Tahanto Regional

MIDDLE SCHOOL
PROGRAM OF STUDIES

2024-2025

TAHANTO REGIONAL MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL

BERLIN, MA BOYLSTON, MA

Principal:
Lisa Sequeira

Assistant Principals:
Richard Cameron
Renee Legendre

School Counselors:
Greg Picariello – Middle School Grades 6-8
Katie Schmidt – High School Grades 9-10
Ilene Rodman – High School Grades 11-12

Accredited by:
The New England Association of Schools and Colleges

TELEPHONE: (508) 869-2333
FAX: (508) 869-0175
http://tahanto.bbrsd.org

EDUCATION FOR ALL

Chapter 622/Title IX Equity Statement: Tahanto Regional Middle/High School is in compliance with Chapter 622 of the Acts of 1971 and Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972. Chapter 622 guarantees that all aspects of public-school education must be fully open and available to members of sexes, minority groups and handicapped. No student may be excluded from any course, service or resource available in that school because of the race, color, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, or handicap of that student. Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 ensures that no person shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination in any federally assisted program. For information, please contact Jannel Fitzpatrick, Special Education, at 508-869-2837.

Berlin-Boylston Public Schools is an affirmative action employer, ensuring that its programs and facilities are accessible to the public. We do not discriminate on the basis of age, race, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, creed, disability, veteran status, genetic information, homelessness or any other class protected by state or federal law.

Chapter 622/Title IX Grievance Procedure: Any student or employee of the Berlin-Boylston Public Schools who believes he/she has been discriminated against, denied a benefit, or excluded from participation in any educational program or activity on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, race, religion, color, national original, or handicap, may file a complaint with Chapter 622/Title IX Coordinator. This may be done through the Superintendent's Office at 215

Tahanto Regional Middle High School is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Inc., a non-profit government, a nationally recognized organization whose affiliated institutions include elementary through collegiate institutions offering post graduate instruction.

Accreditation of an institution by the New England Association indicates that it meets or exceeds criteria for the assessment of institutional quality periodically applied through a peer group review process. An accredited school or college is one which has available the necessary resources to achieve its stated purpose through appropriate educational programs, is substantially doing so, and gives reasonable evidence that it will continue to do so in the foreseeable future.

Tahanto was re-accredited by the NEASC in April 2017. For further information about accreditation, please contact: http://www.neasc.org. NEASC/ 209 Burlington Road, Bedford, MA 01730

TAHANTO REGIONAL MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL
STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Tahanto Regional Middle/High School is a community composed of students, faculty, administration, parents and staff committed to working cooperatively to develop the intellectual and social potential of each student. Mutual trust and respect are encouraged. Students and teachers demonstrate positive respect for one another.

A varied curriculum is offered to meet the needs of students of all levels of ability. Recognizing the different ways that students learn, we are committed to providing learning experiences using a variety of educational models, such as cooperative learning, debates, group discussions, inquiry and investigation, discovery, open-ended questions, and student-centered learning.

The class size at Tahanto is small, with an average student to teacher ratio of 19 to 1. Course overviews are distributed by each teacher at the beginning of the school year. These performance objectives are measured by a variety of teacher constructed forms of evaluation and teacher observation. Student assessment is measured in the classroom, and by studying and analyzing the results of standardized testing.

This curriculum reflects a comprehensive and sequential development of concepts structured around affective and cognitive objectives. Students are encouraged to strive for the highest level of achievement. The music and art curricula offerings educate students to appreciate ideas and emotions conveyed in sound and image with the goal that they will understand and know the nature of the creative process and the role of the arts in reflecting and shaping their cultural heritage. The World Language Department offers a four-year sequential study of French and Spanish. Advanced Placement courses are offered in Biology, Chemistry, Calculus, Statistics, US History, European History, Psychology and English. Library media and technology are used at all levels of instruction. Students are also able to access over 300 different online courses via an online platform.

Tahanto Regional Middle/High School is pleased to offer the Tahanto Pre-School and an Early Childhood Development Program onsite. Participating students are eligible for licensure as private pre-school teachers after graduation. Licensure-eligible students will have completed 4 year-long child development courses and a 360-hour practicum with Tahanto Preschool students.
Tahanto's School Counseling Department supports students by providing classroom guidance, individual student planning, responsive services, system support, and special education services. The school counselors, school adjustment counselors and the school psychologist provide a full range of academic, career, and personal/social support. Students are encouraged and assisted with continuing their education beyond high school.

The athletic program provides our students with a variety of interscholastic and intramural sports at the middle school and high school levels and is committed to developing students' scholastic and social skill abilities, in addition to growing their athletic capacities.

Tahanto Regional Middle/High School provides a supportive, respectful, and challenging environment in which each student can strive to achieve his/her full potential.

MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to support and to challenge students in achieving personal and academic excellence in a safe, collaborative, and student-centered environment.

VISION STATEMENT

Our vision is to create a tradition of developing responsible and reflective citizens who are college/career ready and life-long learners.

CORE VALUES AND BELIEFS

Determination	**Education**	**Enrichment**	**Responsibility**
problem solving	critical thinking	creativity	strong sense of community
perseverance	access to resources	extra-curricular opportunities	service to others
desire to succeed	technology	confidence	collaboration
pride	effective communication	applying knowledge	self-reflection outside of school
			respect and empathy for others
			positive contributions to the community

EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT LEARNING

We want our graduates to know and be able to…

Read effectively

- Apply basic reading and comprehension strategies to access information in texts.
- Utilize critical thinking skills to demonstrate understanding of central and supporting ideas in various sources of written work.

Write effectively

- Understand purpose and audience.
- Conform to Standard English style.
- Organize ideas so they are clear, concise, and well supported by a variety of primary and secondary sources.

Communicate effectively

- Understand the audience.Engage listeners through verbal illustrations, key details, and visual aids when appropriate.
- Pose and respond to pertinent questions.

Listen and view critically

- Participate in discussions.
- Build upon comments of others to arrive at a better understanding of material.
- Distinguish relevant from irrelevant.
- Summarize main ideas and most supporting arguments from discussions.
- Recognize the right of others to speak.

Analyze, interpret and evaluate effectively

- Collect, organize, interpret, evaluate, and present information drawn from a variety of sources.
- Justify findings.
- Make logical predictions.
- Draw inferences.
- Defend arguments.

Acquire, integrate and apply essential knowledge

- Acquire information from reliable and relevant sources such as the library, the Internet, oral and visual sources, as well as human and community resources.
- Determine what is relevant to the goal of the assignment. Integrate all ideas and materials into a variety of presentation formats such as research papers and/or projects, computer presentations, audio/visual presentations, mathematical representations, artistic performances,

and/or portfolio

Apply skills (mathematical, literacy, scientific, historical, linguistic) to interpret information and solve problems

- Demonstrate an understanding of underlying concepts, procedures, and structures.
- Examine and satisfy most essential conditions of the problem.
- Present solid supporting arguments with examples.
- Show evidence of reflection and checking of work in reading the solution.
- Apply skills to acquire, organize, and interpret scientific information from reliable sources to describe problems and related issues.
- Refine knowledge using appropriate thinking skills, and accurately apply all information to the solution of the scientific problem.
- Demonstrate the ability to pose questions, interpret the ideas of others, and contribute his/her own ideas in both formal and informal settings.
- Acquire new knowledge, synthesize ideas, and analyze complex concepts.
- Organize, interpret, evaluate, and present information drawn from a variety of historical sources.
- Develop logical arguments that make connections between past events and current issues and problems.
- Justify relevant findings, distinguish fact from opinion, and recognize point of view as well as cause and effect.
- Demonstrate effective technical mastery in good craftsmanship and creative insight in his or her work.
- Engage in thoughtful reflections on his or her work.
- Apply skills learned in the arts across the curriculum with competence.

Use technology and a variety of resources to acquire, organize and communicate

- Use a portion of those resources available to locate, collect, organize and store information.
- Show fundamental understanding of Internet browsers, search engines, word processors, spreadsheets, databases, OPACs, and multimedia.
- Demonstrate the basic skills to use technology in presenting written, visual, oral and multi-media work.
- Use technology in an ethical and legal manner.

Demonstrate responsibility for her/his own learning and behavior

- Demonstrate responsibility for one's own learning and behavior in establishing and achieving academic goals.
- Set clear priorities and expectations.
- Plan to meet deadlines and make efforts to balance academic and extracurricular activities.
- Make informed decisions about his/her future. Treat others with respect

Regardless of their philosophy, culture, or religious belief

- Demonstrate an understanding of diversity between and within societies, cultures and abilities.
- Accept and respect others regardless of their race, cultural differences, religion, gender,

sexual orientation, or disability.
- Demonstrate the ability to work collaboratively and independently.
- Participate in a group environment.
- Exhibit problem-solving skills.
- Exhibit cooperative social skills.

Make informed and responsible judgments regarding personal health

- Identify factors that lead to physical, emotional, and mental well-being.
- Demonstrate the ability to acquire and apply appropriate health information.

Understand and demonstrate a sense of community

- Exhibit a sense of belonging to the community.
- Perform service activities.

Understand and respect the individual's rights and responsibilities in the school, community and nation

- Comply with rules.
- Be responsible for his or her behavior.
- Understand how individual behavior affects others.
- Know the process for affecting change.

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES

The school demonstrates its commitment to foster and expand community involvement through: The Tahanto Website, Newsletter, clubs focused on community service, annual Parent-Student Class Overviews and College Seminars, and the School Council.

The school demonstrates its commitment to curriculum development through a five-year review of each curriculum area, setting of annual teacher goals, setting of annual department goals, setting of school goals and setting of system-wide goals, and the use of release time devoted to curriculum development.

The school demonstrates its commitment to making available to all members of the community opportunities to acquire technological skills through the community-school television studio and the public access catalog.

The school demonstrates its commitment to the need to strive for effective interaction and with the larger community through Tower Hill, Clinton Savings Bank, WHEAT, Atlantic White Shark Conservancy, Quinsigamond Community College, The Worcester Art Museum, WPI, Clark University, The Association of Middle Schools, and The Massachusetts Water Resources Authority.

The school demonstrates its commitment to provide career level educational opportunities through its partnership with Clinton Savings Bank and the student banking program, the technology and engineering program, work-study, community service and the early childhood education/preschool program.

The school demonstrates its commitment to pupil services through a comprehensive school counseling program that could include seminars and events such as Job Shadow Day, Career Day, College Fair Field Trip, and a College Admissions Panel.

The school demonstrates its commitment to the special needs population by its unique programs: Tools for Living, the Peer Assistance Program, the Oral Interpreter and Speech/Language Pathologist Program, the Assabet Valley Collaborative Middle School Multiply Handicapped Program, the Transitional Skills Program and inclusive education.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Course Selection:

- Students are required to enroll in a full schedule (all 7 periods)

PROMOTION AND GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

If a student fails two or more core subjects, he or she will be required to attend an approved summer school program. A student is only required to take one of the failed courses with Math and English being first priority. The student must show proof of passing an approved summer school program, if they do not and they fail a minimum of two core subjects, the student will be retained. Core Subjects: English, mathematics, social studies, science

GRADE 6

Required Full Year Periods Per Six Day Cycle	**One Semester Each Required**	**Full Year Electives**
English 6 Science 6 Social Studies 6 Math (Math 6 or Math 6 Advanced) QUEST 6	Reading 6 Music 6 Phys Ed. 6 Computer Science Discovery 6	Middle School Band 6 Middle School Jazz Band 6 Middle School Chorus 6 Lego Mindstorm Robotics 6 Art 6 Elective Film Adaptation Grade 6 Intro to Spanish 6

Grade 7

Required Full Year Periods Per Six Day Cycle	**One Semester Each Required**	**Full Year Electives**
English 7 Gr. 7 General Science Systems & Cycles Geography/World Cultures 7 Math (Math 7 or Algebra 1-7) Phys. Ed. 7 Technology/Engineering 7 (opposite PE) (Math Lab) ** (ELA Lab) ** Computer Science Discovery ***Required support course if student meets eligibility*	Middle School Essential Skills Computer Science Biodiversity 7 Science Fiction and Fantasy	Middle School Band 7 Middle School Jazz Band 7 Middle School Chorus 7 Art 7 Elective Art 7 - Drawing Music Technology 7 Guitar 7 Science Fiction and Fantasy Intro to French 7

Grade 8

Required Full Year Periods Per Six Day Cycle	**One Semester Each Required**	**Full Year Electives**
English 8 Gr. 8 Science Social Studies 8 Math (Pre-Algebra 8., Algebra 1-8 or Geometry 8) Phys. Ed. 8 (Math Lab 8) ** (ELA Lab 8) ** ***Required support course if student meets eligibility requirements.*	Middle School Health/Wellness Technology/Engineering 8	Middle School Band 8 Middle School Jazz Band 8 Middle School Chorus 8 Exploratory French and Spanish 8 Art 8 Elective Fun with Math 8

Grade 8 Core Electives

Students will be assigned two different core electives each semester. These classes will meet every other day. The core electives most students will experience include: Horticulture, Civics in Action, Computer Science Discovery 8, and Forensics Science.

SCHEDULE CHANGES

Students should consult with their guidance counselor and/or teachers to discuss any schedule changes.

MIDDLE SCHOOL COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

EXPLORATORY AND GENERAL ELECTIVE DESCRIPTIONS

Grade 6

Middle School Chorus 6:

All students are encouraged to join the middle school chorus, even if they have not sung in the elementary school. The chorus program is designed to offer an introduction to a wide variety of music and appropriate singing styles. Information is also given about proper tone and breath. This class is graded with a standard letter and number system.

Middle School Band 6:

The middle school band meets every other day for rehearsal. Students perform popular jazz and classical music. There are three required performances as well as many other activities. While most middle school band members have played their instruments throughout elementary school, beginners are encouraged to join. Students who elect this course should give strong consideration to continuing band into the senior high. This class is graded with a standard letter and number system.

Middle School Jazz Band 6:

Middle School Jazz Band is an elective offered three days per week to those students with an exceptional interest in improvisation and jazz style composition. Students will explore various genres including swing, Latin, rock and blues through repertoire designed for the

Jazz Big Band. Class work will include scale and chord study, listening, improvisation practice and performance repertoire. Elementary Jazz Band experience is preferred but not necessary. This class is graded with a standard letter and number system.

Physical Education 6:

Physical Education is an integral part of each student's education and is designed to supplement work done in the classroom by educating through action. The aim of the Physical Education Program is the optimum development of the physically, mentally and socially integrated and adjusted individual through guided instruction and participation in selected activities.

Units Offered: Units may consist of but are not limited to: Hiking, Cross Country Skiing, Disc Golf, Ultimate Frisbee, Yard Games, Racquet Sports, Volleyball, Flag Football, Basketball, Soccer, Floor Hockey, Rugby, Cricket, Zooball, Games, Track and Field, and Weightlifting.

Assessment: Students will be assessed throughout each unit based on their individual effort, improvement and sportsmanship. Both formative and summative evaluations will be used throughout the curriculum via written and/or skill-based assessments.

PE 6 (Required) - This class is designed to develop fine and gross motor skills through introduction of various individual and team sports to 6th grade students. Through this course students will gain a basic understanding of general rules and basic vocabulary in

various individual and team sports. Additionally, students will develop a foundation of proper body mechanics and form for various exercise movements.

Introduction to Spanish 6:

This course will focus on vocabulary and conversational expressions through speaking, listening, reading and writing. Students will also examine culture from Spanish speaking countries and will practice skills through peer communication. This course is Pass/Fail.

Lego Mindstorm Robotics 6:

In this course middle school students will develop problem solving and computational thinking skills as they are introduced to the world of engineering, robotics and computer science. Through the use of the Lego Mindstorm robotics platform, students will engage in mechanical design and software programming as they create robots that sense the environment and respond to user defined commands. This course is hands-on and develops critical thinking skills in a project-based learning environment.

Art 6 Elective:

This course provides an introduction to visual arts while studying a variety of art tools and materials. Students will work on a variety of projects in both 2D and 3D. Projects will center on a particular artist or style. Grading will be based on weekly sketch assignments, projects, and quizzes. Assessment: Students will maintain a portfolio and complete self-assessments on each project. Teacher assessment will be based on technique and craftsmanship. Students' performance will be assessed on how well they make use of their time, materials, and the care put into each project.

Quest 6 (required):

Quest is a required sixth grade transition course that is designed to meet the needs of all students at all levels. It allows for flexible grouping and specialized instruction to accommodate the various challenges created by the transition to middle school. Students are supported in the development of social, emotional, and academic skills necessary for a successful transition to the middle school environment. Quest acts as a support period as well as a time for intervention and enrichment that addresses individual learning trajectories and the capacity to access the full educational experience. Its tailored instruction works to meet both the needs of the individual student as well as the entire sixth grade community. Students are assessed on daily performance tasks, time on task, extension activities, participation in whole or small group lessons and growth and improvement in strategy/skill utilization. **This course is pass/fail**

Reading 6 (required):

Reading 6 is a required semester class where the goal is to improve students' overall reading skills, as outlined in the grade 6 reading section of the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. Focus is on fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. A variety of reading methods are employed, including reading as a whole class, reading in small groups, and reading silently with optional audio-book support. There is an emphasis on close reading, identifying different vocabulary words, types of figurative language, etc. which will provide students with better comprehension of texts. Students will read a primary text (fiction novel) along with supportive non-fiction texts that will further develop their comprehension of topics discussed in the novel. Throughout the semester, students will be expected to read widely and often use critical thinking skills to analyze texts and

communicate their understanding through writing and class discussion. **This class is graded with a standard letter and number system.**

Music 6 (required):

In this mandatory semester course, students will learn about what makes music sound the way it does. Popular, jazz, Broadway, and classical music are explored. They also learn about music from other cultures and about rhythm and harmony. Students learn how to write music down on paper and even make up their own songs with the aid of a computer. This class is graded with a standard letter and number system.

Film Adaptation Grade 6:

In this course, students will examine the interaction of film and literary texts and the qualities of each. They will consider what happens when literary texts are made into films and how their views of a text may be altered by the way it was portrayed in the film. Students will read, write, complete projects, and have multiple class discussions.

Grade 7

Middle School Chorus 7:

All students are encouraged to join the middle school chorus, even if they have not sung in the elementary school. The chorus program is designed to offer an introduction to a wide variety of music and appropriate singing styles. Information is also given about proper tone and breath. This class is graded with a standard letter and number system.

Middle School Band 7:

The middle school band meets every other day for rehearsal. Students perform popular jazz and classical music. There are three required performances as well as many other activities. While most middle school band members have played their instruments throughout elementary school, beginners are encouraged to join. Students who elect this course should give strong consideration to continuing band into the senior high. This class is graded with a standard letter and number system.

Middle School Jazz Band 7:

Middle School Jazz Band is an elective offered three days per week to those students with an exceptional interest in improvisation and jazz style composition. Students will explore various genres including swing, Latin, rock and blues through repertoire designed for the

Jazz Big Band. Class work will include scale and chord study, listening, improvisation practice and performance repertoire. Elementary Jazz Band experience is preferred but not necessary. This class is graded with a standard letter and number system.

Music Technology 7:

This is a new elective we are offering this year for those students who enjoy and want to be involved with music but not necessarily want to sing or play an instrument. In music technology

students will learn the basics of recording as well as producing live events such as concerts, lectures, or dances. Students will be introduced to the basics of Garage Band, ProTools mixing boards, MIDI, Sibelius, and more as they establish a student-run live production and recording studio. This class is graded with a standard letter and number system.

Guitar 7:

This class is for anyone and everyone who has either played or wants to play guitar. Students will learn first how to play chords on the guitar as well as basic music theory and its applications in chord progressions. Students will learn how to play songs from a variety of genres and styles but will also learn about the resources available at their disposal and how they can use these resources to learn songs of their choice as well as begin to use this information to write their own music. From the basics of the guitar, students can then branch out to any number of fretted instruments that they would like to learn how to play. This includes bass, ukulele, mandolin, banjo, electric guitar and more. This class is graded with a standard letter and number system.

Physical Education 7:

Physical Education is an integral part of each student's education and is designed to supplement work done in the classroom by educating through action. The aim of the Physical Education Program is the optimum development of the physically, mentally and socially integrated and adjusted individual through guided instruction and participation in selected activities.

Units Offered: Units may consist of but are not limited to: Hiking, Cross Country Skiing, Disc Golf, Ultimate Frisbee, Yard Games, Racquet Sports, Volleyball, Flag Football, Basketball, Soccer, Floor Hockey, Rugby, Cricket, Zooball, Games, Track and Field, and Weightlifting.

Assessment: Students will be assessed throughout each unit based on their individual effort, improvement and sportsmanship. Both formative and summative evaluations will be used throughout the curriculum via written and/or skill-based assessments.

PE 7 (Required):This class is designed to build on developing fine and gross motor skills through continued introduction of various individual and team sports for 7th grade students. Through this course students will gain a basic understanding of general rules and basic vocabulary in various individual and team sports. Additionally, students will develop a foundation of proper body mechanics and form for various exercise movements. Intro to track and field will embrace a sense of self confidence and achievement through physical activity. Exposure to multiple team and adventure based activities will increase likelihood of life long fitness habits.

Science Fiction & Fantasy (Gr. 7):

For this course, students will examine science fiction and fantasy as genres rooted in a mixture of philosophical ideas, scientific exploration, and literary art. In this class, students will analyze short stories, novels and films from different periods of time in order to think critically about connections to modern day ideas.

Biodiversity (Gr.7):

With an emphasis on research, the purpose of this course is to provide students with a basic understanding of the concept of biodiversity, applied to their surroundings and connected to the Massachusetts Common Core science standards. During this course, students will study the biodiversity that we are lucky to have

in our very own backyard. Through research, models, experiments, and fieldwork students will learn just how important biodiversity is, not only for ecosystems, but for humans too!

Art 7 Elective:

This course will focus on the elements of art (line, shape, value, color, form, space, texture) and the acknowledgement that all art is created with one or more of these elements. Projects will center around a particular artist and element. Students will work on 2D and 3D projects in a variety of mediums. Grading will be based on weekly sketch assignments, projects, and quizzes. Assessment: Students will maintain a portfolio and complete self-assessments on each project. Teacher assessment will be based on technique and craftsmanship. Student's performance will be assessed on how well they make use of their time, materials, and the care put into each project. Class size limited to 24 students.

Art 7- Drawing:

Have you ever wanted to improve your drawing skills? This course will focus on drawing skills for both the beginner and experienced student. A variety of media will be explored including pencil, pen, color pencil, charcoal, and oil pastel. Students will create many types of drawings including perspective, landscape, still life, and portraits. Assessment: Students will maintain a portfolio and complete self-assessments on each project. Teacher assessment will be based on technique and craftsmanship. Student performance will be assessed on how well they make use of their time, materials, and the care put into each project. Class size limited to 12 students.

Technology/Engineering 7:

Full year required course in grade 7. Technology is defined as the human-made world. Engineering is the action of inventing and innovating technologies to provide a way of life for our society. In this course, which spans the 7th and 8th grade, students will develop an understanding of the engineering design process as they explore communication, construction, manufacturing, transportation, bioengineering, materials, tools and machines in a hands-on, project-based learning environment. Evaluation of each student will be based on completion of engineering projects, note-taking, effort and formal testing.

Intro to French 7:

This course will focus on vocabulary and conversational expressions through speaking, listening, reading and writing. The class is taught via a course of units, and these units focus on useful application of language concepts learned. Students will also examine French culture and will practice skills through peer communication. This is a pass/fail course.

Middle Essential School Skills:
In this class, students will receive instruction on vocabulary, reading comprehension, and writing skills. The class is designed to assist students to learn, understand, and reinforce concepts and/or assignments presented in all classes. Students will practice various types of writing, close-reading, analysis, and overall comprehension strategies. This is a pass/fail course.

Middle School Tier II Directed Study: This Tier II class would run every other day and would start with students identified with gaps in ELA and/or math through examination of MCAS and AIMS data. Students could be added throughout the year as the needs arise, as well. At the mid-year point, if students are successful and deemed no longer in need of support, they could "graduate" from the program and resume all electives for semester two. This is a pass/fail course.

Grade 8

Middle School Chorus 8:

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Middle School Band 8:

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Middle School Jazz Band 8:

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Physical Education 8:

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Assessment: Students will be assessed throughout each unit based on their individual

effort, improvement and sportsmanship. Both formative and summative evaluations will be used throughout the curriculum via written and/or skill-based assessments.

PE 8 (Required)- In this class students will apply prior knowledge of individual and team sports principles to advance understanding and demonstrate team concepts and strategies. Students will be introduced to racquet sports to increase hand eye coordination and mature fine motor skills.

*** Stag Block (Gr. 8)**

When core classes (math, English, science, or social studies) fall during the long block of the day, students will be provided the opportunity to seek extra help from teachers, complete make-up assignments, work independently or collaboratively on current assignments, or read silently for the last 20 minutes of class. On occasion, students will be taught executive functioning lessons to help their academic performance.

Horticulture 8:

This 8th grade elective is a hybrid class of hands-on applications and research assignments of numerous horticultural topics selected by enrolled students. Topics covered in class may include: carnivorous plants, succulents, houseplants, trees, invasive pests, dairy farming, maple syrup production, plant propagation, orchids, pollinator friendly gardening, and bonsai. In addition to classroom instruction and activities, students will read the class text, The Story of Seeds, and maintain several school gardens, when weather permits.

Civics in Action:

Students will be challenged to practice civic engagement as they identify an issue in need of attention or change. As a class, we will work together to research, discuss, and learn more about the selected issue. Most importantly, we will determine a path of action to bring the necessary attention or change forward in our communities. Finally, students will reflect on their efforts and consider ways to continue such engaged citizenship. This quarterly elective has been developed in connection with state law requiring eighth grade students to participate in an active civics project.

Forensic Science 8:

Forensic Science is the application of science to law. In this course students will be given the opportunity to develop an understanding of biological, chemical and physical concepts as they relate to law. Students will also learn how to observe, collect, analyze and evaluate evidence found at crime scenes. Some of the many topics that students will explore include:

- Processing a crime scene
- Forgery and Document analysis
- Forensic Anthropology
- Fingerprint analysis
- Trace evidence
- Forensic Serology
- DNA Fingerprinting
- Hair and Fiber analysis

Exploratory French and Spanish Language and Culture 8:

Students will meet every other day for one semester in each language. This course will focus on vocabulary and conversational expressions through speaking, listening, reading and writing. The cultural rich program includes texts, activities and audio from a variety of online resources, books and teacher created materials. Students will also examine culture from both French and Spanish speaking countries and will practice skills through peer communication. **Assessment:** Students may be assessed on their Spanish/French listening, speaking, reading and writing skills as well as cultural knowledge. The teacher may use quizzes, short compositions, dialogues, presentations, projects, homework and class participation to evaluate the students. This is a pass/fail course.

Fun with Math 8:

In this math elective, students will explore applications of math in everyday situations. Through project-based learning, topics discussed may include math and its connection to food, budgeting, music, the stock market, toys, architecture, sports, and art.

School of Rock (Gr. 8)

This course will explore the history of rock music from its early jazz and blues roots to today's computer influenced songs. Students will learn the roles of vocals, guitar, bass, drums, and keyboards in the rock genre. Popular rock tunes will be studied and performed. Basic music theory will be introduced with the purpose of reinforcing the students' understanding of rock music. Students will be expected to perform at Stag's Lounge as well as the winter and spring concerts. This class is open to 8th grade students. Some knowledge of rock instrumentation and the ability to play basic progressions is preferred. Students will be performing. Assessment is based on individual improvement and effort, class participation and successful performances.

Art 8 Elective:

This course will be a continuation of 7th grade art. There will be an overview of the concepts presented previously and more advanced concepts will be introduced. Once familiar with the elements of art, students learn how the principles of design (balance, contrast, emphasis, movement, pattern, unity, rhythm) can make their artwork better. Projects will center around a particular artist and principle. Students will work on 2D and 3D projects in a variety of mediums. Grading will be based on weekly sketch assignments, projects, and quizzes. Assessment: Students will maintain a portfolio and complete self-assessments on each project. Teacher assessment will be based on technique and craftsmanship. Students' performance will be assessed on how well they make use of their time, materials, and the care put into each project.

Technology/Engineering 8 (required):

Full year required course in grade 8. Technology is defined as the human-made world. Engineering is the action of inventing and innovating technologies to provide a way of life for our society. In this course, which spans the 7th and 8th grade, students will develop an understanding of the engineering design process as they explore communication, construction, manufacturing, transportation, bioengineering, materials, tools and machines in a hands-on, project-based learning environment. Evaluation of each student will be based on completion of engineering projects, note-taking, effort and formal testing.

Middle School Health and Wellness 8 (required):

The objective of this course is to provide students with an understanding of the skills necessary to care for their physical, mental, and social-emotional well-being. This class has a strong emphasis on enhancing general wellness and teaching life-long approaches to building and maintaining healthy habits. Students will develop an understanding of strategies for self-care and concepts related to nutrition, hygiene, stress management, substance abuse prevention, diseases, and sexual education. Communication and social skills will be strengthened through project-based learning and interactive group work.

ENGLISH COURSES

Middle School

Grade 6

Grade 6 Language Arts provides an integrated approach to the study of reading, literature, writing, and language skills. Students study literature including novels, short stories, poetry, drama and nonfiction in order to develop, expand and apply reading skills and strategies. Frequent opportunities for reading at their independent levels provide students with the practice needed to internalize these reading strategies. Instruction in writing emphasizes the thinking, creating and composing processes. Grammar and usage, language mechanics, vocabulary and spelling, listening and speaking are integral parts of the course.

Grade 7

The seventh grade English program provides instruction to strengthen skills that students already possess and to introduce new skills. The curriculum consists of reading, writing, grammar, and vocabulary. Students will acquire and apply new vocabulary skills via the Wordly Wise vocabulary program. Students will read and discuss as a class and with their peers' short stories, poetry, novels, and nonfiction texts in order to hone their comprehension and analysis skills. The fundamentals of writing are developed and emphasized throughout the class in conjunction with reading these texts. Students will practice writing narrative, expository, and argumentative pieces. Students will read for pleasure outside and inside of class (SSR) and will develop critical thinking skills when writing book reviews on each novel read.

Grade 8

Grade 8 The Eighth-grade curriculum is literature, writing, and research based. To increase literacy skills, students review key literary elements before examining them in numerous short stories and novels. Some of the titles students read include: The Outsiders, Animal Farm, Murder on the Orient Express, "The Raven," and "The Cask of Amontillado." Occasionally, students are responsible for reading additional texts outside of school.

To increase writing skills, students write in each of the three major writing types (narrative, argumentative, and informational/expository) for a variety of purposes and audiences throughout the year. Students will compose a reflective narrative, write a feature profile, create a children's storybook, and produce informational and argumentative essays effectively adhering to MLA standards. Students will also review grammar material with special

emphasis placed on the parts of speech, sentence structure, voice, and punctuation.

Honors and College Prep Placement: During the second semester, the English Department will recommend English 9 course level placements to all eighth grade students. The following criteria will be the basis for the English Department recommendations: prior ELA standardized test scores, 8th grade English course grades (A- average), student class participation, and 8th grade teacher observations.

Grade 7-8 ELA Lab**

The Grade 7-8 ELA Lab courses target word recognition, vocabulary, comprehension skills, writing skills and strategies for Honors and College Prep Placement: with needs in those areas. Students have opportunities to build fluency through reading appropriately leveled texts. Placement in the ELA Lab course is a result of recommendations from teachers, analysis of standardized testing data, and consultation with the guidance counselor. Students work

on individual skills to help them grow and experience success in reading and writing. This course runs every day throughout the year and is in addition to the regular English Language Arts class.

** Required Support course if student meets eligibility

MATHEMATICS COURSES

Middle School

The mathematics program in the middle school is focused on ensuring that all students develop the foundational skills necessary to be successful in higher level mathematics courses. Mathematics placement is therefore dependent on a student's foundational skills which are determined by student performance in courses and a readiness exam. All students are required to take a readiness exam for placement into their next math course in all grades. Note that students completing advanced courses such as Algebra 1 and Geometry in middle school will still be required to complete 4 full years of math in high school to meet graduation requirements.

***These courses require a readiness exam and department recommendation**

Math 6:

In the sixth grade mathematics program, students continue to develop number sense and apply it to real world situations. They apply and extend previous understandings of all operations involving decimals and fractions, and the relationships between fractions, decimals, and percent. The concepts of ratio, scale and proportion are introduced, as well as central tendency and graphing. Students will use variables and begin to study algebraic equations and patterns. They will investigate and use positive and negative integers, and build on previous understandings of area and perimeter, surface area, and volume.

Math 7:

This course builds a strong foundation for understanding algebra and geometry. Instructional time is focused on developing four critical areas: (a) developing understanding of and applying proportional relationships; (b) developing understanding of operations with rational numbers and working with expressions and linear equations; (c) solving problems involving scale drawings and informal geometric constructions, and working with two and three dimensional shapes to solve problems involving area, surface area, and volume; (d) and drawing inferences about populations based on samples. Topics include: ratios and proportional relationships, the number system, expressions and equations, linear equations, geometry, statistics and probability.

Accelerated Math 7:

This course provides an intensive study of algebra using practical problems, decision making, and technology to help students communicate mathematically. This rigorous course will prepare students with a firm background for higher math, science and computer courses. More material will be covered than in the College Prep course. NOTE: Any student who takes Algebra I in the 7^{th} and 8^{th} grade should be aware of the new college entrance requirement of taking 4 years of high school mathematics including a math course in the senior year. Students will take high school midterm and final exams for this course.

Prerequisites: Department Recommendation /Readiness Exam

Assessment: Student progress and achievement are based on the following: class work and participation, homework, cooperative group work, tests, quizzes, projects, presentations and mid-term and final exams.

Pre-Algebra 8:

The objective of this course is to give students an understanding of algebra by emphasizing concepts, structure, and applications. Topics include the real number system, integers and rational numbers, algebraic expressions and sentences, algebraic inequalities, basic statistical concepts, linear equations, exponents and polynomials, and factoring. Graphing calculators are integrated throughout the course and are required.

Algebra I 8:

This course provides an intensive study of algebra using practical problems, decision making, and technology to help students communicate mathematically. This rigorous course will prepare students with a firm background for higher math, science and computer courses. More material will be covered than in the College Prep course. NOTE: Any student who takes Algebra I in the 7^{th} and 8^{th} grade should be aware of the new college entrance requirement of taking 4 years of high school mathematics including a math course in the senior year. Students will take high school midterm and final exams for this course.

Prerequisites: Department Recommendation /Readiness Exam

Assessment: Student progress and achievement are based on the following: class work and participation, homework, cooperative group work, tests, quizzes, projects, presentations and mid-term and final exams.

Math Lab (Gr. 7, 8) **:

The Math Workshop provides extra support to students who are enrolled in a regular (everyday) mathematics course. It targets computational skills and foundational concepts in math for students with significant needs in those areas. Students have opportunities to build skills proficiency and strong conceptual understanding of fundamental mathematical ideas through a variety of classroom and computer-based activities. Placement in this course is by recommendation of the classroom teacher in consultation with specialists, the guidance counselor and parents. This course meets every other day, and is in addition to the grade level mathematics course.

** Required Support course if student meets eligibility

COMPUTER SCIENCE DISCOVERY

Computer Science Discovery (grade 6):

Computer Science Discovery is a computer science course for grade 6. Students will be learning how to create and share content on their own web pages. After deciding what content they want to share with the world, students learn how to structure and style their pages using HTML and CSS. Students also practice valuable programming skills such as debugging, using resources, and teamwork.

Computer Science Discovery (grade 7):

Computer Science Discovery is a computer science course for grade 7. Students will be learning how to make sprite-based games using JavaScript. Students start off creating simple shapes and then build up to more sophisticated sprite games. Through the course, students become familiar with the programming concepts and the design process computer scientists use daily.

Computer Science Discovery (grade 8):

Computer Science Discovery is a computer science course for grade 8. Students will explore the role of physical devices in computing. Using App Lab and Adafruit's Circuit Playground, students will develop programs that utilize the same hardware inputs and outputs that they see in smart devices. Students will also explore how physical devices can be used to react to the world around them using a "maker" mindset to create prototypes with everyday materials.

SCIENCE COURSES

Middle School

Grade 6: General Science - Structure and Function

Grade six science begins the spiraling curriculum for Middle School. We begin with the scientific method and methods of inquiry and progress to metrics and measurement. Students will learn to use instruments and make scientific mathematical conversions and calculations. The physical

science unit is composed of matter, waves, and light. We will explore different learning methods including interactive notebooks, computer simulations, and classroom laboratory activities. Students will explore space at the beginning of the Earth science unit and progress to the history of Earth learning about rock layers, fossils, and plate tectonics where they will debate the scientific method in action. The year concludes with life science where we study cell theory, the parts of cells and use of microscopes, and body systems where they will teach their peers. Through the course materials students will gain experience reading informational text, writing using evidence, and applications of mathematics. They will learn to construct a variety of models and to communicate their understanding in diverse ways. Massachusetts sixth grade curriculum focuses on structure and function.

Grade 7: General Science – Systems and Cycles

Students in grade 7 focus on systems and cycles using their understanding of structures and functions, connections and relationships in systems, and flow of matter and energy developed in earlier grades. A focus on systems requires students to apply concepts and skills across disciplines, since most natural and designed systems and cycles are complex and interactive. They gain experience with plate tectonics, interactions of humans and Earth processes, organism systems to support and propagate life, ecosystem dynamics, motion and energy systems, and key technological systems used by society. Through grade 7, students begin a process of moving from a more concrete to an abstract perspective, since many of the systems and cycles studied are not directly observable or experienced. This also creates a foundation for exploring cause and effect relationships in more depth in grade 8.

Grade 8 Science

Grade 8 Science is an integration of physical, life and earth sciences. In this lab-based course students will be given the opportunity to examine the cause and effect of key natural phenomena and design processes in order to strengthen their ability to explain patterns and make predictions about future events. They will discover that nature can be understood in terms of fundamental rules and models.

Some examples of specific topics that will be covered include:

- The role of gravity in ocean tides, the orbital motions of planets, their moons, and asteroids in the solar system.
- Patterns in air mass interactions and the relationship of those patterns to local weather.
- How environmental and genetic factors influence the growth of organisms.
- Understanding that genes hold the instructions for the production of specific proteins, which in turn affects the traits of an individual.
- The process of natural selection, in which genetic variations of some traits in a population increase some individuals' likelihood of surviving and reproducing in a changing environment.
- The idea that atoms combine in a multitude of ways to produce pure substances which make up all of the living and nonliving things that we encounter.
- Examining Newton's third law involving the motion of two colliding objects.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Middle School

Grade 6: Human Origins and Ancient Civilizations

Sixth graders study the development of early civilizations, from the origins of humans through the development of complex society. They examine how geography, religion, organization and unity contributed to the lasting legacies that formed among the civilizations of the Middle East, North Africa, Central America, the Caribbean, South Africa, Southeast Asia and Oceania. Throughout the year they make connections to the past to gain a greater understanding of history and modern civilization. Through reading, writing, speaking, listening and research, they consider how earlier societies have shaped history and how they continue to shape our lives today.

Grade 7: Geography/World Cultures

The grade seven social studies curriculum is a continuation of what students began in grade six. We will continue to study the physical geography of important regions of the world. This year students will explore sub-Saharan Africa, south and east Asia, and Europe. Students will learn how physical
characteristics such as climate, natural resources, and bodies of water influenced the development of the modern nations in these regions. In addition, we will examine the ancient civilizations that existed in these regions. Analytical techniques, skill development and interpretation are stressed.

Grade 8: United States and Massachusetts Government and Civic Life

Students study the roots and foundations of democratic government through primary documents, such as the United States and Massachusetts Constitutions; how and why government institutions developed; how government evolves through legislation and court decisions; and how individuals exercise their rights and civic responsibilities to maintain a healthy democracy in the nation and the Commonwealth.

OTHER PROGRAMS / COURSES

Middle School

Student Transitional Assistance for Academics and Guidance (STAAG) is a short-term program

with supports customized to each student's needs that are culturally competent, clinically informed, and flexible. We provide clinical support, academic coordination, family support, and care coordination services to students who are reintegrating into a full schedule after missing extensive amounts of time on learning due to serious mental health, medical, and/or life transition challenges.

Program staff strive to coordinate resources within the school, the wider community and partner effectively with families to help each participating student reintegrate and finish the school year on track for graduation.

What services will STAAG provide?

- Direct clinical support to students: readily accessible and planned clinical support (customized to each student), crisis intervention where needed, development and implementation of coping skills.
- Academic coordination: direct academic support along with communication with a student's
- Teachers modify assignments as needed for the student to demonstrate sufficient mastery to accrue credits.
- Family engagement: consistent, culturally-appropriate two-way communication with parents/guardians about student progress needs; provision of support, learning, and leadership opportunities for family members.
- Care coordination: consultation/collaboration with all in-school supports and collateral providers

SCHOOL COUNSELING

The school Psychologist, School Adjustment Counselor and School Counselors offer counseling services for students and families who may request it. Faculty/Staff can also make referrals for counseling.

Individual or group support sessions are ongoing. Counseling is usually short-term and directed toward helping a student enhance the quality of his/her life and reaching self-defined goals. Typical issues that are addressed in counseling include abuse, academic progress, anxiety, anger management, bullying/harassment, depression, family issues, grief/loss, relationships with family, friends, or loved ones, and substance use.

If you are interested in learning more about counseling services that are available to you, speak to the School Psychologist, School Counselor, or leave your name with the Counseling **Department Secretary.**

SPEECH & LANGUAGE PROGRAM

The Speech/Language Program is an inclusive program for students in grades 6-12 dealing with disorders of articulation, language, auditory, memory, voice, and/or fluency. Services are provided through consultation, in class support, small group support and individualized programs, as needed. Curriculum materials are used as the basis for intervention whenever possible.

Assessment: Daily assessment is based on "time on task," organization, effort, completion of daily agenda, and participation in small study groups.

ACADEMIC SUPPORT: (2.5 or 5 Credits)

This credit-based course is a Special Education Service that is recommended by a student's Team to deliver specialized instruction facilitating progress towards IEP goals and objectives. Essential to the course's design is the belief that the academic support must address individual learning trajectories and the capacity to access the full educational experience available to all students. Participants are also taught how to leverage their learning styles to best shift the focus of control from the instructor to the student, an important factor in becoming a more self-reliant, self-directed individuals. Assignments may be used as a vehicle for accessing core academic content areas in English, history, mathematics, and science; and, teaching skills such as organization, time management, test preparation, and task completion. Grades are based on the student's class participation, assessments, effort, growth, and improvement in strategy and skill utilization.

Assessment: Students are graded on daily performance tasks, time-on-task, extension activities, participation in whole or small group lessons, and growth and improvement in strategy/skill utilization.

INTENSIVE LANGUAGE: (2.5 Credits)

This course teaches basic language skills to those students with a diagnosed language/learning disability in phonology, syntax, semantics, reading comprehension or written composition. Structured multi-sensory language training and curriculum materials are combined to facilitate growth in skill areas and simultaneously provide tutorial support for classroom goals.

Assessment: Because students enrolled in ILA have been diagnosed with a language/learning disorder, and all have individual, specific language goals, assessment includes a combination of standardized and informal measures. Standardized testing includes an initial evaluation to determine eligibility for the class and subsequent three-year re-evaluations. Informal measures include mastery of concepts taught which occurs all year long, as well as a yearly assessment of progress made toward individual goals determined for each student at his/her last team meeting.

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (2.5 OR -5Credits)
Dependent on individual program needs)

Students who speak a language other than English at home are assessed when they enter Tahanto. If the results of the assessment suggest that they are in need of additional academic support, students participate in ESL classes to develop their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills.

Assessment: Progress in English is measured in a variety of formative and summative assessments.