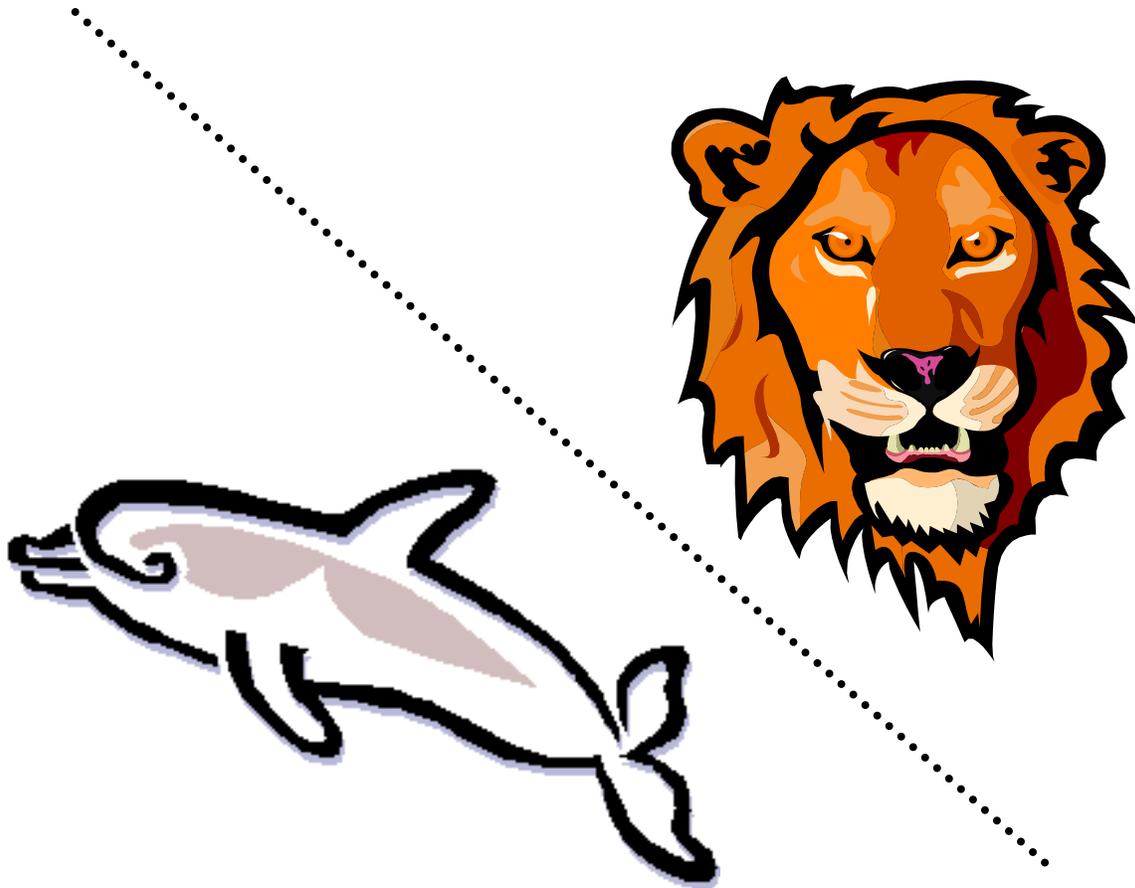


Middletown Township Public Schools Middle School Course Selection Guide



DISTRICT MISSION STATEMENT

The Middletown Township Public School District, in partnership with our resourceful and historically rich community, provides students with a rigorous and relevant education, rooted in the New Jersey and Common Core State Standards, motivating them to recognize and develop their full potential as responsible citizens, contributing to an ever-evolving global society.

Bayshore

Thompson

Thorne

2016 – 2017

DISTRICT PHILOSOPHY OF INSTRUCTION

In order to prepare our students for the ever-increasing demand for a literate, technology-oriented work force, Middletown Township Public School District embraces an instructional philosophy that is student-centered, inquiry-based, and that differentiates instruction based on students' individual abilities.

Teachers, as facilitators of lifelong learning, challenge students by providing an environment in which the students become active participants engaged in working together on projects and in solving problems that involve or simulate authentic data and events.

Students learn to value a variety of different approaches and are taught to take responsibility for their own meaningful learning as they become more adept at communicating their reasoning and in asking questions to help clarify their thinking and that of their classmates.

MIDDLE SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

Emerging adolescents have special characteristics and needs. Middle school provides a balanced program and environment to meet these needs in terms of learning styles and social development and provides for individual differences. Students are guided to take greater responsibility for their own learning both in the classroom and outside through counseling, extra-curricular activities, and age-appropriate leadership opportunities. Through partnership and communication with the home, middle school is intended to facilitate a smooth transition from elementary to high school, and to assist students in developing their potential.

Each student is challenged to recognize his/her capacity for achievement, to develop a positive self-concept, and to grow in self-discipline and social consciousness. In addition to providing academic, social, and life skills, students are taught to appreciate a wide variety of learning experiences and to become productive, creative, and responsible members of society in a changing world.

MIDDLE SCHOOL CURRICULUM

The program for all students at the middle school level consists of the five core subjects: English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and World Language. In addition, students take Physical Education and Health, Computers, and electives that enable them to further explore personal interests. Throughout the program, students are provided with opportunities to help them develop the skills necessary to take responsibility for their own learning including develop problem-solving, authentic learning, and technology skills.

The mandated state assessments in English Language Arts and Mathematics will be administered to all sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students as well as the state assessment in Science to all eighth grade students. All courses are continually reviewed to ensure that the skills and knowledge required by these assessments are included in the curriculum.

MIDDLE SCHOOL COURSE OFFERINGS - 2016-2017

SIXTH GRADE COURSES

English Language Arts
Mathematics
Science (Integrated Earth / Life / Physical)
Social Studies – World History
World Languages –French or Spanish
Physical Education / Health
Study Skills
Other courses may include:
 Computers
 Band OR Chorus
 Art Appreciation
 Music Appreciation
 Family and Consumer Science

SEVENTH GRADE COURSES

English Language Arts
Mathematics
Science (Integrated Earth / Life / Physical)
Social Studies – U. S. History
World Language – either full year French I, full year Spanish I, half year French, or half year Spanish
Physical Education / Health
Other courses may include:
 Computers
 Band OR Chorus
 Art
 Intro to Video Production
 Team Problem Solving
 Theater

EIGHTH GRADE COURSES

English Language Arts
Mathematics
Science (Integrated Earth / Life / Physical)
Social Studies – US History and Civics
World Language – either full year French II, full year Spanish II, half year French, or half year Spanish
Physical Education / Health
Other courses may include:
 Computers
 Band OR Chorus
 Art
 Drama
 Intro to Video Production
 Applied Arts

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS & SOCIAL STUDIES

The *Common Core State Standards* cross-disciplinary literacy expectations must be met for students to be prepared to enter college and workforce training programs. Through the reading of a diverse array of classic and contemporary literature, as well as challenging informational texts in a range of subjects, students are expected to build knowledge, gain insights, explore possibilities, and broaden their perspectives. Reading, Writing and Speaking & Listening are integrated into a curriculum that seeks to enrich students about subjects dealing with national and worldwide interests, both past and present. Developing an appreciation and an understanding of the many peoples of our own nation and other nations, students are encouraged to be sensitive toward the needs and values of various cultures in this global society. Finally, an understanding of the issues and institutions of a democratic nation and the responsibilities of its citizens are emphasized.

Students read novels, informational text and primary source documents that align to historical periods. For example, when studying ancient Greece in Social Studies, students read novels and short stories on Greek mythology in English classes. They explore overarching themes in both content areas such as “Heroes” and the “Foundations of Democracy” and gain an enduring understanding of how these concepts translate to life in twenty-first century United States. Curriculum is designed around “Essential Questions” that require students to explore topics in detail. Students work collaboratively to complete PBL’s (Project-Based Learning activities) at the end of each marking period. PBL’s provides students with the opportunity to work collaboratively to conduct research by reading, writing and drawing evidence to support claims from informational text and use multimedia tools as they create final presentations.

A wide range of reading materials in various genres is explored. Each student participates in the process of creating an individual writing portfolio that will encourage reflection and self-analysis of personal growth and the development of higher order, critical thinking skills.

Students who wish to apply for acceptance into 7th and 8th grade Honors English need to submit a letter of intent to their guidance counselor. The student evaluation process for admission to the honors course will include an assigned writing task, report card grades, and teacher recommendation.

The 6th grade Social Studies curriculum encompasses World History from the “Dawn of Civilization” through the “Ancient Period”, the “Middle Ages”, and the beginning of the “Age of Global Encounters”. Geography and map skills are reinforced throughout the year.

The 7th grade Social Studies course is a survey of American History beginning with Colonization and continuing through to the Civil War, Reconstruction, and the Industrial Revolution.

The 8th grade Social Studies course consists of the study of civics and modern US History. Civics students take part in an in-depth examination of the United States Constitution and complete an interdisciplinary unit on the civil rights of the individual. Students study the organization and function of the federal, state, and local government, as well as the electoral process. Responsibilities of citizenship are stressed. In modern US History, students examine the current era from 1960 to the present.

Geography is embedded in grades six through eight. Students study the major physical and natural resource regions, landscapes, waterways and climate of all the continents and the locations of countries and major cities around the world. The effect of the geography of an area on the economy and population of a region is also explored.

MATHEMATICS

The mathematics curriculum at the middle school level reflects both the national standards from the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) and the Common Core State Standards. More than ever before, the district is making a concerted effort to teach for understanding and to ensure that:

- Problem situations serve as the context for mathematics.
- Communication with and about mathematics and mathematical reasoning permeate the curriculum.
- Connections are made among the topics taught to help students achieve a deeper understanding of them.
- Technology (calculators, graphing calculators, videos, etc.) is integral to the curriculum and used appropriately.
- Learning is engaging to the students so as to help them become active learners.
- Classroom activities provide students with the opportunity to work individually and in groups.
- Real-life data and manipulatives are used in problem solving and investigations/explorations as appropriate.

Building on the foundation in whole numbers, fractions and decimals that students gained in elementary school, the middle school mathematics curriculum includes more in depth study of topics from geometry, algebra, and probability and statistics. The curriculum includes content from the following domains in all three grades of the middle school mathematics curricula: ratios and proportional relationships, the number system, expressions and equations, geometry, and statistics and probability. In eighth grade, the students are also introduced to the concept of a function.

The following mathematical practices, first used by the students in elementary school, are fostered further in middle school in preparation for their extended use in high school: make sense of problems and persevere in solving them, reason abstractly and quantitatively, construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others, model with mathematics, use appropriate tools strategically, attend to precision, look for and make use of structure, and look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning. Students are given experience with open-ended problems that can be solved in a variety of ways and are required to explain their reasoning on a regular basis.

Math 6 The math curriculum in sixth grade includes the number system, geometry, ratio and proportion, and introduces pre-algebraic expressions and equations and statistics.

Math 7 In seventh grade, content from sixth grade is extended and reinforced and additional concepts related to percents, circles, three-dimensional shapes, and probability are included.

Math 7/8 This course for seventh graders accelerates through both the 7th and 8th grade math curriculum in order to provide a smooth transition to algebra for those students who are determined to be ready to handle this level of work and more abstract thinking. Students are selected for this course based on district assessments in, marking period grades in Mathematics and English Language Arts, and teacher recommendation based on the student having demonstrated the necessary level of understanding.

Pre-Algebra This course for eighth graders involves work with number concepts that is reinforced from previous grades as well as introducing irrational numbers and extending geometry to include concepts such as congruence and similarity. The algebraic concepts of equations and expressions are reinforced and extended to introduce systems of equations as well as linear and nonlinear functions. Additional topics from statistics are studied and may include scatter plots and frequency tables.

Algebra I This course provides a more formal introduction to the techniques of elementary algebra and its logical structure. It emphasizes algebra as a means of representation (in translating quantitative relations to equations, tables, or graphs) and algebraic methods of problem solving using both pencil-and-paper exercises and activities involving the graphing calculator. Topics included are: properties of real numbers, solving linear equations, graphing linear equations and their functions, writing linear equations, solving and graphing linear inequalities, systems of linear equations and inequalities, exponents and exponential functions, quadratic equations and functions, polynomials and factoring, rational equations and functions, and radicals and connections to geometry.

Selected seventh graders will be given a cognitive abilities test and an algebra diagnostic test during the third marking period. This data in addition to performance on district assessments, marking period grades in Mathematics and English Language Arts, and teacher recommendation will be used to determine placement of students in Algebra I in grade eight. Students who qualify for this course are notified normally during the first week of June. A minimum grade of 80 in Algebra I is required by the high school to be considered for placement in the honors math/science program in ninth grade.

SCIENCE

Effective with the 2016-17 school year, science at the middle school level is an integrated program and incorporates topics from earth, life, and physical science each year as specified in the *Next Generation Science Standards* (NGSS) adopted by the state of New Jersey. In order to be proficient in science, students are guided through lab activities and student projects to acquire the knowledge and reasoning skills necessary to understand scientific explanations, generate scientific evidence through active investigation, reflect on scientific knowledge, and participate productively in science. The eight practices of science and engineering, specified in the NGSS, are essential for all students to learn and are incorporated throughout the curriculum:

1. Asking questions (for science) and defining problems (for engineering)
2. Developing and using models
3. Planning and carrying out investigations
4. Analyzing and interpreting data
5. Using mathematics and computational thinking
6. Constructing explanations (for science) and designing solutions (for engineering)
7. Engaging in argument from evidence
8. Obtaining, evaluating, and communicating information

WORLD LANGUAGES

Progressing toward communicative-based instruction in world languages, all students are required to take world language each year in middle school. Sixth grade students will have a choice of taking either a half-year course in French or a half-year course in Spanish. In seventh and eighth grades, students will take either a full year of French, a full year of Spanish, a half year of French, or a half year of Spanish. The full year French and Spanish courses offered in seventh and eighth grades cover the same content as the level one and two courses offered in the high schools.

Students will be assessed in sixth grade to determine their recommended placement in world language for seventh grade. This recommendation is intended to help the student and his/her parent make an informed decision when choosing a seventh grade world language course. To advance from full year French or Spanish I to full year French or Spanish II course, students must receive a minimum final grade of 75. To advance from French or Spanish II to French or Spanish III, a minimum of 80 is required. Students seeking to enter level II in ninth grade after completing two half-year courses must receive a minimum final grade of 80.

Middletown School District offers a four, five, or six-year program in world languages, depending on the language chosen and when the student begins study. French and Spanish are offered beginning in the middle school and students have the opportunity to become proficient while taking the six-year of courses. Students may also elect to take Advanced Placement World Language courses. A four-year program is offered in Latin and Italian beginning in the 9th grade.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The middle school Physical Education curriculum reflects a diversity of experiences based on building skill competencies with an emphasis on safety. Cooperative learning activities, competitive games, and highly structured skill-based units provide opportunities for students to build self-esteem while starting to discover their athletic potential.

HEALTH

The middle school Health curriculum, building upon the elementary Health curriculum, continues to lay a foundation of knowledge that encourages students to choose a healthy lifestyle. The curriculum includes the following basic units of study: “Health and Wellness”, “Decision Making and Goal Setting”, “Nutrition”, “Substance Abuse Prevention”, “First Aid/CPR”, and “Relationships and Sexuality”.

GRADE 6 – NON-CORE COURSES

*The courses listed below will be offered depending on student enrollment.
Courses are subject to change and revision.*

COMPUTERS

In sixth grade, students continue to develop an understanding of computer networking, telecommunication and information management as well as continuing to develop fundamental computer skills including the use of a spreadsheet. The functions and advantages of computer productivity software and multimedia skills, as well as legal, safety, and ethical issues involved in computer and internet usage are also included.

Lab project activities complement core curricular subject areas as appropriate. Additionally, students may be required to maintain and submit a professional portfolio of their work.

STUDY SKILLS

In order to assist students in transitioning from elementary to middle school, this course will focus on organization, time management, quality research, and project-based individual and collaborative project completion.

BAND

The band program includes the instrumental study of scales, rhythm exercises and playing techniques. Students will play various types of music including marches, classical show music, popular music, etc. As individual lessons are not a part of the program, students who elect band must know how to play an instrument as well as read music. Students taking this course are required to perform in a winter concert, a spring concert, and at graduation.

CHORUS

The chorus program is designed to develop student skills required for vocal performance, and includes ear training, basic music theory, music history, vocal production techniques of breathing, tone quality, singing in harmony and counterpoint. Students taking this course are required to perform at school recitals and evening concerts.

ART APPRECIATION

Art appreciation will introduce students to the origin of art as a means to communicate in a visual manner. Students will explore works of art in relation to history and cultural influence. They will be introduced to the elements and principles of art and will use the knowledge learned to create artwork using a variety of techniques and mediums.

MUSIC APPRECIATION

Music appreciation helps the student experience a variety of musical styles. Study will include great composers, instruments of the band and orchestra, and the history of Western music.

FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCE

Often referred to as “I’m in Charge”, this course teaches students to be responsible, safe and confident when home alone. Students learn how to successfully deal with everyday occurrences, first aid, and emergency situations. Safe snack preparation and baby-sitting skills / child care are also included.

GRADE 7 – NON-CORE COURSES

*The courses listed below will be offered depending on student enrollment.
Courses are subject to change and revision.*

COMPUTERS

In seventh grade, the skills taught in sixth grade are reviewed and reinforced. In addition, students utilize spreadsheets more fully, create a simple database by means of a spreadsheet application, work on desktop publishing to produce writing samples consistent with core curricular areas, and use applications to create a digital presentation.

Lab project activities complement core curricular subject areas as appropriate. Additionally, students may be required to maintain and submit a professional portfolio of their work.

BAND

This course continues instrumental study in scales and techniques, playing selections of various types of music and the developing of sight-reading skills. Students who elect this course must know how to play an instrument as well as read music and will be required to perform in a winter concert, a spring concert, and at graduation.

CHORUS

The chorus program continues to give students with vocal ability the opportunity to develop the skills required for vocal performance. The repertoire includes choral ensemble and solo material from many musical periods. Students taking this course are required to perform at school recitals and evening concerts.

THEATER

The art of theater is designed to have students explore their creativity and experience acting, scene design, lighting, play writing, make-up, costumes, directing, and dance.

ART

This course will focus on giving the student experiences with which to develop his/her ability to express himself/herself artistically while further developing his/her respect and sensitivity to the arts. Personal imagination is developed and encouraged through activities which will involve the elements and principles of art and a variety of introductory techniques and mediums, including drawing, painting, printmaking, computer-generated art, and working with 3D form.

INTRODUCTION TO VIDEO PRODUCTION

This course will give students an opportunity to actively plan and produce live broadcasts that may be heard/viewed throughout the school and on the local cable station. Through this hands-on broadcasting experience, students may report on such topics as weather, sports, school and district events and course offerings, historical trivia, student accomplishments, “random acts of kindness”, and school/district announcements.

TEAM PROBLEM SOLVING

In this course, students work with each other as a team to evaluate ideas, make decisions, and create solutions to a variety of short-term and long-term problems. As a result of their experiences, creative thinking is fostered, problem-solving skills are developed, and self-confidence is increased.

GRADE 8 – NON-CORE COURSES

*The courses listed below will be offered depending on student enrollment.
Courses are subject to change and revision.*

COMPUTERS

In eighth grade, the program reviews and reinforces the content of the previous grades and provides an opportunity for students to learn and utilize database skills. In addition, desktop/web-based publishing consistent with core curricular areas and the creation of a digital presentation are included.

Lab project activities complement core curricular subject areas as appropriate. Additionally, students may be required to maintain and submit a professional portfolio of their work.

BAND

This course continues instrumental study in scales and techniques, playing selections of various types of music and the developing of sight-reading skills. Students who elect this course **MUST** play a band instrument. Students taking this course are required to perform in a winter concert, a spring concert, and at graduation.

CHORUS

The chorus program continues to give students with vocal ability the opportunity to develop the skills required for vocal performance. The repertoire includes choral ensemble and solo material from many musical periods. Students taking this course are required to perform at school recitals and evening concerts.

INTRODUCTION TO VIDEO PRODUCTION

This course will give students an opportunity to actively plan and produce live broadcasts that may be heard/viewed throughout the school and on the local cable station. Through this hands-on broadcasting experience, students may report on such topics as weather, sports, school and district events and course offerings, historical trivia, student accomplishments, “random acts of kindness”, and school/district announcements. (Introduction to Video Production in grade 7 is not required prior to taking this course.)

APPLIED ARTS

Students are encouraged to demonstrate their creativity through a range of projects. They are given the opportunity to apply what is being learned for personal satisfaction and the development of life skills. Projects will involve the students in the design and construction of a variety of different pieces of work. These may include projects created through computer design/graphics, sewing and needlecraft, work with textiles, or functional art and design.

ART

This program will focus on problem-solving experiments in color theory, pattern, one point perspective, lettering, use of the ruler, drawing the human face and figure, contour drawing, 3-D design, and explorations of texture and value. Materials used will include many types of art mediums such as pencil, tempera or acrylic paint, colored pencils, markers, clay, pen and ink, and pastels.

DRAMA

Drama is an art form that tells a story through the speech and actions of the character in a story. Working in groups and individually, this exciting course takes the student through a variety of activities such as pantomime, improvisation, theater games, and scene study.

AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Activities available to middle school students may include:

Student Council / Student Activities
Newspaper
STEM Club
Math Club
Environmental Club
Boys & Girls Soccer*
Wrestling
Cheerleading*
Baseball*

Yearbook
Drama / Variety Show
Peer Leadership
Boys & Girls Cross Country
Friendship Club
Girls Field Hockey*
Boys & Girls Basketball*
Softball*
Boys & Girls Track

* 7th and 8th grade only

GRADING SCALE

Beginning in sixth grade, and continuing through grade twelve, report card grades are reported numerically for all subjects.

MIDDLETOWN TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICIES

The Middletown Township Board of Education affirms its responsibilities to ensure that all students in the public schools of this township have an equal opportunity regardless of race, color, creed, religion, sex, ancestry, national origin or social or economic status. Lack of English language skills will not be a deterrent to admission to any program. No otherwise qualified handicapped individuals shall, solely by reason of their handicap, be denied the benefits of or subjected to discrimination in any activity.

The school system's Affirmative Action Plans for School/Classroom Practices are on file in the Superintendent's office.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

The Board of Education has established a procedure for staff, students or parents on a student's behalf to follow in filing a complaint dealing with alleged violation, misinterpretation, or inequitable application of the policies and practices of the school district relative to provisions of Federal and State anti-discrimination legislation. Details of the grievance procedures are included in the school district's policy manual under Policy #5750.

The building principal or designee serves as the first step of this grievance procedure.

The District Affirmative Action Officer is:

John Douglas Covert, Director of Personnel
Middletown Township Board of Education
834 Leonardville Road, 2nd Floor
Leonardo New Jersey 07737
(732) 671-3850

The District 504 Compliance Officer is:

Robert Dunn, District Director of Student Services
834 Leonardville Road, 2nd Floor
Leonardo New Jersey 07737
(732) 671-3850

**The Middletown Board of Education
834 Leonardville Road, 2nd Floor
Leonardo, New Jersey 07737**

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