyond. This course will teach students the tools and techniques they need to successfully learn the curriculum and the ability to apply these strategies to new learning situations. The goal is help students learn and enhance their skills, integrate new knowledge with previous learning, learn independently, and apply skills and knowledge to both new and familiar situations.

Schedule of Class: The class meets daily during A Block.

Electives – Grade 7

Course: Physical Education – Grade 7

Course Description: During all Physical Education classes, students are expected to actively participate to the best of their ability with a positive attitude and respect for their classmates and teachers. The Physical Education Department at the Middle School seeks to provide all students with an appreciation and foundation for lifetime fitness and participation in activity through the medium of movement. The primary goals of the program will be the acquisition of physical, social, psychological, and intellectual skills necessary for the appreciation and enjoyment of lifetime skills and recreational participation. Students will participate in a variety of individual, dual and team activities, each emphasizing the basic components necessary for participation. Exposure to a number of movement experiences, particularly those that may be unfamiliar to the student, will allow participants to select meaningful lifetime fitness and recreational activities in the future. Students will demonstrate their proficiency through test taking, peer/teacher assessments, and participation in the Fitness-gram. Students are required to wear athletic sneakers that are laced and tied appropriately.

Schedule of Class: Students meet every other day for a full year.

Course: Health – Grade 7

Course Description: Some students, but not all, will have previously taken sixth grade Health; therefore, some material may be reviewed. Students will develop a fundamental understanding of physical, social and mental health. Students will learn about the Health Triangle and the interconnection of physical, social and mental health; develop an understanding of the Respiratory System and learn about tobacco, its history, its impact on the body, marketing and promotion, addiction, and the development of refusal skills. Students will also learn about Public and Consumer Health and the role of public health agencies; violence and effective ways to promote the prevention of violence; and the developmental stages of the life cycle, with an emphasis on the physical and emotional changes connected with puberty. Students are expected to participate actively in class through listening, speaking, writing, reading, small group work, presentations, and skits. Students will demonstrate their proficiency through test taking, in-class and out-of-class written assignments, and presentations. All course content and skills will be developmentally appropriate for students at the seventh-grade level.

Schedule of Class: This is a trimester class that meets every other day.

Course: Fitness – Grade 7

Course Description: Fitness and physical activity is an important component of the Middle School curriculum. Good health is critical to the overall quality of life, and it is through health and physical education that students acquire knowledge and develop positive attitudes and behaviors that promote lifelong well-being. This course meets every other day for one trimester. The goals are; increase the quality and length of life; help develop responsibility and accountability toward personal fitness; and inform students of diseases and disorders associated with decreased aerobic and anaerobic activity. All course content and skills will be developmentally appropriate for students at the seventh-grade level.

Schedule of Class: This is a trimester class that meets every other day.

Course: First Aid/ CPR/ Sports Injuries – Grade 7

Course Description: This course will teach students the basic life support skills needed to render emergency care. Through discussions and hands on activities, students will gain the knowledge and skills to perform in an emergency situation, and perhaps even more important, learn what not to do. These tactics can make the difference between life, death, or permanent disability. During the First Aid portion the following topics may include: wounds, control of bleeding, splinting, burns, diabetes, heart disease and shock, musculoskeletal injuries, anaphylaxis shock, poisoning emergencies, and heat and cold emergencies.

Schedule of Class: This is a trimester class that meets every other day.

Course: Chorus – Grade 7

Course Description: Students learn to sing music from a wide variety of musical genres and cultures. Students will learn the basics of vocal production, music reading, and performance skills. Students will focus on the study of two-part music, as well as start beginning three-part music. Performance opportunities will arise in the form of choral concerts.

Schedule of Class: This class meets three times per cycle for the entire year.

Course: Band – Grade 7

Course Description: Students learn to play a wide variety of Band music together. Students will learn the basics of musical literacy and performance skills. Performance opportunities will arise in the form of band concerts.

Schedule of Class: This class meets three times per cycle for the entire year.

Course: Orchestra – Grade 7

Course Description: Orchestra is open to all students in grades 6-8 who play a stringed instrument (violin, viola, cello, bass), and meets by grade level. Orchestra provides an academic opportunity for participation in instrumental ensemble playing. Special attention is given to forming proper habits regarding ensemble routine. Students will work to develop their tone production, intonation, rhythm, critical listening, instrumental technique, and musical interpretation through skill study and participation. Exercises and repertoire explore major key signatures up to three sharps and flats. Throughout the middle school sequence, students will begin to develop shifting technique, the ability to tune their own instrument, and increasingly complex bow technique. Students will study and perform music from a variety of genres and time periods. In addition to evening concerts, students have the opportunity to perform at two school-wide assemblies throughout the year.

Schedule of Class: This class meets three times per cycle for the entire year.

Course: Art – Grade 7

Course Description: Students will expand their repertoire of 2D and 3D art processes, techniques, and materials with a focus on the range of effects possible within each medium. Students deepen their understanding of basic art materials such as drawing, clay, watercolor, and printmaking by examining each material in long-term assignments that scaffold skills and ideas studied in elementary school and 6th grade. Students will be able to recognize and utilize the elements of art and principles of design in their own work, and discuss the elements and principles for other students' work and historical artwork. Students will deepen their understanding of perspective techniques utilized by professional artists. Students will study facial and body proportions as well as different techniques for figure drawing in order to create self-portraits.

Schedule of Class: This is a trimester course that meets every other day.

Course: Painting – Grade 7

Course Description: Students will experiment with different painting mediums and techniques; acrylic techniques, watercolor techniques, and encaustic. Basic color theory is reviewed and expanded on to include mixing primaries, shades, tints, and hues. Students will learn the appropriate use for art tools and materials, and will demonstrate the proper maintenance of a personal workspace and supplies. During each project students will describe and analyze their own work and the work of others and will connect their analysis to interpretation and evaluation.

Schedule of Class: This is a trimester course that meets every other day.

Course: Technology Engineering – Grade 7

Course Description: Using a hands-on approach, students will explore the use of materials, tools, and machines, within the context of the Engineering Design Process, to develop and refine solutions that meet specific design constraints. Use the concept of systems engineering to model inputs, processes, outputs, and feedback among components of a transportation, structural, or communication system.. Students will be introduced to STEM principles, in particular basic physics, in order to better understand how the laws of nature significantly impact engineering designs and structural components. Students will keep an engineering journal to document their research, record their findings to investigations, show revisions of their ideas/designs to engineering challenges, and to reflect on what they have learned from these activities. Students will utilize the computer lab to draw three-dimensional designs, conduct research, and to communicate their findings.

Schedule of Class: This is a trimester course that meets every other day.

Course: Industrial Design – Grade 7

Course Description: Students will evaluate competing solutions to a given design problem using a decision matrix to determine how well each meets the criteria and constraints of the problem. Use a model of each solution to evaluate how variations in one or more design features, including size, shape, weight, or cost, may affect the function or effectiveness of the solution. Students will construct a prototype of a solution to a given design problem, generating and analyzing data from iterative testing and modification to optimize the object, tool, or process for its intended purpose.

Schedule of Class: This is a trimester course that meets every other day.

Course: Computers and Digital Literacy– Grade 7

Course Description: Students develop skills in technology literacy guided by the Massachusetts Technology Literacy Standards. By the end of middle school, students should be proficient in the use of computers and applications including hardware, software, and connectivity; be able to use technology in a responsible, ethical, and safe manner; and utilize technology for research, critical thinking, problem solving, decision-making, communication, collaboration, creativity, and innovation. In all three grades, students learn to use the computer to compose and revise their writing.

Students in seventh grade will continue to build touch-typing skills, without looking at their hands and following proper technique. The goal is to improve form, increase speed, and decrease errors. Although it is helpful when the student has preceded the class with the sixth grade, trimester-long course, it is not a prerequisite. Over the course of the trimester, students produce various independent and group projects to show mastery of a variety of topics including: creating, analyzing, and interpreting data **via Microsoft Excel and Sheets**; creating digital graphic organizers where new products are planned, created and brought to life through advertisements using **Google Docs and add-on features**; gathering technology rich informational text to analyze and draw new ideas and conclusions using **Microsoft Word**; a more in-depth unit on the 9 elements of **Digital Citizenship** is built upon and reinforced; and planning, building and viewing a multimedia presentation to communicate a theme using **Google Slides**. Students are assessed via homework, quizzes, and project based assignments.

The content aspect of this course will be on-going and continually revised as the District's educational process continues to use information, technology, and other tools to enhance student learning. It is the Computer Education Program's objective to support all school curricula in the development of students who are problem solvers, information seekers and users, and effective communicators within both the real and digital world.

Schedule of Class: This is a trimester course that meets every other day.

Course: Reading & Literature – Grade 7

Course Description: This course provides students with opportunities to engage in a variety of literature (both fiction and non-fiction). Some texts will be self-selected by students based on interest. Students will participate in group discussions about text and respond in writing and using a variety formats or media to present central ideas and themes of text. The primary focal points of the class are to enhance student appreciation for reading, build vocabulary and improve general comprehension skills. This class may be repeated during the year because of the variation of text selected.

Schedule of Class: This is a trimester course that meets three times per seven day cycle.

8th Grade Classes

Core Content Classes

These classes meet every day for the full year

Course: English 8

Course Description: This course concentrates on the writing of structured expository and persuasive papers and on the critical reading of plays, essays, novels, and poetry. Verb usage and review of tenses are included in order for students to add polish to their writing. Literature will include *The Diary of Anne Frank*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Our Town*, *Anthem*, *The Giver*, *Metamorphosis*, and a variety of short stories, poems, and non-fiction texts. Students will also spend part of the year working on the study of literature and nonfiction in the literature circle format. Students should expect to complete nine responses to short reading passages in preparation for standardized testing. Students can expect to complete one to three hours of independent work such as reading, writing, and project work each week, and study is aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks (2011).

Primary Course Materials: *The Diary of Anne Frank* (screenplay and diary excerpts), *Our Town*, *Metamorphosis*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Giver*, *Anthem*, and other complementary texts.

Course: English 8 Accelerated

Prerequisite/Criteria:

- Advanced score on 7th grade MCAS/PARCC,
- B+ average or better 7th grade Advanced English or an A average or better in 7th grade English
- A score of 3 or higher on placement exam,
- 90% or higher on Mid-year exam &
- Department approval/Teacher recommendation

Course Description: This course concentrates on the writing of structured expository and persuasive papers and on the critical reading of plays, essays, novels, and poetry. Verb usage and review of tenses are included in order for students to add sophistication to their writing. Students are expected to have mastered the reading and writing skills that allow them to work independently. Literature will include *The Diary of Anne Frank*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Metamorphosis*, *The Cay*, *Our Town*, *Anthem*, *A Solitary Blue*, and *The Giver* and a variety of short stories, poems, and nonfiction texts. Students will also spend part of the year working on the study of literature and nonfiction in the literature circle format. Students should expect to complete nine responses to short reading passages in preparation for standardized testing. Students can expect to complete three or more hours of independent work such as reading, writing, and project work each week, and study is aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks (2011).

Primary Course Materials: *The Diary of Anne Frank* (screenplay and diary excerpts), *Our Town*, *Metamorphosis*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Giver*, *Anthem*, and other complementary texts.

Course: World History I – Grade 8

Course Description: This course examines the development of world civilizations after the fall of the Roman Empire. Students study the history of the major empires and political entities of this period: the Islamic Empire, the Byzantine Empire, Medieval Europe and the major pre-Columbian civilizations that existed in Central and South America. Students examine the important political, economic, and religious developments of this period, including the development of Christianity and Islam, the conflicts between them in different parts of the world, and the beginnings of European influence on the Western Hemisphere. Finally, students study the development of democratic, scientific, and secular thought in European history. To the extent practical, students study the origins and development of major civilizations in Africa, India and East Asia.

Primary Course Materials: Textbook: *World History: The Human Experience* (2001) Glencoe. **Secondary Material:** TCI *History Alive!* World History Program Supplemental Materials

Course: Math - Grade 8

Course Description: This course covers all standards from Grade 8 Math as described in the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. Students will gain knowledge in the following domains: The Number System, Expressions and Equations, Functions, Geometry, and Statistics and Probability. Topics include operations with radicals and exponents, solving linear equations, systems of equations, linear functions, angle pair relationships, congruence, similarity, Pythagorean Theorem, volume, transformations, and bivariate data. Students are expected to build fluency with solving linear equations, modeling and representing linear functions, and using a set of geometric measurement skills as well as develop a solid foundation of proportional reasoning. Students will enhance their problem solving and communication skills as well as their proficiency with the mathematical practices.

Primary Course Materials: *Math Innovations Kendall Hunt*. The textbook is available for use online. Students will receive a username and password to access the text online. A scientific calculator is required.

Course: Math – Algebra I – HS Model

Prerequisite/Criteria:

- An 85% or better score on the placement/Algebra readiness test **AND** 3 of the 4 of the following criteria:
 - Average grade of “A-” or better in Grade 7 Advanced class or Average grade of “A” or better in Grade 7 Math class
 - An 85% or better on the mid-year
 - Advanced score on Math MCAS/PARCC
 - Teacher recommendation
- Students scoring above an 85% on the placement test, but not meeting 3 of the 4 criteria, will have their placement reviewed with the Department Placement Team (Department Director, Principal, and Teacher)
- Students scoring between and 80% and 84% and meeting 3 of the 4 other criteria will have their placement reviewed with the Department Placement Team (Department Director, Principal, and Teacher)

Students will be required to complete additional preparatory work over the summer.

Course Description – This course covers all standards from HS Model Algebra 1 as described in the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. This course expects a high degree of procedural fluency and conceptual understanding in K-8 math content as well as proficiency with mathematical practice standards. In this course, students are working to achieve mastery of the content. Students will gain knowledge in the following domains: The Real Number System, Quantities, Seeing Structure in Expressions, Arithmetic with Polynomials and Rational Expressions, Creating Equations, Reasoning with Equations and Inequalities, Interpreting Functions, Building Functions, Linear, Quadratic, and Exponential Models, and Interpreting Categorical and Quantitative Data. Topics include linear and nonlinear relationships, systems of linear and nonlinear equations, operations with polynomials, exponential functions, quadratic functions, piece-wise functions, and descriptive statistics. Students are expected to achieve fluency with modeling linear and nonlinear functions, adding, subtracting, and multiplying polynomials, and transforming expressions. Students will enhance their problem solving and communication skills as well as their proficiency with the mathematical practices.

Primary Course Materials: **Textbook:** *Pearson Algebra 1 Common Core*. The textbook is available for use online. Students will receive a username and password to access the text online. A graphing calculator is required.

Course: Science – Grade 8

Course Description: Grade 8 students use more robust abstract thinking skills to explain causes of complex phenomena and systems. Many causes are not immediately or physically visible to students. An understanding of cause and effect of key natural phenomena and designed processes allows students to explain patterns and make predictions about future events. In grade 8 these include, for example, causes of seasons and tides, causes of plate tectonics and weather or climate, the role of genetics in reproduction, heredity, and artificial selection, and how atoms and molecules interact to explain the substances that make up the world and how materials change. Being able to analyze phenomena for evidence of causes and processes that often cannot be seen, and being able to conceptualize and describe those, is a significant outcome for grade 8 students. Students enhance their problem solving and communication skills as they complete laboratory experiments that will include a focus on student design and inquiry skills.

Primary Course Materials: **Textbook:** *Pearson Interactive Science (Cell Structure and Function, Ecology, Water and the Atmosphere, Astronomy and Space Science, Introduction to Chemistry, Forces and Energy)*. The textbook is available for use online. Students will receive a username and password to access the text online.

Course: French - Grade 8

Course Description: This course further develops basic proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Students are expected to participate actively in class through spontaneous speaking, written practice (French paragraphs and translation), and authentic, active listening. In addition, students are expected to spend 15-20 minutes daily outside of class time engaged in independent practice. Students will be assessed through common midyear and final exams that include speaking, listening, writing, and reading. Students will demonstrate their proficiency through three open response assignments in French of (minimum) 5-8 sentences in length. Students will also demonstrate proficiency through one core assignment presented as a research project fusing digital literacy and presentation skills in English, and two core assignments in French.

Prerequisite/Criteria: Completion of French 7.

Schedule of Class: Yearlong, meeting every day.

Primary Course Materials: Primary text: *Bien Dit*

Additional resources: online supporting text resources; authentic cultural connections including music, maps, posters, videos; and other online resources.

Course: German - Grade 8

Course Description: This course further develops basic proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Students are expected to participate actively in class through spontaneous speaking, written practice (German paragraphs and translation), and authentic active listening. In addition, students are expected to spend 15-20 minutes daily outside of class time engaged in independent practice. Students will be assessed through common midyear and final exams that include speaking, listening, writing, and reading. Students will demonstrate their proficiency through three open response assignments in German of (minimum) 5-8 sentences in length. Students will also demonstrate proficiency through one core assignment presented as a research project fusing digital literacy and presentation skills in English, and two core assignments in German.

Prerequisite/Criteria: Completion of German 7.

Schedule of Class: Yearlong, meeting every day.

Primary Course Materials: Primary text: *Komm Mit*

Additional resources: online supporting text resources; authentic cultural connections including music, maps, posters, videos; and other online resources.

Course: Italian - Grade 8

Course Description: This course further develops the foundation of basic proficiency in the competencies of listening, reading, speaking, and writing. Students are expected to actively participate in class through authentic, active listening, spontaneous speaking, individual and group oral presentations, and written practice (Italian paragraphs and translation). Furthermore, students are expected to spend approximately 15-20 minutes daily outside of class engaged in independent practice. Students will be informally evaluated periodically during each trimester through a series of oral and written quizzes/tests. In addition, students will be formally assessed through common mid-year and final examinations that include listening, reading, writing and speaking sections. Students will demonstrate their proficiency through the completion of one culture-based open response assignment in English, and three open response assignments in Italian of a minimum of 5-8 sentences in length. Students will also demonstrate proficiency through one core assignment presented as a research project fusing digital literacy and presentation skills in English, and two core assignments in Italian.

Prerequisite/Criteria: Completion of Italian 7

Schedule of Class: Yearlong, meeting every day

Primary Course Materials: Primary text: *Salve!*

Additional resources: authentic cultural connections including music, maps, posters, videos; and other online resources

Course: Spanish - Grade 8

Course Description: This course further develops basic proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Students are expected to participate actively in class through spontaneous speaking, written practice (Spanish paragraphs and translation), and authentic, active listening. Furthermore, students are expected to spend additional time daily (15-25 minutes) outside of class time engaged in independent practice. Students will be assessed through common mid-year and final exams that include speaking, listening, writing, and reading. Students will demonstrate their proficiency through three open response assignments in Spanish of (minimum) 5-8 sentences in length. Students will also demonstrate proficiency through one core assignment presented as a research project fusing digital literacy and presentation skills in English, and two core assignments in Spanish.

Prerequisite/Criteria: Completion of Spanish 7

Schedule of Class: Yearlong, meeting every day

Primary Course Materials: Primary text: *Avancemos!*

Additional resources: online supporting text resources; authentic cultural connections including music, maps, posters, videos; and other online resources

Challenge Classes – Grade 8

The duration of these classes is one trimester meeting every day unless otherwise noted.

Challenge English 8

Course # 1: Film as Literature

Course Description: In this elective, students will examine the literature of film, using the career of Steven Spielberg to provide the structure for the course. Students already know about figurative language in stories and poetry—things like similes and onomatopoeia—but movies have their own, “figurative devices”. These tools include everything from camera movement, to the music, and a lot more in between. In this course students will explore these tools and discover how filmmakers like Spielberg use them to tell their stories in the most compelling way possible. Students will complete a research project exploring one of the many film industry vocations. Students will also create a “mini-script” using the proper format for a motion picture script. Other assignments include writing a film review, and comparing and contrasting Spielberg’s *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* with Stanley Kubrick’s groundbreaking *2001: A Space Odyssey*. Students will also complete dialectical journal entries as a response to feature films and documentary films.

Course # 2: The Writing of Lois Duncan

Course Description: Duncan is best known for her novels of suspense written for teenagers. Some of her works have been adapted for the screen, the most famous example being the 1997 film *I Know What You Did Last Summer*, adapted from her novel of the same title. The ALA Margaret A. Edwards Award recognizes one writer and a particular body of work for “significant and lasting contribution to young adult literature.” Duncan won the annual award in 1992, and young adult librarians now name six books Duncan published from 1966 to 1987 as worthy of the Edwards Award, the autobiographical *Chapters* and five novels: *Ransom*, *I Know What You Did Last Summer*, *Summer of Fear*, *Killing Mr. Griffin*, and *The Twisted Window*. The citation observes, “Whether accepting responsibility for the death of an English teacher or admitting to their responsibility for a hit and run accident, Duncan’s characters face a universal truth – your actions are important and you are responsible for them.”

Course #3 - Public Speaking

Course Description: One of the keys to future success is effective communication. This course will provide instruction in both composing and delivering speeches in a variety of settings. In preparation there will be an emphasis on research, persuasive techniques in both writing and speaking, and the use of technology to create info graphics as a visual aid. Through the instruction phase, students will have the opportunity to read, listen to, and watch some of the great orators of history. Students will be expected to write two comprehensive speeches, based on thorough research, on a topic of their choosing. They will be presenting one of those two speeches to an audience. The course work will also be accompanied by an independent reading project that gives insight to the work of speechwriters behind some of the most influential speeches of all time. After completing this course students will have furthered the speaking, listening, and social skills imperative to being successful communicators in academic settings, in the community, and beyond.

Challenge Social Studies 8

Course #4: Civics in Action

Course Description: This course is an examination of the United States political process and institutions, and the individual's role in that process. Topics include an examination of current local, state and federal political issues and leaders. Students will learn about civic responsibility and have an opportunity to apply what they have learned by participating in an action research project.

Challenge Science 8

Course #5: Science Current Events

Course Description: Major discoveries are made daily, almost hourly in the realm of science. In the 8th grade challenge course, we will be analyzing some of these new ideas. Throughout the trimester you will be asked to: research science subjects, summarize articles, prepare poster projects, present information, debate topics, create public service announcements (PSAs) and prepare newsletters. The areas of science include: Astronomy, Physical/Chemical Science, Heredity & Earth Science. This course is designed to support both mastery of science content and the standards for literacy in science and technical subjects. This course can be repeated a 2nd time in the year as the content changes.

Challenge: Global Languages

Course #6: Latin I

Prerequisite/Criteria: Students enrolling in Latin I should express the desire to continue their study of Latin at Melrose High School. If the number of interested students exceeds the number of places in Latin I, preference will first be given to those students who have maintained at least an 85% average in their most recent Global Language class. If the number of interested students still exceeds the number of places in Latin I, preference will next be given to those students concurrently enrolled in Accelerated English.

Course Description: This course provides students with one and one half years of Latin instruction based on the Cambridge Latin Course series. Students will learn the fundamentals of Latin grammar and vocabulary, and develop fluency in reading and summarizing Latin through active class participation and 3-5 hours per week in independent practice. Students will be expected to complete four open response assignments of 1-2 paragraphs in length, and deliver four core assignment summary assignments. This class is taught at Melrose High School by a Melrose High School Latin teacher and attended by Melrose High School Students. It is strongly encouraged that students who register for this class continue with their Latin studies at Melrose High School.

Schedule of Class: This class meets daily during A Block for the entire year. Students enrolled in this class will NOT attend Extended Team Time. Students who wish to withdraw from Latin I may do so at the conclusion of Trimester 1 or Trimester 2.

Primary Course Materials: Primary Text: Cambridge Latin Course; Additional Resources: online supporting text resources

Intervention Classes – Grade 8

Course: Intervention Math

Prerequisite/Criteria: Placement is based on performance on state standardized tests and teacher recommendation. Course placement is revisited in the middle and end of each trimester using students' progress data.

Course Description: Students will receive structured, targeted instruction on foundational concepts that are critical to students' development of mathematical knowledge. Some of the modules are positive and negative numbers, equations and inequalities, solving problems using expressions and equations, patterns and graphs, proportional reasoning, and geometry. This class supports students by filling in critical gaps of understanding and addressing misconceptions.

Schedule of Class: The class meets daily during A Block.

Course: Math Lab

Prerequisite/Criteria: Placement is based on a student's need for added support and time on learning to master current concepts in the eighth grade math class.

Course Description: This course is designed to support students who have demonstrated a need for additional instruction and practice with the content in their current math class. Teachers will re-teach or review the material that students are struggling with and provide students with individual support and guided practice that will aid students' success in their current math class. Teachers will address students' misconceptions and errors and present the information in alternative ways that will help students understand the material including the use of manipulative and visuals. This course affords students additional time to practice and process the math content that they are currently learning.

Schedule of Class: The class meets daily during A Block or may be scheduled three times a cycle during an off team block.

Course: Intervention ELA

Prerequisite/Criteria: Placement is based on performance on state standardized tests and teacher recommendation. Course placement is revisited in the middle and end of each trimester using students' progress data.

Course Description: Using the Literature Circle model, students will work in small learning groups to improve reading comprehension and facility. Readings will include nonfiction texts, dynamic fiction, essays, poetry, short stories, and a variety of other print materials. Students will focus on retrieving specific ideas, making inferences, interpreting and integrating information and ideas, and examining and evaluating text features. Participation in the class is intended to be fluid: the course provides support to students who read and write below their class level, but cyclic testing allows students to place out of the class when they have mastered these skills.

Schedule of Class: The class meets daily during A Block.

Electives – Grade 8

Course: Physical Education/Wellness – Grade 8

Course Description: The eighth grade wellness class blends the disciplines of health and physical education. Students are taught to lead a meaningful and healthy lifestyle by introducing them to physical activity, knowledge, habits and conduct that will serve to improve their quality of life. Curriculum for eighth grade wellness presents developmentally appropriate material to address health content areas and presents team and individual activities that aid students in developing a positive attitude and appreciation of physical activity. Examples of health topics covered in the classroom throughout the course are: personal and mental health, stress management, tobacco, alcohol, other substances use and abuse, growth and development and healthy relationships, etc. Examples of activities that may be covered during the physical education portion of the course include cooperative games and team building, fitness testing, flag football, basketball, volleyball, pickle ball, floor hockey, ultimate Frisbee/Can Jam and whiffle ball. Students will demonstrate their proficiency through test taking, peer/teacher assessment, in class and out of class assignments, participation in the Fitness-gram, presentations, and projects.

Schedule of Class: Students meet every other day for a full year with some days in the classroom setting and some in the Gymnasium and outside.

Course: Fitness – Grade 8

Course Description: Fitness and physical activity is an important component of the Middle School's curriculum. Good health is critical to the overall quality of life, and it is through health and physical education that students acquire knowledge and develop positive attitudes and behaviors that promote lifelong well-being. The course will meet every other day for one trimester. The goals are: increase the quality and length of life, help develop responsibility and accountability towards personal fitness, and develop proper nutrition choices. All course content and skills will be developmentally appropriate for students at the eighth grade level.

Schedule of Class: This is a trimester course that meets every other day.

Course: First Aid/ CPR/ Sports Injuries – Grade 8

Course Description: This course will teach students the basic life support skills needed to render emergency care. Through discussions and hands on activities, students will gain the knowledge and skills to perform in an emergency situation, and perhaps even more important, learn what not to do. These tactics can make the difference between life, death, or permanent disability. During the First Aid portion the following topics may include: wounds, control of bleeding, splinting, burns, diabetes, heart disease and shock, musculoskeletal injuries, anaphylaxis shock, poisoning emergencies, and heat and cold emergencies.

Schedule of Class: This is a trimester course that meets every other day.

Course: Chorus – Grade 8

Course Description: In Chorus, students learn to sing music from a wide variety of musical genres and cultures. Students will learn the basics of vocal production, music reading, and performance skills. Students will refine skills learned in seventh grade chorus, with a focus on three part mixed repertoire. During the second half of the year, students will have the opportunity to experience simple four-part harmony, in preparation for the High School Choral program. Performance opportunities will arise in the form of choral concerts.

Schedule of Class: This class meets three times per cycle for the entire year.

Course: Band – Grade 8

Course Description: Students learn to play a wide variety of Band music together. Students will learn the basics of musical literacy and performance skills. Performance opportunities will arise in the form of band concerts.

Schedule of Class: This class meets three times per cycle for the entire year.

Course: Orchestra – Grade 8

Course Description: Orchestra is open to all students in grades 6-8 who play a stringed instrument (violin, viola, cello, bass), and meets by grade level. Orchestra provides an academic opportunity for participation in instrumental ensemble playing. Special attention is given to forming proper habits regarding ensemble routine. Students will work to develop their tone production, intonation, rhythm, critical listening, instrumental technique, and musical interpretation through skill study and participation. Exercises and repertoire explore major key signatures up to three sharps and flats. Throughout the middle school sequence, students will begin to develop shifting technique, the ability to tune their own instrument, and increasingly complex bow technique. Students will study and perform music from a variety of genres and time periods. In addition to evening concerts, students have the opportunity to perform at two school-wide assemblies throughout the year.

Schedule of Class: This class meets three times per cycle for the entire year.

Course: Art – Grade 8

Course Description: Students will expand their repertoire of 2D and 3D art processes, techniques, and materials with a focus on the range of effects possible within each medium. Students deepen their understanding of basic art materials such as drawing, clay, watercolor, and printmaking by examining each material in long-term assignments that scaffold skills and ideas studied in elementary school and 6th and 7th grade. Students will be able to recognize and utilize the elements of art and principles of design in their own work, and discuss the elements and principles for other students' work and historical artwork. Students will examine the works of historic artists as well as contemporary artwork as it relates to their own work. Students will deepen their understanding of art, create a working definition of art, what makes art good, what makes art bad as well as look at the historical context of art and the contemporary art world.

Schedule of Class: This is a trimester course that meets every other day.

Course: 3D - Art – Grade 8

Course Description: Students will expand their repertoire of 3D art processes, techniques, and materials with a focus on the range of effects possible within this medium. In this multimedia class, students will apply themselves to the processes involved in solving visual problems three-dimensionally. Students will analyze and describe the kinds of imagery used to represent subject matter and ideas, demonstrate their ability to articulate criteria for artistic work, describe personal style, assess and reflect on work orally and in writing, and revise work based on criteria developed in the classroom. Students will propose their own designs, revise their designs based on teacher and fellow student recommendations and execute this revised design in a final piece.

Schedule of Class: This is a trimester course that meets every other day.

Course: Technology Engineering – Grade 8

Course Description: Using a hands-on approach, students will explore materials, tools, and manufacturing to understand how materials can be created, refined, formed and shaped to meet the specific needs of a design constraint. Students will explore how a machine converts energy, through mechanical means, to do work. Students will keep an engineering journal to document their research, record their findings to investigations, show revisions of their ideas and designs to engineering challenges, and reflect on what they have learned from these activities. Students will utilize the computer lab to draw three-dimensional designs, conduct research, and to communicate their findings.

Schedule of Class: This is a trimester course that meets every other day.

Course: Industrial Design – Grade 8

Course Description: Students will use informational text to illustrate that materials maintain their composition under various kinds of physical processing; however, some material properties may change if a process changes the particulate structure of a material. Students will present information that illustrates how a product can be created using basic processes in manufacturing systems, including forming, separating, conditioning, assembling, finishing, quality control, and safety. Compare the advantages and disadvantages of human vs. computer control of these processes.

Schedule of Class: This is a trimester course that meets every other day.

Course: Computers and Digital Literacy – Grade 8

Course Description: Students develop skills in technology literacy guided by the Massachusetts Technology Literacy Standards. By the end of middle school, students should be proficient in the use of computers and applications including hardware, software, and connectivity; be able to use technology in a responsible, ethical, and safe manner; and utilize technology for research, critical thinking, problem solving, decision-making, communication, collaboration, creativity, and innovation.

Although it is helpful when the student has preceded the class with the sixth grade and seventh grade, trimester-long class, it is not a prerequisite. In this class, students will utilize computers and current technologies to collect information, increase their knowledge, and create projects to build independence. A solid working knowledge of many computer programs and applications will be built in order to prepare students for a future in either a college or career setting. Students will extend their knowledge of content from prior grades and use both basic and more advanced techniques to complete more complex tasks through a series of long-term projects. Students will continue to build and refine touch typing skills, without looking at their hands and following proper technique. During the trimester, students will review their skills while using various components of the **Microsoft Office Suite** (including **Word, Excel and PowerPoint, Access**). They will be also be introduced to **Google Forms, Add ons in these apps** and **Google Sites** and experiment with **computer coding**. Using safe and ethical online practices is again reinforced and expanded using the 9 Elements of **Digital Citizenship**. Students are assessed via homework, quizzes, and project based assignments.

The content aspect of this course will be on-going and continually revised as the District's educational process continues to use information, technology, and other tools to enhance student learning. It is the Computer Education Program's objective to support all school curricula in the development of students who are problem solvers, information seekers and users, and effective communicators within both the real and digital world.

Schedule of Class: This is a trimester course that meets every other day.

Course: Reading & Literature – Grade 8

Course Description: This course provides students with opportunities to engage in a variety of literature (both fiction and non-fiction). Some texts will be self-selected by students based on interest. Students will participate in group discussions about text and respond in writing and using a variety formats or media to present central ideas and themes of text. The primary focal points of the class are to enhance student appreciation for reading, build vocabulary and improve general comprehension skills. This class may be repeated during the year because of the variation of text selected.

Schedule of Class: This is a trimester course that meets three times per seven day cycle.

Supports for Students on Individualized Education Programs

Supports for students who qualify for an Individualized Education Programs (IEP) through the Special Education Eligibility process are determined by the team as to what is necessary for a student to make progress in the least restrictive environment. Individual accommodations and modifications for the general education classroom and curriculum may be considered written into the IEP. Services and programmatic placements are provided in the general education classroom, the skills based classroom, and in a substantially separate setting, when appropriate.

Below are some of the *specific programs and classes* beyond in-class support that we can provide to students who require services in a small group setting for part of the day.

- **Learning Strategies Class** – offered three times in a cycle to work on building independence with skills and strategies to learn content, prepare for tests and assessments, and utilize tools for organization and greater understanding of general concepts.
- **Academic Support** – offered three times in a cycle to help students understand content specific skills in Math or Literacy so they can continue to make effective progress in the grade level curriculum. Content can be previewed and often retaught and reviewed.
- **ACCESS Program** – The ACCESS program is for students who require additional adult support to manage their school day and the academic demands placed on them. The time spent in this program will vary depending on the individual needs of the students. Content can be delivered through the ACCESS program but the goal is to have the student fully integrated into the core content areas for their grade level, while utilizing the supports in the program to make effective progress.
- **Student Success Program - SSC** – This program provides individualized student support with self-management and interpersonal skills. The goal is to have students fully engaged in the academic demands of a grade level, while building personal skills to manage their emotions and interpersonal interactions with peers and adults so they can make effective progress.
- **Language Based Learning Program** – LBC- This program offers students with a Language Based Learning Disability a smaller setting to learn English and math content using best practices for students with this type of disability. The students are then supported in other core content areas and provided with additional time and support to break down assignments and make effective progress.
- **Developmental Learning Program** – This classroom provides students with a highly individualized network of supports to address specific academic, social and functional goals. The students integrate into general education classrooms with support when appropriate for both academic and social purposes.

Supports for All Students

Social, Emotional, and Transitional Supports

Throughout a student's experience in Middle School, there will be times and scenarios where added support or guidance is needed to help students make sense of his/her school environment, peer relationships, adult relationships, school performance, and preparation for their future. MVMMS is continually developing programming, both short and long term, to help our students with these transitions and adjustments. Supports are provided to large groups of students, small groups, peer groups, or one to one.

- Three Guidance Counselors support students with classroom and scheduling needs, preparations for future decisions, partnering with families and supporting agencies, and providing guidance to students when dealing with any social or emotional issue.
- Two School Psychologists provide detailed assessments and analysis of support needed for a student to be successful in school. They also provide consultation with professional staff and guidance to students needing more intensive in-school support.
- Lunch Groups for Social Development and Peer Relations
- A Positive Behavior Intervention System (PBIS) promotes the positive actions of students and staff which is based on identified characteristics and expectations for students. A more monitored and supported framework is used for students who need it, in order for them to meet these expectations using personalized goals and more frequent assessment of success.
- Partnerships with surrounding agencies providing therapists during the school day
- Partnership with Melrose Alliance Against Violence (MAAV) for a community mentoring program where students are paired with a trained and trusted adult from the community. MAAV also supports the school by providing whole school and grade level assemblies with guest speakers and presentations.
- Partnership with Melrose Substance Abuse and Prevention Coalition for counseling and family resources and providing support for whole school and grade level assemblies with guest speakers and presentations.
- Transitional Program classroom (short term – 3-7 days) for students stepping down from outside therapeutic treatment programs.

Academic Supports

- District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP) which outlines all accommodations and supports that are available to any student. The DCAP is a resource for teachers and parents when considering methods to meet the needs of any student.
- Instructional Support Team (IST) is a problem solving team which uses a process where teachers refer a student to outline a plan of action to address immediate areas of academic or social/emotional need.
- Tiered instruction is a practice used in classrooms to differentiate the work and assignments for students who have demonstrated mastery of a concept or require additional practice in order to master a concept
- A Block Intervention Classes for Literacy, Math and Organization to provide focused skill based instruction and tutorial for students who have demonstrated a deficit in a particular area.
- A Block Challenge Classes to provide all students the opportunity to immerse themselves in rigorous work related to key content areas. These classes focus on speaking, listening and research skills and encourage students to take academic risks.
- After School help sessions with teachers – each teacher offers 30 minutes twice per week.
- Open and supervised Library and Computer lab after school each day until 4:00 P.M.
- Math Lab Class to support students in their current math class. This class provides added time and instruction to review taught concepts so all students can aim for success with grade level standards and expectations.