

WELCOME TO



North Salem Middle School

Preparing for 8th Grade

Class of 2016

MISSION AND BELIEFS

Engage students to continuously learn, question, define and solve problems through critical and creative thinking.

In pursuit of this, we believe that:

- All students are capable of learning
- All students are supported and challenged to continuously improve
- Academic, intra and interpersonal skills are essential for success
- The learning environment must be safe, ethical and respectful
- Everyone in the community shares responsibility for student development
- We must continue to hire and retain staff of the highest quality
- Collaboration, data and evidence guide decision-making.

NORTH SALEM MIDDLE SCHOOL

PHILOSOPHY

North Salem Middle School is committed to providing a high performing, standards-focused middle level program that successfully balances the intellectual development and academic achievement of all students and the personal and social development of each student.

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CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS

A. Social Studies

Grade 6

- Examination of the people, cultures, geography, and a history of the Eastern Hemisphere (Europe, Asia, Africa, Australia)
- Continued emphasis on skill development including note taking, critical reading and thinking, reading comprehension, map reading, creative writing, research techniques, and document-based questions
- Interdisciplinary (English/Social Studies) lessons and units including the Medieval Period and involving the reading of the novel, *Crispin*
- Research projects emphasizing a multi-disciplinary approach and presentations culminating in live learning events. Previous examples have included the Halloween Historical Contest, the Disabilities Workshop, and the Medieval Exhibition.

Grade 7

- Units of study include Colonial Era through the Civil War Era. The history of New York State will be discussed when appropriate
- Emphasis on a multi-disciplinary approach to American History to promote an ability to interpret and analyze data in various formats and to separate fact from opinion and propaganda
- Develop an understanding of American democracy in a chronological approach. Areas of focus include geography, history, politics, social problems and economics
- Value the principles and ideals of a democratic system based upon the premises of human dignity, liberty, justice and equality
- Participate as informed citizens in the political and economic systems of the United States
- Celebrate our American heritage through interdisciplinary activities correlating to visits to Plymouth and Boston, Massachusetts.

Grade 8

- **Continued chronological study of American and New York State history started in grade 7. The history of Canada and Mexico will be discussed when appropriate in order to provide students a model for the global studies they will have in grades 9 and 10.**
- **Units of study to emphasize history, geography, politics, social problems and economics.**

- **Current events to interpret the foundations of our government and continue the development of an understanding and appreciation of American democracy.**
- **Continued development of social studies skills using factual information to think critically, make inferences, draw conclusions and make value judgments.**
- **Interdisciplinary (English/Social Studies) literature correlating to eras of history studied, e.g., Pre-Civil War: *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*; The Great Depression: *To Kill a Mockingbird*; Civil Rights Era: *The Secret Life of Bees*.**
- **Celebrate our American heritage through interdisciplinary activities including the spring trip to Washington, D. C.**

B. English

Grade 6

- An integrated language arts program utilizing a variety of literature to develop an understanding of plot, setting, conflict, characters, theme and meanings beyond the literal level
- Emphasis on the steps of the writing process (pre-writing, drafting, revising, proofreading and publishing)
- Application of different strategies (brainstorming, free writing and Semantic Mapping) in developing organization in writing stories, paragraphs, book reviews and essays
- Opportunities for a variety of writing activities including responses to literature, journal entries of personal reactions to an experience or event, in-class "writing to a prompt," persuasive and descriptive paragraphs, summaries and reports
- Interdisciplinary units in both the language arts and social studies curriculum including literature, oral reports, and written assignments in which students share their writing in group discussions, working both with partners and in small cooperative groups

Assessment: Grade 6 New York State Assessment.

Grade 7

- Emphasis on a multi-disciplinary approach to literature to promote literary response and expression
- Continued development of written language skills with guided practice in process writing, "writing to a prompt," and writing to persuade, entertain, or inform

- Development of reading and critical thinking skills through nonfiction and on-line research -- reading to acquire, analyze, evaluate, and interpret information for clear communication
- Focus on oral language skills through informal presentations, in-class response and discussion, improvisation, and formal speeches.

Assessment: Grade 7 New York State Assessment.

Grade 8

- **Promote literary appreciation and understanding of various genres such as short stories, novels, essays, poetry, and drama.**
- **Emphasize interdisciplinary reading, especially historical fiction and non-fiction to promote literary response and expression.**
- **Continue development of written language skills with guided practice in writing to a prompt, comparing paired readings and listening passages, and writing to persuade, entertain, or inform.**
- **Master research skills including note taking, outlining, using quotations, citing sources according to MLA standards as elements of a research-based project.**
- **Focus on oral language skills through in-class response and discussion and formal poetry readings, and class presentations.**

Assessment: Grade 8 English Language Arts New York State Assessment

C. Mathematics

CRITERIA FOR ADMISSION TO ACCELERATED COURSES

To enroll in the Accelerated Middle School math course in Grade 8 (Integrated Algebra), students must qualify by earning a minimum of 2 points according to the rubric outlined below:

- A. Earn a score of 4 on the New York State Assessment
1 point**
- B. Earn minimum of 90% in Math 7
1 point**
- C. Earn the recommendation of the teacher based on teacher developed criteria
1 Point**
- D. Earn minimum of 86% on an algebra aptitude test
1 Point**

E. Demonstrate mastery on a placement test developed by the department

1 point

Total points required to enroll = 2 points

Total points earned = _____

Student placement in Accelerated courses will be reviewed at the end of the marking period. Students must maintain a minimum average of 80% to remain in the Accelerated course. Students failing to maintain this minimum average will be rescheduled for a non-accelerated course.

Grade 6, 7

Problem Solving Strand

- Students will build mathematical knowledge through problem solving
- Students will solve problems in mathematics and in other contexts
- Students will apply appropriate strategies to solve problems
- Students will monitor and reflect on the process of mathematical problem solving

Reasoning Strand

- Students will investigate and make mathematical conjectures

Communication Strand

- Students will communicate their mathematical thinking coherently and clearly to teachers, peers, and others
- Students will analyze and evaluate the thinking and strategies of others
- Students will use the language of mathematics to express their ideas precisely

Content Strand

- Numbers and operations
- Algebra
- Geometry
- Measurement

- Probability and Statistics

Grade 6

Assessment: May, New York State 6th Grade Assessment

Grade 7

Assessment: May, New York State Math 7 Assessment

Grade 8

New York State mathematics curriculum focuses on five process strands: Problem Solving, Reasoning and Proof, Communication, Connections, and Representation. The five content strands are Number Sense and Operations, Algebra, Geometry, Measurement, and Probability and Statistics.

Regularly paced eighth graders will complete the course work and take the Algebra Regents exam in June of their ninth-grade year.

Students enrolled in accelerated math will complete the Integrated Algebra course work and take the Integrated Algebra examination at the end of eighth grade.

**Assessment: May, New York State 8th Grade Assessment (all students.)
Integrated Algebra Regents Exam (accelerated students.)**

D. Science

INTERMEDIATE LEVEL SCIENCE STANDARDS

1. Analysis, Inquiry, and Design

Students will use mathematical analysis, scientific inquiry, and engineering design, as appropriate, to pose questions, seek answers, and develop solutions.

2. Information Systems

Students will access, generate, process, and transfer information, using appropriate technologies.

4. Science Content

Students will understand and apply scientific concepts, principles, and theories pertaining to the physical setting and living environment and recognize the historical development of ideas in science.

6. Interconnectedness: Common Themes

Students will understand the relationships and common themes that connect mathematics, science, and technology and apply the themes and other areas of learning.

7. Interdisciplinary Problem Solving

Students will apply the knowledge and thinking skills of mathematics, science, and technology to address real-life problems and make informed decisions.

****Standards 3 and 5 refer to Math and Technology content.***

Grade 6

- Students in this program are expected to take an active role in their science education through the formation of questions and observations. The students will be given the tools needed to form and to answer their questions successfully through laboratory experiments, along with exploration of literature and electronic media, including the Internet.
- The Core Content of sixth grade science includes the study of introductory physics and chemistry with the common theme of energy. Problem-solving skills are developed as students investigate information and concepts, solve simple equations, and use ratio and proportion techniques. Each topic of study is reinforced with a variety of hands-on activities and class projects. Students will often design and conduct their own experiments and evaluate their work to redesign, retest, and re-evaluate their product and conclusions. Communication of results and ideas to others through lab reports, or class discussions and public presentations helps create individuals who are more scientifically literate.
- Whether the activities are student-designed or teacher-designed, students will apply and develop their science knowledge and skills as they learn science by doing science.

Grade 7

- Science 7 is an introduction to the living environment. Topics include cell theory, scientific method, ecology, evolution, genetics, classification of life, human organ systems, nutrition, and biological survival.
- The course involves many opportunities for active learning including demonstration and hands-on lab authentic experiences. Student assessments include graded homework checks, quizzes, labs, projects and exams.
- Some lab experiences are ecological explorations, bacteria study, gathering and analyzing data in many biological areas. Some projects are interdisciplinary with math, English, social studies, and foreign language. Students learn to objectively observe and analyze the living environment.

Grade 8

- Science 8 is an activity-based program leading to preparation for the NYS Intermediate Level Science Assessment.
- The Core Content opens with a brief review and expansion of the principles of physics, chemistry, and energy studied in Science 6, along with a sharpening of essential problem-solving skills. The focus then turns to applying these principles in the study of Earth and celestial phenomena including daily, monthly, and seasonal changes. An in-depth study of activities within and between the lithosphere, hydrosphere, and atmosphere is followed by preparation for the Intermediate-Level Science Assessment. Science 8 also prepares students for success in Regents Earth Science in ninth grade.
- Educational activities are student-designed, teacher-designed, and include long-term and short-term projects. They involve independent research, group projects, written lab reports and public presentations.

Assessment: New York State Intermediate Level Science Assessment

Grade 8 Acceleration: Regents Physical Setting / Earth Science

- This course is appropriate for self-motivated students who consistently perform in science among the top of their peers. Assessment and selection is made by the seventh-grade science teachers.
- Beginning the high school science sequence in eighth grade leads to opportunities to expand into our Advance Placement courses and/or our three-year Scientific Research Program. Non-accelerated students may take these courses also in high school.
- Regents Earth Science is an activity-based program that follows the Core Content for Physical Setting: Earth Science in the study of the Earth's dimensions, geology, plate tectonics, landscape development, geologic history, meteorology, water cycles and climate, the Earth in space, and environmental awareness.

Assessment: Regents Earth Science Exam

CRITERIA FOR ADMISSION TO ACCELERATED COURSES

To enroll in Accelerated Middle School science course in grade 8 (Earth Science), students must qualify by earning a minimum of 2 points according to the rubric outlined below:

- A. Earn a score of 4 on the New York State Assessment (if applicable)
1 point

- B. Earn minimum of 90% in the previous course**
1 point
- C. Earn the recommendation of the teacher based on teacher developed criteria**
1 point
- D. Demonstrate mastery on a placement test developed by the department**
1 point

Total points required to enroll = 2 points

Total points earned = _____

Student placement in Accelerated courses will be reviewed at the end of the marking period. Students must maintain a minimum average of 80% to remain in the Accelerated course. Students failing to maintain this minimum average will be rescheduled for a non-accelerated course.

E. World Language

Grades 6, 7 and 8

The study of French or Spanish begins in grade 6. The age-appropriate instruction is based on both the National and NYS Standards for Foreign Language Learning and the National Performance K – 12 and is conducted in varying amounts in the target language from the outset.

Grade 6 Spanish and French

The grade 6 curriculum engages students in a virtual travel experience. Students learn vocabulary pertaining to trip preparations and acquire those skills necessary to talk about themselves, their family, their school, town and home. While the focus at this time is use of the present tense, throughout their “voyage” they will encounter other tenses in conversational patterns.

Materials include a text, DVS’s CD’s, nursery rhymes, and the internet.

Grade 7 Spanish and French

In 7th grade, students have the opportunity to strengthen their basic skills through both written and communicative activities. Essential basic verbs will be mastered, and the past and future tenses are introduced. Students will expand on their conversations/repertoire by engaging in simulations of adventures they may have during a trip. They will learn a wide variety of ways to express opinions, preferences, and needs. They will demonstrate an increased ability to initiate and sustain dialog.

Grade 8 Spanish and French

In 8th grade, students have the opportunity to further practice the basic skills and vocabulary of NYS standards at check point A level in an increasingly interdependent manner. All 4 tenses taught to this point (present, future, present progressive and past (in the preterite form) will be used to complete typical tasks like describing people and locations, describing habits, retelling events, expressing feelings, communicating problems, providing solutions, asking for help and sharing or making plans. Basic vocabulary will be enriched and readings will increase students' comfort in both what they know and what they don't know in Spanish but can conclude through context and syntax clues. Students will be exposed to the language as spoken by natives through videos and music and will be expected to increasingly communicate in class using the target language and survival strategies.

Assessment: A local exam of Checkpoint A requirements which will earn passing students one credit of High School Spanish or French.

F. Fine and Practical Arts

We believe every student can learn. The Fine and Practical Arts faculty strive to create an environment in our classes where all students feel welcomed, challenged, and successful.

Students are given the opportunity to become independent and creative thinkers through a process of self-discovery. These newly acquired skills have the potential for cultivating life-long passions.

Art

Art in the middle school is a process-based program that fulfills the NYS Standards in the Arts. Students in 6th, 7th, and 8th grade are scheduled to be in art for one quarter (10 weeks) per academic year. Projects are designed to build skills and will become more challenging in response to students' developmental needs from one grade to the next.

Students in 6th, 7th, and 8th grades will:

- explore a range of media and subject matter
- create interdisciplinary projects, individual projects, group projects, and works for exhibition
- develop an art vocabulary
- learn and apply the principles and elements of art
- have opportunities to respond to and analyze works of art

Assessment: Projects, self-evaluation and peer evaluation through oral critiques. Self-evaluation and teacher evaluation using rubrics.

Music

- Students work on musical activities as musicians, composing, performing, arranging, analyzing, evaluating, and listening to music.
- Music 6, 7, and 8 are designed to meet the New York State Standards by engaging students in musical experiences in a music lab setting

Assessment: Projects, self-evaluation, peer-evaluation, class discussion, visual observation, written responses.

Instrumental Music

- Students develop individual and ensemble performance skills necessary to interact in a band setting.
- Students meet the New York State Standards for music through performing, analyzing, evaluating, listening, composing, and improvising music.
- Instrumental lessons are provided using the “push in” model during band class.

Assessment: Individual and group performances, self-evaluation, peer evaluation, class discussion, written responses, musical composition and improvisation.

Vocal Music

- Students develop both individual and ensemble skills to effectively perform 2- to 4-part choral music.
- Students meet the New York State Standards for music using the following means: sight reading, writing musical notation, composing, rhythmic exercises, and listening.

Assessment: Solo and ensemble performances, written evaluations, and class discussions.

Technology

Grades 6, 7, and 8

- Introduce and explore many of the facets of technology
- Become aware of the history and evolution of technology
- Master the application of safety
- Process various types of materials
- Manage resources
- Recognize and predict positive and negative as well as expected and unexpected impacts of technology
- Utilize technology to solve problems
- Apply technology, math and science concepts to engineer solutions to technological issues
- Focus on understanding and controlling technology through knowledge of tools, materials, resources and systems of technology

Assessment: Safety tests, practices and inspections, project activities, participation, tests and quizzes.

Family and Consumer Science (Home and Career Skills)

Home and Career Skills is a required program of study for all New York students in grades six through eight. It supports the educational needs of students who, in the future, will be required to successfully balance the responsibilities of home, family, and career by using content and process skills for practical problem solving.

Grade 6 Curriculum Modules (ten week course)

- Interpersonal Relationships
- Kitchen Safety and Sanitation
- Basic Food Preparation
- Basic Clothing Construction

Grade 7 Curriculum Modules (ten week course)

- Process Skills – Decision Making, Problem Solving, Management
- Personal Environment Management
- Nutrition and Wellness

Grade 8 Curriculum Modules (2 ten week courses)

- Family Dynamics
- Child Development
- Communication Skills and Conflict Management
- Consumerism
- Introduction To Work

- **Job Acquisition Skills**
- **Career Planning**

Assessment: Written and laboratory performance tests and projects.

G. Physical Education and Health

Grades 6, 7 and 8

▪ **Physical Education**

General Goals:

Students Will:

- **Demonstrate competency in many movement forms and proficiency in a few movement forms.**
- **Apply movement concepts and principals to the learning and development of motor skills.**
- **Exhibit a physically active lifestyle.**
- **Achieve and maintain a health-enhancing level of physical fitness.**
- **Demonstrate responsible personal and social behavior in physical activity settings.**
- **Demonstrate understanding and respect for differences among people in physical activity settings.**
- **Understand that physical activity provides opportunities for enjoyment, challenge, self-expression, and social interaction.**

Grade 7

- **Health** – In Health Education, students will be investigating and learning the four characteristics of health. These include social, environmental, physical and mental health. Exploring each characteristic will provide instruction and knowledge in nutrition, fitness, communicable diseases, bully prevention, substance use, goal setting, mental health and other health-related areas. This course provides students with the knowledge needed to help promote a safe and healthy way of life. Students will acquire knowledge which will foster their decision making skills and help them evolve into life-long learners.

H. Library Media

Grades 6, 7 and 8

The Library Media Center provides a full range of print and electronic resources to support academic learning and leisure pursuits.

The Library Media Specialist regularly collaborates with classroom teachers to teach and integrate information and media literacy skills into the curriculum.

The Library Media Center provides access to computers, Flip video cameras, still cameras, ebook readers, podcasting equipment and other technologies. Our program teaches proper and ethical use of such equipment and encourages students to select, evaluate and utilize technology at appropriate stages of inquiry.

A Virtual Library of general information, databases, links, class project portals, games and other resources is available via our library website 24:7:365 for students and their families to access from home or school.

I. Special Education

The Committee on Special Education recommends students for resource room support, academic support, reading, co-teaching settings in English, Math, Science, and Social Studies, or special education classes in English and Math. All students are integrated into the general education classes for courses in the arts and other special areas.

J. Electives

COURSE SELECTIONS FOR 8TH GRADE STUDENTS

▪ Band

Eighth grade band is an intermediate level class for the instrumental music student, which focuses more intensely on higher level listening and evaluative ensemble skills. Students meet in a large group every other day.

▪ Chorus

Students in Eighth grade Chorus will study vocal technique, sight reading and singing in harmony. Students in this chorus have an opportunity to audition for All-County Chorus, and may choose to participate in the optional NYSSMA Solo/Ensemble Festival in the spring. Eighth Grade Chorus performs at two school concerts each year. It is not necessary for a student to have a great voice in order to join Eighth Grade Chorus; willingness to learn and a sense of humor are the most important qualities for a young singer to have!

- **Digital Art**

Digital Art is an introductory course to programs that are used to create and manipulate images on the computer. Students will be introduced to programs such as *Photoshop*, *Illustrator*, and *PageMaker* through various projects. Students will become familiar with tools and techniques of the programs, while creating and manipulating images. Not only will students be engaged in the arts but projects will also involve other 8th grade curriculum. Ultimately, students will discover their creative individuality while becoming comfortable with digital arts. Due to the limit of equipment available, this class is limited to 15 students and students will be registered on a first come, first serve basis.

- **Digital Audio and Video**

In this class, students will learn to create and edit videos. They will also record and edit sound files and dub audio for videos. Due to the limit of equipment available, this class is limited to 15 students and students will be registered on a first come, first serve basis.

- **Movies in the Making**

The first part of the course is designed to give students an introductory foundation of cinematic terms to enable them to think critically about movies. Within this selection, students will learn about film history, cinematic photography, editing, acting, and point of view through classic films. Students read professional film reviews to develop an awareness and understanding of what may be included in a formal critique. As the course progresses, students will watch “modern” classics with a new point of view and develop their own voices as they become film critics.

**NORTH SALEM MIDDLE SCHOOL
GRADES 6, 7 8 - COURSE OF STUDY**

English/Language Arts

English Language Arts 6
English Language Arts 7
English Language Arts 8
Reading Grade 6
Critical Reading and Writing Grade 7
English Lab 6, 7, 8
English 6 Extended

Social Studies

Social Studies 6
Social Studies 7
Social Studies 8

Science

Science 6
Life Science 7
Physical Science 8
Earth Science 8 Accelerated (Regents)

Mathematics

Math 6
Math 7
Math 8
Math 8 Accelerated (Integrated Algebra)

Fine Arts

Art 6
Art 7
Art 8

Computer

Math 6 Extended/Computer
Math 7 Extended/Computer
Math 8 Extended/Computer

Related Courses

Movies in the Making 8
Digital Art 8
Digital Audio and Video 8
Gifted/Talented

World Language

French 6
French 7
French 8
Spanish 6
Spanish 7
Spanish 8

Music

Music 6, 7, 8
Concert Band 6 or Concert Choir 6
Concert Band 7 or Concert Choir 7
Concert Band 8
Concert Choir 8
Lessons

Technology

Technology 6
Technology 7
Technology 8

Family & Consumer Science

Home & Career Skills 6
Home & Career Skills 7
Home Skills 8
Career Skills 8

Physical Education/Health

Physical Education 6
Physical Education 7
Physical Education 8
Health 7

Special Education

Resource Room/Academic Support*
English-Special Class*
Math-Special Class*
Reading-Special Class*
Core Social Studies, Science, Math, English & Skills*

*All as indicated by a student's IEP

SAMPLE SCHEDULE FOR GRADE 8

7:28—8:08 1	8:13—8:18 HR/2	8:22—9:02 2	9:06—9:46 3	9:50—10:30 4	10:34—11:14 5	11:18—11:58 6	12:02—12:42 7	12:46—1:26 8	1:30—2:10 9
English		English	PE ES Lab	Earth Science	LUNCH	English	English	English	ES Lab
World Language		World Language				English	World Language	World Languages	World Language
Algebra		Math	Computer Careers	Art		Algebra	Math	Math	Math Lab
Social Studies		Earth Science		Music	Science	Science	Science	Earth Science	Band/Chorus
Home & Careers		Social Studies		Technology		Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies	
Technology									Digital Audio & Video
Art				Home & Careers					Digital Art
Music									Movies in the Making

MIDDLE SCHOOL CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES

Middle School Student Forum
Grade 6 Class Organization
Grade 7 Class Organization
Grade 8 Class Organization

Modified Boys' Basketball
Modified Girls' Basketball
Modified Field Hockey
Modified Boys' Soccer
Modified Girls' Soccer
Modified Volleyball
Modified Softball
Modified Baseball
Modified Cross Country
Modified Boy's Lacrosse
Modified Girl's Lacrosse
Modified Ice Hockey
Modified Spring Track
Modified Wrestling
Intramural Sports

Literary Magazine
Chess Club
Munch Bunch
Math Club
Art Club
Drama Club
Computer Club
Memory Book Club
Technology Club
Club Español
Musical
Musical Stage Craft Direction
Project S.T.A.N.D.
MS Book Club
MS Newspaper
Theater Tech Club: Lighting and Sound