

## ***MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAM***

Early adolescence, characterized by diversity in physical, social, emotional, and intellectual growth, marks the beginning of the transition from the dependence of childhood to the independence of adulthood. The middle school years are exciting and challenging as students face new academic and social situations. Our middle school provides a secure environment in which students can make a comfortable transition to high school.

We recognize the existence of a variety of learning styles, and we operate with the assumption that all students do well if they can. We value and encourage individual excellence and provide all students with opportunities to succeed. This approach is inherent in our curriculum and the methodologies we use.

Our middle school prepares students with the skills and knowledge necessary for success. We hope that upon leaving middle school students will see their education as an ongoing process and not as an end in itself.

## ***PARENT & SCHOOL COMMUNICATION***

Parents working together with our school community make for a powerful team. Formal events such as Back to School Night and Parent/Teacher Conferences are excellent opportunities for parents to become familiar with school routines and to communicate with teachers. If you have a question about the schedule, planning for high school, or a concern about your daughter/son's social or emotional well being, please contact middle school guidance counselor Nanette Spoehr. Ms. Spoehr is also the person to call if you wish to make an appointment to meet with either the sixth, seventh, or eighth grade teaching team. Should any classroom concern or question arise, please contact the appropriate teacher first. Usually all difficulties can be resolved in this manner, and School Committee policy requires that teachers be contacted first. The Team Leader, guidance counselor, Dean of Students, and principal are available for help if the concerns cannot be resolved. You may reach anyone at school by calling 637-5560, and you may access voicemail through the receptionist. E-mail addresses are available for individual teachers (please see staff directory in the front of this book). You may also stay up-to-date with most school events by visiting our website at [www.lenoxps.org](http://www.lenoxps.org). We also use an automated calling system to inform parents of school closings and other announcements, email to parents as needed and *View My Schedule* which is accessed from our home page ([www.lenoxps.org](http://www.lenoxps.org)) and provides up-to-date information on sports events. If we do not have your email address, please call the main office at LMMHS and speak with Elaine Lovato, secretary to the principal or email Elaine at [elovato@lenoxps.org](mailto:elovato@lenoxps.org).

All Middle School students are given an assignment notebook that should be used faithfully to record nightly homework and to keep track of assignments. The notebook also has space for parent/teacher communication, and parents should ask to see it daily.

Report cards are sent home for parent signature four times per year. Parents are asked to sign the report card and send it back to school the next day. Progress reports called "Interims" are mailed home on an as-needed basis midway between report cards. Parents who wish to have notification that an interim report is being sent must call the guidance office and provide an E-mail address. Parents are invited to meet teachers and to go through their daughter/son's schedule on Back to School Night, usually scheduled a few weeks after the opening of school in September. Parent/Teacher conferences are scheduled in November and are arranged by calling the school for an appointment.

## ***APPROPRIATE ATTIRE***

Students at LMMHS are expected to dress appropriately for school and school-sponsored activities. A student's dress should show the respect that we encourage for self and others. Therefore, to that end, a student's clothing is not to expose underwear, buttocks, breasts (or cleavage), navels; depict violence; gang membership or promotion; promote illegal activities; contain profanity or pornographic material; or cause disruption or disorder. Clothing that obstructs the identity of an individual (i.e.: hoods) will not be allowed.

Students will be asked to change their clothing if it falls into any of the above categories. A first offense will be considered a minor infraction of school rules. However, repeated offenses or a refusal to change inappropriate clothing will be considered a major infraction and handled accordingly.

## ***DAILY SCHEDULE***

Students should report to their first period class between 7:35 and 7:40 a.m. First period class begins at 7:45 a.m. and also serves as a "homeroom" where attendance is taken and the daily bulletin is read. The school day is divided into seven periods plus a 30 minute lunch period. The school day ends at 2:24 p.m.

### ***Lunch Schedule***

1 <sup>st</sup> Lunch	10:22 - 10:52	Middle school students have 1 <sup>st</sup> lunch
2 <sup>nd</sup> Lunch	11:15 - 11:45	H.S. Students are divided between 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> lunch (Some 8 <sup>th</sup> grade students may eat 2 <sup>nd</sup> lunch depending upon their schedule)
3 <sup>rd</sup> Lunch	12:08 - 12:38	

Five of the seven periods are devoted to Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies and, in grade six, Reading. The two remaining periods are for physical education and a variety of shorter length courses referred to as "mini courses." Mini courses typically have students "up and doing" and provide exposure to courses they may wish to elect during high school.

Most classes meet daily while others such as physical education and most mini courses are offered on alternate days. School days rotate in a six-day cycle with days labeled as 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6. Alternate-day courses appear on student schedules as occurring on "135" or "246" days. Courses lasting half of the year are semester courses while those lasting for one marking period are quarter length courses.

It sounds more complicated than it is, and schedules are quickly mastered.

## ***Bell and Daily Class Schedule***

Homeroom 7:45 - 7:47 (Students have homeroom in their 1<sup>st</sup> period class)

Period A 7:47 - 8:36

Pass 8:36 - 8:40

Period B 8:40 - 9:29

Pass 9:29 - 9:33

Period C 9:33 - 10:22

1<sup>st</sup> Lunch 10:22 - 10:52

Period D 10:56 - 11:45

Period E 11:49 - 12:38

Period D 10:26 - 11:15

2<sup>nd</sup> Lunch 11:15 - 11:45

Period E 11:49 - 12:38

Period D 10:26 - 11:15

Period E 11:19 - 12:08

3<sup>rd</sup> Lunch 12:08 - 12:38

Pass 12:38 - 12:42

Period F 12:42 - 1:31

Pass 1:31 - 1:35

Period G 1:35 - 2:24

## **School Cancellation and Delayed Opening**

Due to inclement weather or other emergencies, school may either open after the normal 7:45 a.m. starting time or be canceled for the day. Notice of delayed opening or cancellation will be announced using the school's automated calling system, local TV broadcast stations channels 6, 10, 13, Capital News 9, most local radio stations including WBEC (105.5 FM), WUPE (95.9 FM, 1110 AM), WSBS (860 AM), and WBRK (101.7 FM, 1340 AM). Delayed openings count as full school days; however, cancellations must be made up at the end of the school year.

## ***SCHOOL SAFETY***

### **Visitors**

All visitors to the school must enter through the main entrance and report to the main office to sign in and obtain a visitor's badge, which must be worn at all times. Visitors who do not report to the main office may be subject to a charge of illegal trespass.

### **Student Guests**

Student guests may be permitted on a limited basis. The guest and their student host must each have written parental consent and must obtain the written consent of the principal at least two days prior to the visit. Guests must adhere to all school rules and regulations. Students applying to Lenox under the provisions of "school choice" must make an appointment for their visit through the guidance office by calling 637-5560.

### **Building Evacuation**

From time to time the building is evacuated either for a practice drill or for an actual emergency. Students should become familiar with the fire exit instructions that are posted in every classroom. The signal for evacuating the building is a loud alarm that is used only for this purpose. When outside, students should stay with their class and teacher. The teacher will take attendance. Students should walk with their class to the parking lot and remain clear of fire lanes. Students should not get into cars unless specifically instructed to do so. Students using other exits should remain 100 feet from the building. If alternative evacuation procedures are required, specific instructions will be announced over the intercom.

For reasons of safety and communication of instructions, it is very important to remain quiet and orderly. Failure to adhere to school rules during building evacuations will be considered a major infraction of school rules.

## Building Lockdown

A lockdown would be used in the event that a dangerous person has entered the school or is on school property. While this is not likely to happen, it is important that we all know how to respond if it should happen. A lockdown would be announced on the school's intercom system. A lockdown requires that classrooms be locked, shades pulled down, and students should be sitting on the floor away from windows. Students will also be given specific instructions by the teacher on what to do when a lockdown is announced.

## ***ATTENDANCE/TARDY POLICIES***

A clear, positive relationship exists between good school attendance and high academic achievement. The learning experiences that take place in the classroom are a meaningful and essential part of the educational process. It simply is not possible to "make up" everything that is lost when a day of school is missed. Developing good attendance and work habits are strong components of overall preparation for employment and higher education.

### Parent Procedure for Student Unplanned Absence

If your son/daughter is absent from school, please do the following:

- 1) Call the school at 637-5560 before 9:00 a.m. An answering machine will be in use for calls before 7:30 a.m.
- 2) Indicate your student's name, grade level, date(s) of absence and the reason for the absence. Your call will be logged and placed in your student's file.
  - If it is an extended illness, please state so as soon as that is known.
  - Other than a known extended illness, the school must be contacted ***each day*** a student is out of school.

### Attendance Responsibilities

The compulsory school attendance law in Massachusetts specifies that school attendance is the responsibility of the parent/legal guardian. Specifically, Ch. 76, S.2. indicates, "Every person in control of a child shall cause him to attend school as therein required...." A student who misses more than one-half of a school day (11:15 AM) is

defined as absent for the entire day. Students who miss more than one period are not allowed to attend dances and may lose the privilege to participate in extra curricular activities. See Athletic Code for restrictions on athletic participation.

It is sometimes unavoidable to be tardy or absent from school. Parents are discouraged from scheduling vacations while school is in session. Legitimate reasons for being absent or tardy may include:

illness	serious family emergencies
religious observances	college visits
required court appearance	

Many times an absence or tardiness is avoidable. Examples of excuses for being tardy or absent that are *not legitimate* include:

holiday shopping	working on homework
hair appointments	being tired
forgetting books	taking care of a pet

## Excused Absence

An absence is considered excused when the parent/legal guardian contacts the school and provides a legitimate excuse for the absence. Contact with the school should be made in accordance with the "Parent Procedure for Student Absence" stated previously.

## Work Missed for Excused Absences

Students whose absences are excused have the right to make up tests and as much classroom work missed as each teacher deems essential. It is the student's responsibility to schedule makeup arrangements with each of his/her teachers. Work missed due to one or two absences should be made up within two school days. Work missed due to longer absences should be made up within five days. With the written consent of the teacher, further extension may be granted if, in the opinion of the teacher, the complexity and/or quantity of work missed requires extended time for completion. Parents should discuss extenuating circumstances with the nurse and/or guidance counselor. In no case will an extension exceed 20 school days from the date the student returns to school. Arrangements for makeup work will take place either before or after school or at such time prescribed by individual teachers. While our teachers try to accommodate extended absences as best they can, they cannot re-teach all the missed classes. In some cases, missed science labs may not be possible to make up due to the complexity of the lab set-up required for completion.

The burden of making up missed school work lies with the student and must be completed within the allocated time frame. Students who are absent from school as a result of short-term out-of-school suspension are responsible for getting assignments, textbooks, and other school supplies from classmates.

Parents must notify the Principal in writing at least one week in advance for planned absence(s), and all work missed must be made up in accordance with the requirements stated above for work missed due to excused absence(s). Parents are discouraged from scheduling vacations while school is in session.

## Unexcused Absence

An unexcused absence is defined as an absence that does not fall within the description of an excused absence. An unexcused absence is considered a major infraction of school rules and will result in one or more days of either in-school or out-of-school suspension. Students missing tests and other classroom work due to unexcused absence(s) may lose their right to make up work missed as a result of such absence(s). Repeated unexcused absences of a student under the age of 16 violates Massachusetts compulsory school attendance laws and, in addition to school imposed penalties, will result in referral to the appropriate legal authority.

## Morning Tardiness

Students are required to arrive to their first period (homeroom) class between 7:35 and 7:40 a.m. Failure to arrive in class by 7:45 a.m. constitutes tardiness. Students who are tardy must report first to the office to obtain a pass to their scheduled class. If a student arrives at school after 7:45 a.m., s/he must have a note from her/his parent/legal guardian on the same day that provides an acceptable excuse for the tardiness. Morning emergencies occurring on the way to school will require a note on the following day. The note must be delivered to the main office and a pass obtained prior to entering class. If a student is tardy without a note from his/her parent/guardian, the tardy is considered unexcused and the student will be assigned to an after school detention. A student may have a maximum of four excused instances of tardiness in any one marking period. Further instances of tardiness will result in being assigned to after school detention. Students begin with a "clean slate" at the start of the next marking period. A student who has a medical condition supported by a letter from their physician that prevents the student from arriving to school on time will not be assigned detention.

## Classroom Tardiness

Students should arrive to class on time. Students who fail to reach their next period class during the allotted four-minute passing period without a pass are tardy and subject to either teacher-assigned or office-assigned detention. Students will be given 24-hour notice of such detention.

## ***CARE OF PERSONAL AND/OR SCHOOL PROPERTY***

It is the student's responsibility at all times and in all situations to protect his or her property and school property placed in his or her charge. Generally, students should not bring extra money or other valuables to school. If a student must have a large sum of money or an item of value while in school, s/he should deposit such item(s) in the office during school hours. Students should keep their lockers locked at all times. Carelessness, including that of friends who know the combination, is the most frequent cause of a loss of property. All equipment, books, etc., should be marked with the student's name. Report all losses to the office immediately. Students are expected to treat school property with care and respect. Students will be held responsible for any damage or vandalism of books, desks, calculators, or other school property in their care.

### **Lockers**

Lockers should be used to temporarily store coats, books, and other school supplies, and provide a good alternative to carrying everything around in a bookbag. Health experts strongly suggest that students not carry more than 10% of their body weight in backpacks. Students are assigned both hallway lockers and gym lockers. All lockers have combination locks, and students should keep their lockers locked at all times. Valuables should not be stored in lockers. Lockers are school property and are subject to search by school officials without warning.

### ***Computer System and Internet Rules and Guidelines***

The supervised use of computers and other technologies is available to Lenox Memorial students to advance education and research in a manner consistent with the philosophy and goals of our school. Computers are school property and are subject to search by school officials without warning. No student should have any expectation of privacy while using LMMHS technology. The school reserves the right to access, review, copy, delete, monitor, and disclose all messages and files on its computer system, as well as review, monitor, and disclose internet usage if necessary and appropriate. All communication, including text and images, can be disclosed to law enforcement or other third parties without prior consent of the sender or receiver.

All aspects of the Code of Conduct concerning one's personal conduct apply while using computers, the Internet or any other technology. The Massachusetts Computer Crimes Statute specifies that unauthorized access to or tampering with computer files is a violation of State law. Students will also be held financially responsible for the repair of any damage resulting from the misuse/vandalism of computers.

Lenox Memorial may issue individual computer/e-mail accounts to students in accordance with the following rules and guidelines:

- Computers are for school-related research, and students may not use them to play games. A reasonable time limit on use may be imposed when computers are in demand.
- Computer and e-mail accounts may be used only by the authorized owner of the account to advance education and research.
- There is a zero tolerance policy on physical abuse and vandalism of the computer systems
- Sending annoying, obscene, libelous, or slanderous messages is specifically prohibited.
- Threats or harassment sent by e-mail may constitute illegal acts punishable by law.
- The Internet is not a secure medium, and you should not assume confidentiality.
- Students should check e-mail daily.
- Computer users must respect copyright laws and licensing agreements pertaining to material entered into and obtained via the computer system.

The following uses of the computer systems and the Internet are prohibited:

- Use of the Internet for commercial purposes, including personal shopping, or advertising.
- Downloading, copying, or installing of any files (including music, software, games, graphics, etc.) is prohibited.
- Changing any configuration settings on any school computer
- Accessing web-based e-mail/IM services such as Yahoo, MSN, Hotmail, etc.
- Accessing or attempting to access internet sites that promote and/or offer a means to cheat or plagiarize. Such action is also contrary to our expectations for academic integrity.

After or before school use of computers (including library computers) is subject to all of the rules stated above. Additional computer system and Internet rules and guidelines may be issued from time to time to protect the computer systems or to enhance effective use. Such rules and guidelines will become effective upon issuance and notice to the students.

### ***Student-Owned Computers***

Students may have the privilege of using a personally owned computing device on school grounds given the following conditions:

- In order to be defined as a laptop, a device must have a 7-inch screen or larger, have an attached keyboard, and be capable of research and word processing.
- The school is not responsible for any damage, loss or theft of student-owned equipment.
- The students must submit a student computer permission form signed by their parent/guardian. See the District Technology Coordinator (Mr. Jackson) to obtain the required form.
- Student-owned computing devices are not permitted for use in classrooms except by specific permission of the teacher on an as-needed basis.
- The privilege of using a student-owned computer/electronic device may be revoked at any time by the school administration and/or the District Technology Coordinator (Mr. Jackson)
- Any student-owned computing device on school grounds is subject to search and / or confiscation by school officials.
- A student must surrender any passwords to his/her computer upon request by school officials.
- In order to be granted access to the school network, a student must register the device with the District Technology Coordinator (Mr. Jackson). A thorough search of the device may occur at that time. (Access points will be limited to specific areas, with no guarantee of service.)
- Rules of acceptable behavior are the same for both student-owned and school-owned equipment. Non-academic uses are not allowed.
- Students may not connect to any network other than one that is designated for student use. These will be identified with the prefix "Student-AP".
- The student agrees not to connect to any other networks or access the internet by any other means.

- To best protect the school and other students, the student agrees to keep current virus prevention software licensed and installed on their computer at all times.

## ***STUDENT SERVICES***

### **Guidance**

The guidance office plays a very active role in the preparation for the new school year. We look forward to welcoming our new students, and we wish to help in any way we can to make the transition comfortable and happy. As the school year progresses, the guidance counselor is available to students and parents. At any point, if questions or concerns arise about the schedule, educational planning, or about social/emotional well being, please feel free to call or come in. The counselor monitors the progress of all students during the year and will call, write, or E-mail parents if a conference is needed.

### **School Adjustment Counseling**

Students and parents may request school adjustment counseling services when a student is experiencing personal, academic, or family distress. The goal of the program is to support school achievement and positive relationships while encouraging effective communication and problem solving, and promoting self-esteem. Individual, group, and family counseling is available at school, or referral to community-based social service professionals can be provided. If a student needs to meet with a school adjustment counselor more than three times, then parent permission is necessary. However, parents will be notified immediately in cases where a student's safety is at risk.

A school adjustment counselor (SAC) is a licensed independent clinical social worker. School adjustment counseling may be arranged by speaking with a guidance counselor or by direct contact with the school adjustment counselor, Kristine Grimes, at extension 1207.

### **Extra Help**

Most students will need extra assistance with one or more of their courses at some time or another. One of the best ways to get help is for the student to see a teacher before or after school. The student should first talk with the teacher to select a specific day to come back for help. Another good way to get help is from a peer tutor. A peer tutor is usually a high school student who is volunteering his/her time to help other students with their schoolwork. Peer tutors are arranged through the guidance office.

## School Resource Officer

The School Resource Officer (SRO) provides assistance to students, parents and teachers on legal issues, fosters a positive relationship with the Police Department, and assists with maintaining a safe school environment. Teachers may use the Resource Officer for assistance with topics such as law and health education. The Resource Officer is also available to meet with parents and students for advice and counseling on a variety of questions or concerns related to the law. The School Resource Officer has a mailbox at school and a posted schedule in the main office and cafeteria.

## Health Services

Students at Lenox Memorial have a nurse or a health aide available during the school day for drop-in visits and emergency first aid. Regular services include hearing, vision, scoliosis, height and weight screenings, individual health counseling, and administration of medications. State law and School Committee policy requires all seventh and eleventh graders and all students who wish to try out for an athletic team to have a physical exam.

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health requires (105 CMR 220.000) the following immunizations for all students entering grade 7:

- 2<sup>nd</sup> MMR (measles, mumps, rubella)
- Hepatitis B (series 3 immunizations in a 6-month period)
- Tetanus Booster (within 5 years)
- Varicella (chicken pox) MD certification that student has had the disease or vaccination is required.

Under special circumstances, medical or religious exemptions may be obtained. However, personal or philosophical exemptions are not acceptable.

At times, a student may be too ill to attend school. As a general guideline, students should stay home if they have nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, or an elevated temperature. A student should be free of such conditions for twenty-four hours before returning to school. A student who is out of school for more than five consecutive days must have a note from a doctor prior to return. The nurse may excuse a student from participation in physical education class upon the request of either the student or parent. The nurse may require a doctor's note if the student either has multiple requests for exclusion or needs extended absence from physical education.

The Lenox Public School System has a medication policy that insures student safety and adherence to good nursing practice. **In order for the school to administer an over-the-counter medication (such as aspirin, Tylenol, etc.) a medication authorization form signed by both the parent and physician must be on file. In order for the school to administer a prescription medication, both parent and physician, on an annual basis, must sign a medication authorization form.** Medication authorization forms may be obtained from the nurse. Students are not permitted to carry their own medications except in special circumstances approved by a physician and coordinated by the nurse and parent. Please feel free to contact the nurse with any questions about this policy.

## Substance Abuse Counselor

A substance abuse counselor is available on location daily to meet with students and/or families for assistance with substance abuse or smoking cessation. Students may make individual appointments through the guidance office or parents may make an appointment by calling the guidance office at 637-5560.

## School Library Media Center

The School Library Media Center serves the informational, curricular, recreational reading and learning needs of grades 6, 7 and 8 and is an integral part of the Middle School student's school experience. All 6<sup>th</sup> graders regularly visit the library every two weeks for orientation to library resources and procedures, book talks, storytelling, and book selection. Seventh and eighth graders continue building library skills through a diverse project approach. Middle school students learn information and reference skills through curriculum-based research projects designed in collaboration with classroom teachers and the librarian. Through books, periodicals, audio-visual, and computer-based resources, students learn to use a multi-faceted approach to information selection, retrieval, evaluation, and use. Most importantly, students learn to use library resources not only for classroom assignments but also for life-long learning and enjoyment.

The library is available to all students during and after school. After school library hours are considered an extension of the school day and all school rules will continue to apply to after school hours. Monday through Thursday the library is open until 3:30. On Fridays, the library closes at 3:00. On the first Monday of the month, the library may close at 2:35 p.m. for faculty meetings. Students who use the library during class visits or on an individual basis are expected to remain in the library with work to do. No food or drink is allowed in the library. The following rules apply:

1. First priority is given to class visits arranged by teachers. Library closings will be posted.
2. Students in grades 6 - 8 must present a signed and dated research pass obtained from a classroom teacher. Only valid passes will be accepted. Students are expected to work quietly while in the Library.
3. Students must remain in the Library for the entire class period. Make sure you have everything you need with you.
4. Students who use the library for purposes other than research, reading, or other assigned work will be asked to leave.

Students who violate library rules will be asked to either return to their class or to the office at the discretion of the library staff. Repeated failure to follow rules will result in a loss of library privileges.

- Because students and faculty share all Library resources, prompt return of all materials is required. All students are assigned a patron number that allows for the borrowing of books and audio-visual resources. All items must be checked out at the circulation desk. Overdue notices will be sent to English teachers for grades 6 -8. All students are responsible for the return of materials. Failure to return library materials will be considered an infraction of school rules and may result in the loss of school privileges. Replacement costs for lost or damaged items will be the responsibility of the student.

## ***INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM***

### **General Information**

All middle school students are enrolled in the major subject areas of English, mathematics, science, and social studies every year. These are full-year courses taught by grade level teams of teachers whose primary concern is the middle school. In grade six, all students also take reading for the full year; and all students in all grades take physical education every other day.

Middle school students are normally scheduled every period. When they are not in a major subject area class or in physical education, they are enrolled in one or more of a variety of exploratory courses called "mini courses." Most mini courses are up and doing hands-on classes that meet every other day for either a quarter or half of the school

year. The only elective choices middle school students have are whether or not to take band and whether or not to take a foreign language. Band is available in all middle school grades and foreign language study is available in grades seven and eight. Due to schedule conflict, students who elect band will be unable to take some of the mini courses.

## Teaching Teams

When scheduling allows, the teachers for grades 6, 7, and 8 form teams for their grade level and meet on a regular basis. Team meetings provide an opportunity for the teachers to coordinate plans, discuss problems, and meet with the guidance counselor or administrative staff. Faculty work together to integrate the curriculum across disciplines, and students are taught to see the inter-relationships among these areas of knowledge. Teachers also use this time to see individual students or meet with parents. Parents wishing to see their child's teachers should phone the guidance office at 637-5560 for an appointment.

## The Resource Room

The resource room program is designed for students who are experiencing some difficulty in one or more of their courses and who need academic assistance. The type and amount of assistance is flexible and depends upon the individual needs of the student. Instruction is provided either individually or in small groups and is tailored to the needs and abilities of each student. Students are graded each marking period and must complete class and homework assignments and attend regularly to earn a passing grade. A student must have a disability that affects learning to qualify for extra help in the resource room. A parent or student aged 14 and older may request an evaluation to determine if the student has a disability by contacting the guidance counselor.

## Hand-Held Calculator Use

Professional mathematics organizations such as the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, the Mathematics Association of America, and the Mathematical Sciences Education Board of the National Academy of Sciences have strongly endorsed the use of calculators in mathematics instruction. Calculators enhance problem-solving skills, assist in the discovery of new mathematics concepts, and reduce time spent on repetitious computation at the expense of process skills. Efficient calculator use is also an expected skill in academic, personal, and occupational life.

Calculator use is gradually increased in grades six and seven and fully integrated into the instructional program by grade eight to facilitate increased attention to problem solving. We encourage students to purchase their own scientific calculators for both home and school use.

The following guidelines are established for the use of calculators as part of the mathematics program:

**1. *Calculators should be used when they:***

- extend students' capability to do problem solving;
- speed up a search for patterns;
- enable more examples to be considered;
- remove the anxiety of computational failure;
- provide motivation and confidence that a problem can be solved;
- offer access to mathematical ideas not available without them;
- eliminate tedious or routine computations;
- allow for problems of greater intricacy and difficulty;
- contribute to further applications and exploration of related topics;
- save time without significantly detracting from the curriculum objectives.

**2. *Calculators should not be used:***

- when there is no advantage to performing the learning activity with a calculator;
- so extensively that opportunities to use and maintain personal skills are significantly diminished;
- in competitive situations in which all students do not have equal access to a calculator;
- as a substitute for learning basic computational and estimation skills.

## Report Card Grades

The following grades may be earned:

A = Excellent

B = Good

C = Average

D = Poor

F = Failing

I = Incomplete

P = Passing

WP = Withdrawn Passing

WF = Withdrawn Failing

## Incomplete Grades

A grade of 'I' (incomplete) may only be issued under extenuating circumstances beyond the student's control when s/he is unable to submit all work during the normal course time. This grade may not be awarded simply for missing an important test. An incomplete must be made up within two weeks after grades close unless the teacher grants an additional extension of one week. Any additional extension must receive the written approval of the Principal. Failure to make up the required work within the specified time limit will result in a change of grade from 'I' to whatever the adjusted grade is with a zero averaged in for the missing work.

## Honor Roll

The Honor Roll recognizes excellence in achievement in all areas. The following guidelines provide all students with the opportunity to be recognized for their success.

Eligibility for the honor roll is determined as follows:

High Honors: A grade of B+ or higher in all classes

Honors: A grade of B- or higher in all classes

Grade 8 Algebra 1 is a honors course for high school credit.

An (F) in a course graded pass/fail, or carrying more than one course graded pass/fail, shall disqualify a student from the honor roll. A (P) will not be averaged in with graded courses.

## ***FIELD TRIPS AND EXCURSIONS***

Students participating in a field trip or excursion are representing both our school and community; and exemplary behavior is expected at all times. Going on a field trip or excursion is a privilege, and students are required to have an acceptable record of behavior and achievement (as outlined below) in order to participate. Parent consent, as indicated by signature on specific forms provided by the school, is also required for participation. Some field trips and excursions may require additional rules.

**Field trips** are integral parts of the school program where students investigate or participate in real or lifelike experiences away from the classroom. The school pays most of the costs for field trips; and all students in the participating class are expected to attend. Examples include visits to museums, historic sites, or nature centers.

**Excursions** are supplements to the school program and typically do not require the participation of all students in a group or class. Examples include trips sponsored by student clubs, student foreign exchange programs, and travel of special interest groups outside of school hours. Participating students pay most or all of the cost of excursions.

### **Minimum standards for behavior and achievement:**

1. The teacher(s) sponsoring the fieldtrip may establish an academic prerequisite as a condition for participation on the trip. Any prerequisite shall be directly related to the trip and be assigned at least 10 school days in advance of the trip. A student who does not complete the prerequisite shall be so informed by the teacher at least three school days prior to the date of the trip. The principal may waive this requirement when extenuating circumstances exist that are beyond the student's control that affect the student's ability to complete the prerequisite. The SPOT Committee will review all such cases.
2. The following discipline record will exclude you from a field trip or excursion for a period of 90 school days:  
    2 assignments to OSS (Out of School Suspension)  
    or  
    3 days resulting from any combination of ISS (In School) and/or OSS
3. If you are assigned to either ISS or OSS during those 90 school days, the 90-day count will begin again from the date of the suspension. The 90-day count will carry over to the following school year if there are fewer than 90 school days remaining in the current year.

4. You must not have a suspension (ISS or OSS) resulting from misbehavior on a field trip within the last twelve months. If an office-assigned detention is assigned as a result of misbehavior on a field trip within the last twelve months, it will carry the equivalent weight of an ISS toward future field trip eligibility.
5. Standards beyond the minimum standards stated above may be required for overnight and/or international travel. Such standards will be approved by the principal and the individual(s) sponsoring the trip and will be stated when the trip is announced.

A student who is ineligible to participate in a field trip is to attend school on the day of the trip and complete an alternative assignment in lieu of the work related to the field trip.

## ***STUDENT ACTIVITIES***

Participation in school-sponsored activities such as dances, clubs, and student government is fun and helps build school spirit. Most activities need student help with organization and planning particularly from members of the sponsoring club or class. The first priority of every student is academic success. Classroom and disciplinary obligations always have priority over participation in co-curricular and extra-curricular activities.

### **Clubs and Organizations**

Clubs provide an excellent opportunity for students to pursue specific interests beyond the regular school day. Below is a sampling of clubs/organizations open to mid-school students:

Math Team	School Band	Art Club
Student Council/Class Office	Technology Club	Going Places
Destination Imagination	Crafts Club	Outing Club

### **Drama**

Drama is an after school, co-curricular program whose educational objectives are framed within the English department guidelines. Students adapt works of fiction or non-fiction, interpret established dramatic works, or collaborate to produce an original theater piece. Drama schedules two middle school productions per year.

Participation in the drama program is guided by the Code of Conduct, school attendance policies, and by maintaining passing grades. To participate in the drama program, a

student must have passed the equivalent of 25 credit hours in the preceding marking period. The 25 credit hours must include a minimum of four major subjects. Also, a student who is suspended from school (OSS) is also suspended from the drama program for the entire duration of the suspension. Students are expected to comply with all aspects of these policies. Modifications to the school attendance policy will only be considered during Tech Week. Failure to abide by these policies will result in loss of participation in current and/or future productions.

## ***INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORTS***

The athletic program is an important part of the total school program and is open to students in grades seven through twelve. Participation in the athletic program is a privilege and is subject to a number of requirements outlined in the Athletic Code section of this handbook. Coaches also have information about the requirements for each particular team.

Students playing on cooperative teams must adhere to the rules in both schools.

The following sports teams are typically offered:

- FALL: Soccer, Cross-Country Running, Golf, Crew, Volleyball, Football (with Lee High School team.)
- WINTER: Basketball, Cross-Country Skiing, Alpine Skiing, Swimming (with Monument Mountain), Hockey (with Mt. Everett H.S. team.)
- SPRING: Baseball, Softball, Tennis, Track, Lacrosse (with St. Joseph's H.S. team)

Students wishing to request the addition of an interscholastic sport must see the Athletic Director one year prior to the requested sport's season.

## **Dances**

Classes, clubs, and other approved organizations may sponsor dances. The principal must approve all dances. Middle school dances are for students in grades 6, 7, and 8 only and will start at 6:30 p.m. and end at 9:30 p.m. No guests or high school students are allowed to attend. Eighth graders may bring a guest to the grade 8 graduation dance, but that guest must be a mid-school student and must be signed up prior to the dance. Only current Lenox students are allowed at dances unless they are a guest at the mid-school graduation dance. Five adult chaperones are required including faculty advisors/sponsors. A Lenox police officer may be required at the discretion of the principal/assistant principal. Students will not be admitted to the dance after 8:00 p.m. and will not be readmitted after leaving. It is the student's responsibility to inform their parent/guardian if they are leaving early or have made a change of plans.

## ***STUDENT GOVERNMENT***

Holding a class office or being elected to student council is a privilege. Class officers and council members are expected to serve as role models and to uphold the standards and ideals of the school and community. Each class has a president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer and elects two students to serve as representatives on the student council. The middle school and high school each have their own student council. Elections for all high school class offices will be held in May of each year. Elections for all middle school offices will be held in September/October of each year. Elections for class office will be held prior to student council elections. There is a standard ballot for each office that requires five nomination signatures and a paragraph describing the candidate's reasons for running for office. The advisor must then approve the ballot. A description of the duties for each office is available from the class advisor.

### **Standards for Running for Class Office:**

Academic - No report card grade of "F" in the previous two marking periods

Disciplinary - The following discipline record will exclude you from running for office in the next election:

2 assignments to OSS

or

3 days resulting from any combination of In-School or Out-of-School Suspension

Class Dues - Class dues must be paid in full.

### **Conditions for Retaining Office**

1. Any infraction of school rules that requires three or more consecutive days of suspension will result in immediate removal from office for the remainder of the term of office.
2. Conviction of a crime will result in permanent expulsion from all class offices.
3. A second violation of the school's tobacco policy will result in removal from office for the remainder of the term of office.

4. Passing grades must be maintained. A student must have passed 25 credit hours in the preceding marking period. The 25 credit hours must include a minimum of four major subjects. A student who does not maintain this standard will be removed from office for the remainder of the term of office.
5. Loss of office will not result in new elections. The class advisor may appoint the runner-up.
6. Class advisors and the assistant principal will serve as a standing advisory board to discuss issues as necessary.

## Class Dues

Class dues are used to pay for a number of student activities. Each class establishes the level of dues that each student in the class is expected to pay. Dues are payable each year, and failure to pay dues may result in exclusion from certain class activities. The principal will grant students experiencing financial hardship a waiver of dues.

## ***FEDERAL & STATE REGULATIONS***

### STUDENTS AGED 14 AND OLDER

Students aged fourteen and older have the right to look at their official school records housed in the guidance department and have the authority to allow others to see their file. Fourteen year old students also have the right to attend their TEAM meetings held in accordance with the provisions of the Massachusetts Department of Education Special Education Regulations (603 CMR 28.00).

### PROTECTION AGAINST DISCRIMINATION

The Lenox Public School System is committed to ensuring equal educational opportunities for all students. In accordance with Title IX of the Education Acts of 1972, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and Chapter 622 of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the Lenox Public Schools affirm that no person shall, on the basis of race, color, sex, age, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination in any education program or activity it operates, including employment therein, and admission thereto. See page 15 in the Code of Conduct section for additional information.

Any complaints or inquiries concerning this policy should be directed as follows:

Susan M. Strong, Principal  
Lenox Memorial Middle & High School  
197 East Street  
Lenox, MA 01240  
(413) 637-5560

## EDUCATION OF STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

### SECTION 504

In compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Lenox Public Schools affirm that no qualified handicapped person shall, on the basis of handicap, be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity sponsored by the Lenox Public Schools.

### SPECIAL EDUCATION

The guidelines regarding special education are based on state and federal law. The state special education law sets procedures for identification and assessment of students with special needs. A student must receive a complete and comprehensive evaluation to determine if the student has a disability and is eligible for special education. If eligible, the evaluation(s) will assist in determining appropriate special education supports and services. Parents who have a concern about their child's development or have a suspicion about a possible disability may refer their child for an initial evaluation. Upon receipt of a request for an initial evaluation, the school district must send notice to the parent and must receive the parent's written consent to conduct the evaluation.

In Massachusetts, in order to be found eligible for special education, a student must demonstrate the presence of a disability that prevents the student from making effective progress in regular education and requires specially designed instruction or a related service in order to access the general curriculum. Areas of disability include autism, developmental delay, intellectual, sensory, neurological, emotional, physical or health impairment, communication, or specific learning disability. Although the state testing program, the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) is an evaluation, it is not part of the evaluation conducted to determine if a student is eligible for special education.

Whenever a referral is made, parents are notified in writing. An evaluation or assessment will occur only after written parental consent. Following the evaluation period, parents and members of the evaluation team will meet to discuss the assessments and whether or not the student is eligible for special education services. If a student is eligible for special education services, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) will be developed. Parents then have the right to accept or reject the IEP (in part, or in full). If the parents disagree with the special education program proposed for their child, an appeal process is available.

Requests for further information, complaints or inquiries concerning either Section 504 or special education should be directed to:

Ms. Cynthia Dinan  
Director of Special Education  
Morris School  
129 West Street  
Lenox, MA 01240  
(413) 637-5571

## RELEASE OF STUDENT DIRECTORY INFORMATION

Massachusetts's Student Records Regulations permit the release of "directory" information without consent. Directory information includes data such as student's name, address, phone numbers, date of birth, major course of study, participation in officially recognized school activities, awards, honors, dates of attendance, and post high school plans.

In Lenox, such information is typically used in the newsletter, in press releases, in sports coverage in local newspapers, and as part of the college/university application process. We do not release phone numbers without consent. We also provide names and addresses to recognized groups supporting school activities such as PTO and booster clubs. You have the right to request that such information not be released without your prior consent. If you wish to make such a request, please do so in a note sent to the attention of the guidance office.

## TRANSFER OF STUDENT RECORDS

If a student transfers to another school, the student's record will be sent to the new school without the written consent of the parent or student.

## ACCESS OF STUDENT RECORDS BY NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS

Massachusetts's law (Chapter 71, Section 34H) specifies detailed procedures that govern access to student records by parents who do not have physical custody of their children. For more information, please contact the principal's office at 637-5560.

## HOMELESS ASSISTANCE ACT

The federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act requires school districts to immediately enroll homeless students in school, even if they don't have the documents typically required for enrollment in their immediate possession. The appropriate guidance counselor will provide assistance to families in obtaining records from the prior school. A homeless student may also remain in their school of origin until the end of the school year in which they obtain housing. Transportation for the student will be provided at no cost to the family or student.

## ***GRADE 6 COURSE DESCRIPTIONS***

### Language Arts 6

The Language Arts program introduces students to a variety of literary genres throughout the year in addition to the reading curriculum. The genres will include, yet are not limited to novels, short stories, plays, poetry, newspaper, and magazine articles. Students will read, discuss, synthesize and provide written and oral interpretation and analysis of the literary material. They will produce responses to these literary pieces using letters, the five paragraph essay, reflections, creative writing and group-created oral reports.

Students will also: study various traditional as well as current poets, read and analyze several types of poetry, learn about figurative language and how it enhances meaning, and learn how to generate their own poetry. They will also be able to produce and display content through the use of modern technology.

In addition to studying literature and poetry, there will be a heavy emphasis on all types of writing, including but not limited to folktale/creative writing, all types of formal essays, paragraph writing, formal letter writing, editorials, and speeches. Students will also learn through formal instruction and through meaningful text, the importance of mechanics and rich vocabulary.

Most importantly, students will learn how to get along in groups, problem solve and collaborate in order to produce successful end results and to support their peers.

## Mathematics 6

This course begins with a review of numeration, place value, and addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division of whole numbers. From there the course moves on to the same operations with decimal numbers and fractions. Other topics such as metric systems, basic geometry, and statistics are introduced. Throughout the year, emphasis is given to the practicality of math and its application to real life uses. Students are taught the many strategies of problem solving and then work in groups to solve various problems. Calculators are used occasionally to do computation during problem solving.

## Accelerated Mathematics 6

Recommended 6th graders will be allowed to take accelerated math. This course includes all of the skills taught in regular math class with additional topics such as percent, integers, proportions, and transformation geometry. There is an even greater emphasis on problem solving and practical applications of math.

## Social Studies 6

In 6<sup>th</sup> grade Social Studies students will be studying the world from a geographic prospective. Students will be learning the skills necessary to become global citizens. They begin the year by learning the five themes of geography and taking a look at the tools a geographer would use to better understand the world. The focus then shifts to an in depth look at Latin America, Africa, Europe, and Asia. In addition, students will learn about social issues that concern all countries such as available resources, conflict, poverty, refugees, natural disasters, and pollution.

## Science

Students examine the sciences and their relationship to the world around them through identified key concepts. Extensive hands-on activities and experiments guide students' understanding of the scientific method. Emphasis is placed on observing what happens in an experiment and in drawing meaningful conclusions. Students are expected to maintain a journal of their observations and to present their conclusions in a written lab format.

## Reading

The reading program combines skill development and literature. Much of the literature is chosen to complement the social studies program. Vocabulary, comprehension, and decoding skills are developed through a variety of resources.

## Health & Wellness

Health & Wellness meets every other day and is required of all students unless they are specifically excused in writing by a licensed physician. Successful completion of the program requires attendance and active participation, including proper dress. The program is designed to give every student a chance to find and enjoy a lifelong sport and to build an understanding that activity and exercise are valuable contributors to good health now and in later life. The program is coeducational with an emphasis in middle school on organization, providing an outlet for energy, and cultivation of a knowledge and respect for rules and regulations. There are opportunities for participation in team sports, social growth activities, physical fitness training, and outdoor activities. Students are graded on an A - F basis based primarily on active participation in class. As with all courses graded on an A - F basis, grades earned in physical education count toward eligibility for honor roll.

## ***GRADE 6 "MINI COURSE" DESCRIPTIONS***

**"Mini Courses"** are of shorter duration than major subject courses and provide students with skills of immediate use as well as exposure to a wide range of experiences that they may wish to pursue further in high school. A mini course typically meets every other day for half the year or for one marking period.

### **Middle School Band**

The middle school music program consists of a sixth grade band, a seventh grade band, and an eighth grade band that meet during the school day. Seventh and eighth grade students may, with the director's permission, participate in the Jazz Ensemble or Pep Band. These two groups meet after school. Middle school students wishing to begin study of a band instrument may do so by arrangement with the director.

### **Art**

Sixth graders participate in a general introductory art program exploring a wide variety of two- and three-dimensional media. Emphasis is on self-expression and development of appreciation of their own work as well as that of other students.

### **Introduction to World Languages**

Sixth grade students take one quarter of French and one quarter of Spanish. They are introduced to everyday vocabulary, basic sounds, and structures through group activities and simulations. This introduction allows students to better understand what a "foreign language" is and to make a more informed choice about which language they may wish to pursue the following year.

### **Computer Technology**

Computer technology 6 provides students with the basic techniques necessary to use the computer as a tool for personal/school application. Students learn the commands needed to do writing assignments and Internet projects on school computers. While practicing these skills, students will be doing work directly related to the sixth grade social studies, science, language arts, and health curriculums.

## Health Education

Sixth grade students study the characteristics of early adolescence, self-confidence, communication skills, understanding emotions, and peer relationships. Healthy lifestyles are studied including nutrition, fitness, and dealing with stress as well as a review of the Drug Awareness Resistance Education (DARE) approach to substance abuse.

## ***GRADE 7 COURSE DESCRIPTIONS***

### Social Studies 7:

Students will use their reading, research, and note-taking skills to explore interdisciplinary units based on the ancient civilizations of Mesopotamia, Egypt, Greece, and Rome. An example of an essential question that guides this course is, "What constitutes a civilization?" In addition, students will learn to differentiate between primary and secondary sources, how to properly use citations, to distinguish between fact and opinion, and how to write from an historian's perspective.

### English 7

This literature-based program emphasizes reading, writing, and critical thinking skills. Literary analysis skills are developed, and students address the structure and style of different literary genres including the novel, the short story, the play, the personal essay and poetry. Students read and analyze shared texts - many of which connect to work done in other disciplines - and read independently-selected books. Students continue to develop their paragraph-writing skills and learn to write critical, narrative, persuasive and descriptive essays. Students craft short stories and a variety of poems. Students explore the origins of the English language as they work on vocabulary, and grammar and writing mechanics are reviewed regularly.

### Science 7

Seventh grade science is an activity based course designed to encourage students to develop critical and creative thinking skills and to foster independence in learning. Students engage in a variety of activities that increase familiarity with the scientific method and information-based technology. Earth Science is the primary focus, but concepts from Life Sciences, Physical Sciences, Technology and Engineering are integrated into the curriculum. Students start the year by investigating the relationship between climate, terrain and ecosystems. They then examine how Earth's history can be studied through the geological record; some of the topics included are:

erosion, weathering and sedimentation, fossil formation and the evidence for plate tectonics. Students compare past and present conditions of Berkshire County, as well as comparing Earth's geology to that of other planets. Climate change, both past and future, is a recurring theme throughout the year.

## Mathematics

Fundamental operations with whole numbers and fractions are included. There is an emphasis on decimals. Each area stresses problem solving, estimation, and calculator use. Ratio, proportion, and percent concepts are expanded. Graphing, probability and statistics, and geometry coverage are continued from grade six.

## Accelerated Mathematics 7

Recommended 7<sup>th</sup> graders are allowed to take accelerated math 7. This is a pre-algebra course with emphasis on the language and symbols of algebra. Some of the topics covered are: algebraic expressions, equations and inequalities, spatial thinking and area and volume. Projects showing the application of mathematical concepts will be done throughout the year.

## Health and Wellness

Health & Wellness meets every other day and is required of all students unless they are specifically excused in writing by a licensed physician. Successful completion of the program requires attendance and active participation, including proper dress. The program is designed to give every student a chance to find and enjoy a lifelong sport and to build an understanding that activity and exercise are valuable contributors to good health now and in later life. The program is coeducational with an emphasis in middle school on organization, providing an outlet for energy, and cultivation of a knowledge and respect for rules and regulations. There are opportunities for participation in team sports, social growth activities, physical fitness training, and outdoor activities. Students are graded on an A - F basis based primarily on active participation in class. As with all courses graded on an A - F basis, grades earned in physical education count toward eligibility for honor roll.

## ***GRADE 7 MINI COURSE DESCRIPTIONS***

### **Middle School Band**

The middle school music program consists of a sixth grade band, a seventh grade band, and an eighth grade band that meet during the school day. Seventh and eighth grade students may, with the director's permission, participate in the Jazz Ensemble or Pep Band. These two groups meet after school. Middle school students wishing to begin study of a band instrument may do so by arrangement with the director.

### **Computer/Keyboarding 7**

This course is primarily designed to teach the basic word processing and keyboarding skills and techniques necessary to use the computer as a tool for personal/school applications. Emphasis will be placed on proper fingering position, correct alphabetic and numeric finger reaches using the touch-typing method, and proper numeric pad technique. The goal will be to type without looking at the keys at the rate of 26 words per minute with no more than 1 error per minute during a 2 minute timed writing. Students will learn to format various documents from a multi-page document to personal/business letters. Computer literacy is also taught through readings and software applications.

### **Health Education**

This course focuses on three main areas: first aid, safety, and disease process/wellness. A refresher on substance abuse is placed in the disease process unit. Successful completion of the American Red Cross standard first aid course enables students to be certified in adult CPR as well as first aid. Other topics studied in sixth grade health are continued including self-confidence, emotions, peer relationships, family relationships, decision making, and goal setting. All seventh grade students take health for one quarter of the year.

### **Technology**

This is an introductory course that allows for exploration and application of technology through simulation and "hands-on" experiences. Traditional and computer aided drafting (CAD) continues to be the foundation of the course. Basic electronics, robotics, and design are introduced allowing for a broad-based technology exploration experience. All seventh grade students take technology for one quarter of the year.

## Civics

Students will learn the rights and duties of citizens and the principle of equal rights for all. They will consider the nature of civic virtue in a school, a community, and a nation; and identify the major obstacles and threats to civil rights. Students will compare, contrast, and analyze diverse forms of government, the opportunities they promote and their effects on human rights.

## Careers

This seventh grade course is an introduction to investigating careers, to learn more about yourself, to explore your interests and aptitudes, to examine your values and decision-making skills, and to expose students to various career options. Basic math and English composition skills will be incorporated.

### GOALS:

Upon completion of this course, you will:

1. be able to develop decision-making, problem-solving, and critical thinking skills needed to enter the twenty-first century.
  2. develop a positive self-image and self-esteem.
  3. develop a positive work behavior.
  4. become life-long learners and self-directed individuals.
  5. explore career options.
- 

## Newspaper

In this course, the students will research topics and/or interview people to use in producing a middle school publication. A desktop publishing program will be used to plan a student publication, called "Whatever News" in a newspaper format. All students are responsible for each phase of the publication and grades are based on initiative and effort.

### GOALS

1. To write eight articles for the newspaper.
2. To edit and correct articles.
3. To plan, design, assemble, insert pictures, and print documents.
4. To continue to develop computer skills.
5. To continue to develop writing skills.

## Wood Shop

This is a beginning woodworking course. Through the construction of small projects, the student learns various methods of shaping, joining and finishing of wood. Emphasis is placed upon safe working habits and on the proper care and use of hand tools and machines.

## ***GRADE 8 COURSE DESCRIPTIONS***

### **English 8**

Eighth grade English consists of three basic components: literature, writing, and vocabulary. The literature selections aim at developing sensitivity to other people and an appreciation for the hardships and accomplishments of others. Students are exposed to many literary styles and several genres. Emphasis is placed on historical fiction to complement work done in eighth grade social studies.

Students are exposed to a wide variety of creative and expository forms of writing in English 8. The methods used reflect the philosophy of writing as process. Students refine brainstorming, revision, conferencing, and editing techniques.

The purpose of the vocabulary component is to broaden students' written and spoken language and to develop word-attack skills. Vocabulary words are also derived from the literature.

### **Science 8**

A comprehensive study of matter and energy is presented. Students should gain a clear understanding of such fundamental concepts as Newton's three laws of motion, simple machines and how they are used in our everyday lives, forces in liquids and gases, the structure of matter, magnetic and electric forces, chemical and nuclear reactions, and the action of waves.

Several different approaches of study are used such as hands-on science activities, lecture/note-taking, and class discussions.

### **Mathematics 8**

Eighth grade math is a transition between fundamental arithmetic operations and algebra. While this pre-algebra class does review everything that was covered in 7th grade, the emphasis is on application of these concepts. Calculator usage, problem-

solving skills, percentages, probability and statistics, as well as geometry concepts and applications are stressed.

## Algebra I Honors

Some students are recommended to take Algebra I Honors. This recommendation is based on performance in pre-algebra (7th grade honors) and on test results. An average of B- in pre-algebra is expected, and testing must show a strong computational ability and a readiness for the abstract nature of algebra. Five credits toward graduation are given upon successful completion. This course is more rigorous than math 8 with considerably higher homework requirements.

## Social Studies 8

The eighth grade social studies course provides students with an overview of American history concentrated specifically on four target areas: revolution and independence, the political foundation of the United States, the Civil War and human rights, and industrialization and immigration. Students learn to think as historians and are encouraged to look at history critically and to question traditional historical interpretations.

Many methods are employed in this course, and an attempt is made to interweave experiential activities with more "conventional" classroom methods. An effort is made to depart from the "textbook approach" to history and instead provide students with readings, lessons, and activities that represent different viewpoints and stimulate opinion formation as well as critical thinking and writing.

## Spanish and French

An eighth grade student may enter a foreign language course at the introductory level. The choices are Introductory Spanish or Introductory French.

Foreign language courses started in 7th grade continue on a more advanced level. More complex grammatical structures and new vocabulary are introduced in each lesson. Knowledge of the foreign culture is also broadened, and students are encouraged to read simple contemporary magazines or simple short stories. Activities, role-playing, and conversations are used to develop oral communication skills. Five credits toward graduation are awarded after successful completion of two years of study in the same language. Students completing two years with an average grade of at least C- and the recommendation of their teacher are eligible for entry into French III or Spanish III.

## Health and Wellness

Health & Wellness meets every other day and is required of all students unless they are specifically excused in writing by a licensed physician. Successful completion of the program requires attendance and active participation, including proper dress. The program is designed to give every student a chance to find and enjoy a lifelong sport and to build an understanding that activity and exercise are valuable contributors to good health now and in later life. The program is coeducational with an emphasis in middle school on organization, providing an outlet for energy, and cultivation of a knowledge and respect for rules and regulations. There are opportunities for participation in team sports, social growth activities, physical fitness training, and outdoor activities. Students are graded on an A - F basis based primarily on active participation in class. As with all courses graded on an A - F basis, grades earned in physical education count toward eligibility for honor roll.

## ***GRADE 8 "MINI COURSE" DESCRIPTIONS***

### Health Education

The 8th grade health curriculum includes the study of health trends and fads, consumerism, death and dying, the aging process, and human sexuality and sexually transmitted diseases. A refresher course in adult CPR is offered for students to renew their one-year certification in adult CPR. All students take health for half the year.

### Computer Literacy

The eighth grade computer literacy course provides for further improvement in keyboarding, word processing, databases, spreadsheets, Internet projects, and the integration of all these skills for use in school reports and presentations. The applications that we study are part of Microsoft Office.

### Art

Eighth grade art emphasizes the process of printmaking as an art form. Students are provided with the opportunity to explore relief printing and monoprinting. They will acquire the skills to cut multiple blocks so they may learn the application of color registration. Design skills and color theory are integrated into the learning process.

### Wood Shop

This is a beginning woodworking course. Through the construction of small projects, the student learns various methods of shaping, joining and finishing of wood. Emphasis is placed upon safe working habits and on the proper care and use of hand tools and machines. All eighth grade students take wood shop every other day for one quarter of the year.

## Money Management

This eighth grade middle school financial literacy course will focus on how to handle personal finances and why it is important. Students will be taught the basic skills on budgeting, banking services, investments, savings, credit, and checking accounts. This course meets every other day for one quarter.

Course Objectives:

The students will be able to learn:

1. Why it is important to manage your money?
2. How to make a budget plan based for spending and savings of your money.
3. How to be a comparison shopper.
4. What are the sources of income?
5. What are the different types of savings and investments?
6. How to recognize investment fraud?
7. How are advertisements made?
8. What is credit and the advantages/disadvantages of using credit cards.
9. How to maintain a checking account and prepare a bank reconciliation



## Newspaper 8

This eighth grade course builds on skills acquired in "Newspaper 7." Emphasis is placed on creating and editing text and illustrations; planning, designing, assembling, and printing document layouts, and reinforcing English composition skills. Each student will be involved and responsible for all phases of the quarterly publication of the "Lenox News."

## Computer Aided Drafting (CAD)

CAD 8 furthers seventh grade study of graphics using traditional drafting layout tools and CAD. Students also apply geometry and projection skills to develop 3-view drawings as well as ortho and exact sizing skills.

## Technology 8

This course builds upon the grade seven exploration of circuit board electronic assembly (surface mount technology) and investigates the effects of circuit modifications. Emphasis is placed on the application of technology through simulation and "hands-on" experiences. Meter reading and measurement techniques are introduced. Electronic analysis of binary numbering and decoding into numerical display leads to the construction of an electronic clock circuit that is retained by the students at the conclusion of the course.

## Geography

Students will learn map reading and other geography skills as guided by the National Standards in Geography. Students will also become aware of many the physical and political features of the world that play a part in the major events of our contemporary world. The goal is geography literacy coupled with problem solving skills.

## Economics

Economics helps students understand the principle characteristics of the U.S. economic system and the role of business. Activities are designed to reinforce economic concepts taught in American and Massachusetts's history. Students learn steps in organizing a business and producing and marketing a product. They also study the social responsibilities of business and the role of government in the U.S. economy.

## Drama

Eighth grade drama emphasizes creative problem solving experiences where, through a series of structured exercises and responses, students work to develop the natural voice and the art form natural to themselves. Students will read a short work to consider for possible adaptation. They will create their own short pieces. They will improvise and react to controlled situations that require decision making and evaluation.

While the long-term goal of drama is production, growth will be measured through increased ownership and personal responsibility. All eighth grade students who are not in band take drama every other day for one quarter of the year.

## Middle School Band

The middle school music program consists of a sixth grade band, a seventh grade band, and an eighth grade band that meet during the school day. Seventh and eighth grade students may, with the director's permission, participate in the Jazz Ensemble or Pep Band. These two groups meet after school. Middle school students wishing to begin study of a band instrument may do so by arrangement with the director.

## American Sign Language

American Sign Language (ASL) is an introduction to the vocabulary, grammar and structure of ASL. Students are exposed to the five parameters of ASL: handshape, location, movement, orientation and facial expression, and how changing any one of these changes the meaning of the sign. They gain the ability to incorporate basic vocabulary, numbers and fingerspelling to express ideas. Students also gain an understanding of the various careers that they could pursue using ASL. The class typically concludes with students interpreting a song in ASL.