



PROGRAM OF STUDIES

PINE-RICHLAND MIDDLE SCHOOL

2025-2026

Message to Parents

The Pine-Richland Middle School program is specifically designed to help students make a successful transition from Eden Hall Upper Elementary to Pine-Richland Middle School. Pine-Richland Middle School helps develop curriculum and organizational structures to aid our students in discovering changes in themselves and to explore exciting opportunities for their future. Students receive a foundation of necessary knowledge and skills for their success now, in high school, and in the future.

This Program of Studies is designed to give you a brief description of our middle school curriculum and the support services that are available. As we work together to prepare students for the future, we encourage you to also review the prerequisites and graduation requirements.

Our children are important to us. Parents, students and staff work together to build a strong team of support that will help students select educationally appropriate courses.

As a recipient of the 2025-2028 State and National “Schools to Watch” award for outstanding Middle School programs, we continue to strive toward our identified stretch goals to keep us on the path of continuous improvement:

- Evaluate and make decisions on structures needed to provide students with Multi-Tiered Systems of Support
- Reinforce the implementation of general education instructional strategies considering every students’ interests, learning styles, and achievement/growth levels
- Intentionally foster student connections inside and outside of the classroom



We are proud of our school and we are committed to our District’s mission “to focus on learning for every student every day.”

Sincerely,
Dr. David Kristofic
Principal
Pine-Richland Middle School

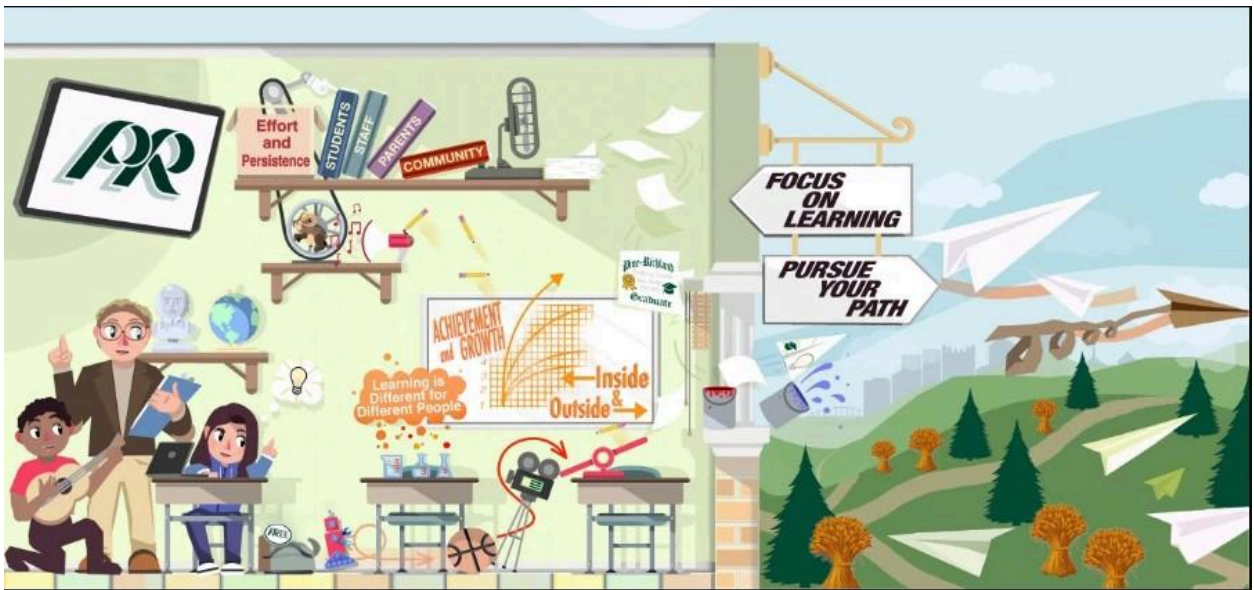
Ms. Nicole Berezo
Assistant Principal
Pine-Richland Middle School

Mission

The mission of the [Pine-Richland School District](#) is to **focus on learning** for **every student every day**.

Vision

The vision of the Pine-Richland School District is a picture developed by a student and updated by a teacher that captures the mission and provides a vivid reminder of the challenge and opportunity of our schools.



In narrative language, the image conveys the following:

Learning is our primary purpose.

Learning occurs inside and outside the classroom.

Learning is measured as BOTH achievement AND growth.

Learning happens differently for different people so flexibility and variation is needed in the approach.

Learning requires effort and persistence.

Learning is for all of us and requires the support of everyone (e.g., student, staff and parents).

Values

The values that guide our actions are based on the PRIDE acronym:



P—Personal Growth
R—Resiliency
I—Innovation
D—Diverse Opportunities
E—Engagement

Personal Growth represents a belief in the whole child and development through the years at Pine-Richland. In addition to academic growth, this value is meant to represent social, emotional, and physical growth as well. Personal growth can also be applied to the staff.

Resiliency is locally defined as "the ability to adapt well in the face of hard times and build upon one's strengths." It was adapted from the American Psychological Association. We believe that students must be equipped to handle success and adversity in their lives.

Innovation represents breakthrough change. Innovation also signals an emphasis on problem solving and critical thinking. These skills are important for post-high school success.

Diverse Opportunities captures the importance of a wide range of choices in academics, athletics, arts, and activities. It acknowledges the fact that students have varied interests. Exposure to a wide variety of opportunities helps them achieve personal growth and potential areas of future interest.

Engagement reflects the degree to which students, staff, parents, and community are part of the school district. It reflects engagement in the classroom for students as well as their connection to other aspects of student life. For our staff and community, engagement is a critical element of achieving our goals.



Pine-Richland Middle School

100 Logan Road, Gibsonia, PA 15044

Proudly Serving Grades 7-8



Directory

Administration

[David Kristofic](#), Principal
[Nicole Berezo](#), Assistant Principal
[Robin Tino](#), Secretary
[Debbie Klodowski](#), Secretary

724-625-3111

ext. 2254
ext. 2254
ext. 2254
ext. 2221

Guidance

[Nora McChesney](#), Counseling Secretary

724-625-3111

ext. 2228

Students in 7th grade (Class of 2031)

[Jennifer Mullaugh](#), School Counselor

ext. 2229

Students in 8th grade (Class of 2030)

[Amorena Pascoe](#), School Counselor

ext. 2230

Health Office

[Michelle Schonbachler](#), School Nurse

ext. 2222

Security

[Kori Phillips](#), School Resource Officer

ext. 2999

Absence Line

ext. 2

Contact Information

Here are some frequent concerns families have and the appropriate person/office to contact.

Concern	Person to Call	Concern	Person to Call
Class Grade	Teacher Issuing Grade	Bus Discipline/Issues	Assistant Principal Transportation
Homework	Teacher School Counselor	Teacher Complaint	Teacher – 1st Principal – 2nd
Course Placement	Counseling Office	Medical	School Nurse
New Student	Central Enrollment Counseling Office	Tutoring/Homebound Instruction	Counseling Office
Withdrawing Student	Counseling Office School Office	Trip Requests	Request Form
Transcripts	Counseling Office	Athletic Information	Athletics
Lunch Accounts	Food Services	Clubs/Activities Information	Activities
Attendance Information	Attendance Guidelines School Office	At-Risk Student	Counseling Office Principal

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Guidance and Counseling Program Mission Statement



- Counselors are part of the education teams where faculty, administrators, school psychologists, and parents meet at various times to explore ways to help students experience greater success.
- Counselors act as case managers for students with 504 Protected Handicap Service Agreements. They also attend Individualized Education Plan (IEP) meetings whenever possible.
- Counselors screen students for special programs such as Learning Support and Gifted.
- Counselors are integral members of the Student Assistance Program (SAP) who help to identify and support students with “at-risk” behaviors.
- Counselors meet with prospective or new students and their families to orient and inform them of district programs and services. They also help with the placement and scheduling process for these students.
- Counselors frequently facilitate and attend parent/teacher conferences throughout the year. They also act as liaisons between various community agencies and the school.
- Counselors are responsible for planning, coordination, and implementation of district and state testing programs, specifically Pennsylvania State School Assessments (PSSA), Keystone, midterms/finals and National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).
- Counselors teach a School Counseling curriculum, developed to meet district goals and outcomes and comply with National Standards. They play an advisory role to students in the development of the individual curricular/career plans.
- Counselors support a school-wide anti-bullying and positive incentive program through student conferences and small group lessons to facilitate positive student relationships.
- Counselors provide direct counseling services through individual and group counseling sessions. Counselors develop and implement lessons on career education and work standards. These lessons meet state standards and are stored in an individual career portfolio. Artifacts from the portfolio can be found in the individual student Naviance account.

Student Assistance Program

Purpose of the Student Assistance Program

The Student Assistance Program (SAP) is a state-mandated program in which the primary goal is to help students. The SAP team collaborates with parents, students, and staff to overcome any barrier to learning and to help students achieve their highest potential.

SAP is a systemic process utilizing techniques to mobilize school resources and remove the barriers to learning. The core of the program is a professionally trained team, including school staff and liaisons from community mental health, and drug and alcohol agencies. SAP team members are trained to identify problems, determine whether the presenting problem lies within the responsibility of the school and to make recommendations to assist the student and the parent. When the problem lies beyond the scope of the school, the SAP team will assist the parent and student so they may access services within the community. The SAP team members do not diagnose, treat, or refer to treatment; but they may refer for a screening that will assist parents in finding community resources. All services require parent permission.

There are four phases to the student assistance process:

- **Referral**—Anyone can refer a student to SAP when they are concerned about someone's behavior. Examples: Any school staff, a student's friend, a family member, or community member. The students themselves can even go directly to the SAP team to ask for help. **The SAP team contacts the parent for permission to proceed with the SAP process.**
- **Team Planning**—The SAP team gathers objective information about the student's performance in school from appropriate staff members who have contact with the student. Information from the parent is also collected. Together, the team and parent develop a plan that includes strategies for removing the learning barriers and promoting the student's academic and personal success.
- **Intervention and Recommendations**—The plan is put into action. The team assists in linking the student to in-school and/or community-based services and activities. The team might recommend a drug and alcohol or mental health assessment. For those students receiving treatment through a community agency, the SAP team, in collaboration with parents and the agency, can assist in helping plan in-school support services during and after treatment.
- **Support and Follow-Up**—The SAP team continues to work with and support the student and their family. Follow-up includes monitoring, mentoring, and motivating for academic success.

The student assistance process is based upon state guidelines, professional standards and policies, and procedures adopted by the local school board of directors. Professional training for team members in all phases of the student assistance process is required to ensure the appropriateness of the recommended services, effective interagency collaboration, and compliance with state and federal laws protecting the privacy rights of parents and students.

Referrals to the Student Assistance Program

The names of students referred to the Student Assistance Program and those who make the referral are kept confidential. Anyone can make a referral to the Student Assistance Program by calling the Middle School at 724-625-3111.

Student Assistance Facilitator

[Carolyn Welshonce](#)—ext. 2227

Guidance Counselor—Class of 2031

[Jennifer Mullaugh](#)—ext. 2229

Guidance Counselor—Class of 2030

[Amorena Pascoe](#)—ext. 2230



Special Education

Special Education

In the Pine-Richland School District, every effort is made to provide students with a free and appropriate education in their home school. Instructional strategies, curriculum adaptations, and behavioral interventions are applied in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). This can range from a regular education classroom setting with minimal support, to a full-time special education classroom in an alternative setting. Pine-Richland teachers promote the concept of inclusion by applying “best practices” which include in-class support, co-teaching, and consultation with classroom teachers. IEP Teams convene to decide which practice will best meet the needs of the individual student.

Special Education Screening Evaluation and Placement Procedures

The Pine-Richland School District uses the following procedures, as requested by law, for locating, identifying, and evaluating specialized needs of school-age students who may require special programs or services.

The district routinely conducts screenings of children’s hearing acuity (grades K, 1, 2, 3 and 7), visual acuity (all grade levels), and speech and language skills (kindergarten and teacher referral). Classroom teachers assess gross motor and fine motor skills, academic skills, and social-emotional skills on an ongoing basis. Identified needs from all of these screening sources are noted within the child’s official file. These school records are available to parents and to school staff who work with the child on a direct or indirect basis. Information from the records is released to other persons or agencies only with appropriate authorization, which requires written permission by parents.

Gifted Education

The Pine-Richland School District is committed to being focused on learning for every student every day. Inherent in that commitment is the recognition of the unique abilities, talents, interests, and strength-based needs of intellectually-gifted students which require special educational considerations. Educating the gifted student is the shared responsibility of all educators, the student’s parents, and the student.

Detailed information related to Pine-Richland School District’s Gifted Education Program is available on our website at <https://www.pinerichland.org/academics/gifted-education>.

Special Education

Types of Service

Educators in the Pine-Richland School District offer a variety of special education services for students with special needs. The needs of the students may be met through one or a combination of the following programs. This allows the district to customize an educational program to meet the specific needs of each child based on their individual needs.

- **Learning Support**—For students whose primary identified need is academic learning
- **Gifted Support**—For students who show outstanding intellectual ability and require more enrichment activities and opportunities in and out of the classroom through specially designed instruction
- **Life Skills Support**—For students who need to develop skills for independent living
- **Speech and Language Support**—For students with communication impairments that affect their academic achievement
- **Deaf or Hard of Hearing Impaired Support**—For students with hearing impairments that interfere with the development of their communication process
- **Blind or Visually Impaired Support**—For students who have a visual impairment that adversely affects their educational performance
- **Autism Support**—For students on the Autism Spectrum who have needs in the areas of social language, regulation of challenging behaviors, or communication skills that may impede their progress in the areas of academic achievement or relationship building
- **Physical Support**—For students with physical needs
- **Multiple Disability Support**—For students whose needs fall into more than one category
- **Emotional Support**—For students whose primary need is in the area of behavioral or emotional support such as self-regulation, self-control, or social skills. These challenging behaviors may impede their progress in the areas of academic achievement or relationship building.

Library and Media Center

The Pine-Richland Middle School library program provides students with a curriculum that focuses on the integration of information literacy with technology skills and teaches students to become effective users of ideas and information.

Middle school students visit the library with their subject area teachers on a flexible schedule to conduct research and select books. Students also have daily opportunities to visit the library for free selection of leisure reading material.

The Information Literacy curriculum includes competencies from the American Association of School Librarians *Standards Framework for Learners*. Our shared foundations and key commitments are: *inquire, include, collaborate, curate, explore, and engage*, under the domains *think, create, share, and grow*.

At the Middle School library, we stress Project-Based Learning using the Big Six process model:

- Task definition
- Information-seeking strategies
- Location and access
- Use of information
- Synthesis
- Evaluation

Additionally, Modern Language Association citations for a variety of resources are employed for all research. Teaching of the Information Literacy and Technology objectives is the joint responsibility of the teacher librarian and the subject area teacher who collaborate to develop and deliver lessons.

The library is staffed by a full-time teacher librarian and is fully automated for circulation. In addition, the library has computer search stations with high-speed internet access as well as charging stations and Wi-Fi for student devices. Please visit our [library website](#) to learn more information about the library and access our online resources, such as databases, eBooks, audiobooks, our online catalog and more.



Alternative Instruction

Policy 124 – Alternative Instruction Methods and Application

The [Alternative Instruction Methods policy](#) was designed to provide Pine-Richland students with a variety of opportunities to improve their skills and understandings of content or to explore areas of strength and interest. **Students must work closely with their school counselors to ensure the alternative method of instruction is approved before scheduling a course.**

The deadline for approval for requests per Policy 124 is the last day of Quarter 3. [Click here](#) for an application.

Credit Recovery

Definition—Credit recovery is an opportunity for a student who has failed to earn credit in an academic course (Math, Science, English, Social Studies, Health, Physical Education, and World Language) in order to recover that course credit by enrolling in a “Credit Recovery” program. Current Pine-Richland School District approved credit recovery programs include Keystone Credit Recovery, AIU Waterfront Learning, and North Hills Online Academy. Other credit recovery programs must be approved by Pine-Richland School District.

Acceleration

Definition—Acceleration occurs when courses are taken outside of Pine-Richland School District to move ahead in Mathematics, Science, or World Language pathways. **An application must be completed and approved prior to scheduling any course.**

Retake

Definition—Retake is an opportunity for students who earned a credit in a course but would like to improve their skills and understanding of content.

Foreign Exchange Program

Definition—District students shall receive high school credit for foreign exchange courses that meet the criteria established in the curriculum and are approved by the building principal.

Enrichment

Definition—Enrichment is additional learning opportunities outside of the Pine-Richland Program of Studies. Enrichment programs help students discover their strengths and interests and should support each student's individual goals. **An application must be completed and approved prior to scheduling any course.**

Sample Student Schedule

A day at the middle school begins with a short homeroom followed by nine periods, each approximately 40 minutes in length. These nine periods include five academic classes, one Unified Arts class, [Physical Education/World Language](#) (7th grade) or [Physical Education/Health](#) (8th grade), an Academic Support/[Performing Arts period](#), and lunch.

7th Grade

A typical day for a 7th grade student might look as follows (*sample—not indicative of all 7th grade schedules*):

Homeroom

Period 1—Academic Support/[Performing Arts](#)*

Period 2—[English 7](#)

Period 3—Unified Arts Rotation**

Period 4—[Reading 7](#)

Period 5—Lunch

Period 6—[Physical Education/World Language 7 \(German, French, Spanish\)](#)***

Period 7—[World Cultures 7](#)

Period 8—[Life Science 7](#)

Period 9—Math ([Pre-Concepts of Math 7](#), [Fundamentals of Pre-Algebra](#), [Pre-Algebra Current](#), [Pre-Algebra Compacted/Extended](#), or [Honors Algebra 1](#))

8th Grade

A typical day for an 8th grade student might look as follows (*sample—not indicative of all 8th grade schedules*):

Homeroom

Period 1—[English 8 Current](#) or [English 8 Compacted/Extended](#)

Period 2—Academic Support/[Performing Arts](#)*

Period 3—Unified Arts Rotation**

Period 4—[Reading 8](#), [German I Compacted/Extended](#), [French I Compacted/Extended](#), [Spanish I Compacted/Extended](#)

Period 5—[American History and Culture 8 Current](#) or [American History and Culture 8 Compacted/Extended](#)

Period 6—Lunch

Period 7—[Physical Education/Health](#)***

Period 8—[Physical Science 8 Current](#) or [Physical Science 8 Compacted/Extended](#)

Period 9—Math ([Pre-Concepts of Math 8](#), [Fundamentals of Algebra](#), [Algebra 1 Current](#), [Algebra 1 Compacted/Extended](#), or [Honors Geometry](#))

*Academic Support period is designed to be utilized as a time for enrichment and support. Science, English, Social Studies, Math, and Reading teachers are available to students during this period. Some students choose to participate in a Performing Arts class such as band, chorus, or orchestra during their academic support period.

**The Unified Arts Rotation consists of Art, Technology Education, Family and Consumer Science, and Business.

***Physical Education alternates all year with World Language classes in 7th grade and Health in 8th grade.

Academic Program

Timeline for Dropping and Adding Courses

Timeline for Dropping a Course

Schedule changes are made using a Request for Schedule Change Form. The ability to drop a course depends on course availability. A course must be dropped within the first 20 days of school.

Timeline for Adding a Course

The best time for adding a course is during the course request phase of scheduling. The building of the master schedule begins in February. The master schedule assigns teachers and rooms for classes and maximizes the use of district resources.

The ability for a student to add a course once the school year has begun is dependent upon the number of students already scheduled in the class, additional changes to the student's schedule needed to add the course, the amount of time elapsed since the onset of the class, and meeting the prerequisites for the course to be added.

Students are never guaranteed that they will be able to make changes to their schedules once the school year has begun.

Academic Program

Midterms and Finals

As a part of students' transition to secondary education, Pine-Richland Middle School introduces midterms and finals to students. These assessments take place in each core content area class (Reading, English, Math, Science, Social Studies, and 8th grade World Language). The purpose of these assessments is to gauge how students are progressing in course content at the midpoint and end of the school year. Teachers use the results of midterms to make instructional decisions for the second half of the school year, and they use finals to reflect on changes that should be made to the course content or instructional strategies for the following year.

Teachers prepare students in advance of midterms and finals. Midterms and finals do not always consist of traditional, multiple-choice tests. Teachers may use a long-term project that occurs within the semester as the student's midterm or final grade. Because of this flexibility, the windows of time for students to complete midterms and finals may vary by subject. For example, English may have their midterm grade associated with an essay that students have been working on for a month while the World Language department may assign their midterm grade to a test that is given on a specific day. In both instances, students will be assessed on knowledge and skills that have been covered throughout the school year.

Weighting: Midterms and finals will each be weighted as 5% of a student's grade. This deliberate weighting recognizes the developmental needs of Middle School students who may experience heightened anxiety during high-stakes tests that could significantly alter their end of year grade. At the same time, weighted midterms and finals introduce students to a concept likely to reappear in subsequent courses.



Course Pathways

Below are typical sequences that students progress through during their middle school careers. However, students have the ability to move between these pathways by meeting the prerequisites for future courses.

Math Pathways	
7 th Grade	8 th Grade
<u>Honors Algebra 1</u>	<u>Honors Geometry</u>
<u>Pre-Algebra Compacted/Extended</u>	<u>Algebra 1 Compacted/Extended</u>
<u>Pre-Algebra Current</u>	<u>Algebra 1 Current</u>
<u>Fundamentals of Pre-Algebra</u>	<u>Fundamentals of Algebra</u>
<u>Pre-Concepts of Math 7 (Intervention Course)</u>	<u>Pre-Concepts of Math 8 (Intervention Course)</u>
Science Pathways	
7 th Grade	8 th Grade
<u>Life Science 7</u>	<u>Physical Science 8 Compacted/Extended</u> or <u>Physical Science 8 Current</u>
ELA Pathways	
7 th Grade	8 th Grade
<u>English 7</u> <u>Reading 7</u> <u>Language Arts 7 (Intervention Course)</u>	<u>English 8 Compacted/Extended</u> or <u>English 8 Current</u> <u>Reading 8</u> or <u>French I Compacted/Extended</u> , <u>German I Compacted/Extended</u> or <u>Spanish I Compacted/Extended</u> <u>Language Arts 8 (Intervention Course)</u>
Social Studies Pathways	
7 th Grade	8 th Grade
<u>World Cultures 7</u>	<u>American History and Culture 8 Compacted/Extended</u> or <u>American History and Culture 8 Current</u>

Keystone Requirements

Algebra I

The Keystone Exam is an end-of-course assessment designed to assess proficiency in Algebra I.

Keystone Exams are one component of Pine-Richland School District's high school graduation requirements. Keystone Exams are typically taken during the spring of the year in which a student is enrolled in Algebra I. Students must demonstrate proficiency on the Keystone Exam. If a student does not receive a score of Advanced or Proficient, the student is permitted to retest during designated windows established by the Pennsylvania Department of Education.



Students who score below proficient on the Keystone Exam are encouraged to participate in supplemental instruction during Academic Support.

Academic Program—7th Grade

Honors Algebra 1

This class is a more rigorous version of Algebra, which is offered to 7th grade students who successfully completed Honors Pre-Algebra in 6th grade. The pace is faster and the amount of material is greater than in standard Algebra. All students completing this course are required to take the end of course Keystone Algebra 1 Exam. The Keystone Exam grade is not calculated into the student's final course grade.



Pre-Algebra Compacted/Extended

Pre-Algebra Compacted/Extended is a comprehensive introduction to Algebra which focuses not only on Algebraic concepts but also arithmetic as well. Along with the introduction to Algebra, consisting of a strong emphasis on variables, equations and inequalities, the Pre-Algebra Compacted/Extended class works extensively with different number systems, concepts in geometry (construction of figures, finding area, perimeter and volume), percentages, ratios and similarities, and data analysis. This Compacted/Extended Pre-Algebra course will take a more in-depth approach to the curriculum and students will be expected to be more independent in and out of class. Pre-Algebra Compacted/Extended students will study various topics on a rigorous level appropriate for each student.

Pre-Algebra Current

Pre-Algebra Current is a comprehensive introduction to Algebra which focuses not only on Algebraic concepts but on arithmetic as well. Along with the introduction to Algebra, consisting of a strong emphasis on variables, equations and inequalities, the Pre-Algebra Current class works extensively with different number systems, concepts in geometry (construction of figures, finding area, perimeter and volume), percentages, ratios and similarities, and data analysis. Pre-Algebra Current students will study various topics on a rigorous level appropriate for each student.

Fundamentals of Pre-Algebra

Fundamentals of Pre-Algebra builds on the mathematical concepts addressed by the PA Core Standards at the 7th grade level. Concepts include the further investigation of the different types of numbers, the order of operations, geometry concepts, and solving more complex Algebraic problems. More theoretical concepts are stressed as well, namely properties of mathematics and more complex formulas in geometry.

Pre-Concepts of Math 7

Pre-Concepts of Math 7 is a Tier 3 Intervention course designed to develop foundational skills that are needed for entry into algebra. Students will delve into fewer topics with greater depth. These topics include operations with fractions, two-dimensional geometry concepts, word problems, rational numbers, and concepts with money. All lessons consist of instruction, guided practice, and independent problem solving. Concrete, Representational, and Abstract (CRA) instructional approaches will be implemented. Manipulatives will be utilized to enhance learning.

Life Science 7

The 7th-grade Life/Environmental Science course will introduce students, through a variety of experiences, to selected topics in both biology and ecology. Students will review the scientific and engineering processes, argumentation, cells, heredity and genetics, kingdoms of living things and relationships of living things within their environment. Through these units, students will conduct investigations, record and analyze data and present their findings.



English 7

This course includes the interpretation of literature and poetry using literary/poetic elements and figurative language. It encompasses grammar studies that emphasize understanding parts of speech, sentence construction rules, and their incorporation into authentic writing. The curriculum places a strong emphasis on the form and content of analytical writing (multiple paragraph essays) written in response to literature, and various argumentative prompts. By year's end, students will become more active and informed readers and skilled writers.



Reading 7

The purpose of this course is to advance literacy acquisition by developing strategic reading skills necessary to access and process explicit and embedded information in academic texts. The genre span used for instruction includes short stories, essays, poetry and expository texts. Reading skills, specific strategies, literary analysis, written responses, oral communication/debate, comparative analysis, higher-level comprehension, and reasoning skills are incorporated through independent, small group, and whole-class experiences. A reading technology program is utilized to provide a wide choice of independent reading

opportunities and measure individual student's academic growth.

Language Arts 7

Placement and pacing of this course is based on student need after analysis of multiple data points. Students engage in a detailed study of the English language including development of skills in the areas of phonics, phonemic awareness, spelling, vocabulary, reading comprehension, grammar, writing, and speaking. Students will be able to apply their skills to real-life and academic reading, listening, speaking, and writing tasks. This is an intervention reading course that could replace another English course.

World Cultures 7

The seventh grade World Cultures course is based on the academic learning standards put forth by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Seventh grade World Cultures curriculum introduces and details selected cultures and regions of the world to students, while demonstrating how those cultures interact with one another and their role in history. The areas of study include Africa, South Asia, East Asia, and Southwest Asia. The time frame of study for each unit begins with the founding of each civilization or region and works through the 1500s AD. Information for each unit of study focuses on how each culture developed and its ties to geography. Students engage these cultures and regions through a multitude of teaching approaches including multi-sensory learning.



Academic Program—8th Grade

Honors Geometry

Students in Geometry study figures and patterns using both inductive (exploration and guess) and deductive (mathematical proof) methods. Real world applications and algebraic connections are emphasized as students are expected to analyze figures, synthesize theorems, craft a logical mathematical argument, and find solutions to problems. Topics include definitions, constructions, parallel line properties, transformations, symmetry, basic logic and proof, triangle and polygon properties, similarity, Pythagorean Theorem, special right triangles, right triangle trigonometry, circles, area, surface area and volume. This course is considered to be an Honors course and is distinguished from Geometry not only by the number of topics covered, but also by the increased rigor.

Algebra 1 Compacted/Extended

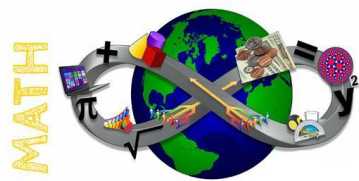
Algebra 1 Compacted/Extended is a demanding course which consists of a brief review of arithmetic followed by an intense course in reasoning of Algebraic concepts. Topics include solving equations and inequalities (as well as systems), graphing and solving functions (linear, absolute value, exponential, and quadratic), solving proportions, finding percent, and factoring polynomials. In addition, other topics are touched upon such as working with square roots, rational expressions, and statistics. This Compacted/Extended Algebra course will take a more in-depth approach to Algebraic topics and students will be expected to be independent and demonstrate self-advocacy. All students completing this course are required to take the end of course Keystone Algebra 1 Exam. The Keystone Exam grade is not calculated into the student's final course grade.

Algebra 1 Current

Algebra 1 Current is a demanding course which consists of a brief review of arithmetic followed by an intense course in reasoning of Algebraic concepts. Topics include solving equations and inequalities (as well as systems), graphing and solving functions (linear, absolute value, exponential, and quadratic), solving proportions, finding percentages, and factoring polynomials. In addition, other topics are touched upon such as working with square roots, rational expressions, and statistics. Algebra 1 Current students will study the various Algebra topics on a rigorous level and will be expected to be more independent and demonstrate self-advocacy. All students completing this course are required to take the end of course Keystone Algebra 1 Exam. The Keystone Exam grade is not calculated into the student's final course grade.

Fundamentals of Algebra

Fundamentals of Algebra is a comprehensive introduction to Algebra which focuses not only on Algebraic concepts but on arithmetic as well. Along with the introduction to Algebra, consisting of a strong emphasis on variables, equations, and inequalities, the Fundamentals of Algebra class works extensively with different number systems, concepts in geometry (construction of figures, finding area, perimeter, and volume), percentages, ratios and similarities, and data displays.



Pre-Concepts of Math 8

Pre-Concepts of Math 8 is a Tier III Intervention course designed to develop foundational skills that are needed for entry into algebra. Students delve into fewer topics with greater depth such as rational numbers, algebraic expressions and equations, and order of operations. Lessons consist of instruction, guided practice, independent problem solving and continued assessment of skill development. Concrete, Representational, and Abstract (CRA) instructional approaches will be used. Manipulatives will be used to enhance learning.

Physical Science 8 Compacted/Extended

The Compacted/Extended class will use the same curriculum as the Physical Science class. The Compacted/Extended class will explore curricular topics more in-depth and students will be expected to be more independent in and out of class. Exploratory and discovery activities will be emphasized and enrichment opportunities will be provided.



Physical Science 8 Current

The 8th grade Physical Science course is designed to be a inquiry based course following the guidelines established by the state STEELS standards. Through this approach, students will develop critical thinking and analysis skills. In addition, students will understand how science influences and affects their everyday life. There are three main disciplines of science covered: Nature of Science, Chemistry, and Physics. The nature of science will be emphasized throughout the entire year. In the chemistry strand, students will examine the Structure and Properties of Matter. Topics covered will include: density, the atom, and the Periodic Table. The second part of the chemistry strand will be Chemical Reactions. Chemical bonding, changes in matter, and conservation of matter will be covered. The physics curriculum will include four major topics: forces and motion, types of interactions (electric, electromagnetic, gravity), definitions and conservation of energy, and wave properties.



English 8 Compacted/Extended

The Compacted/Extended class will use the same curriculum as the English 8 Current class. The Compacted/Extended class will explore curriculum topics more in-depth and students will be expected to be more independent in and out of class. The focus of the class will be on literary analysis and becoming proficient in informational and argumentative modes of writing.

English 8 Current

English 8 focuses on both literature and composition. Students read and respond to a variety of literature including informational texts, poetry, essays, short stories, and novels. Emphasis is placed on critical reading and writing through shared responses and class discussion. Students write in the areas of description, argumentative, and exposition. The development of analytical skills is also a key focus of the eighth grade English curriculum. Correct grammar usage and a formal approach is stressed daily in writing and speaking.

Reading 8

This course extends the instructional design of Reading 7. The course is taken in place of a full year of a foreign language. It is designed to cultivate critical literacy skills so that students reach their maximum potential in all areas of learning. The breadth of genre includes short stories, novels, articles, poems and essays. There is a targeted focus on the application of comprehension skills that can be applied in other content areas. Examples of comprehension skills include literary analysis, specific reading strategies, listening skills, critical thinking skills and higher-level questioning. Direct instruction of vocabulary strategies and a structured written response is incorporated through whole class and individualized reading experiences. A reading technology program is utilized to provide a wide choice of independent reading opportunities and measure individual student's academic growth.

Language Arts 8

Placement and pacing of this course is based on student need after analysis of multiple data points. Language Arts 8 is an intervention course which will replace another English course. This course is designed to provide remediation and reinforcement in all aspects of reading and writing. Small group instruction will address skill development in the following areas: phonemic awareness, fluency, vocabulary development, reading comprehension, grammar and written expression.

American History and Culture 8 Compacted/Extended

The Compacted/Extended class will use the same curriculum as the current American History and Culture Current class. The Compacted/Extended class will explore curriculum topics more in-depth and students will be expected to be more independent in and out of class. Primary and secondary document analysis will be emphasized and enrichment opportunities will be provided.



American History and Culture 8 Current

The eighth-grade American History Course is based on the academic learning standards put forth by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. It focuses on United States History and Pennsylvania History from 1607 to 1877. During the aforementioned period, the students study the historical, political, geographic, social and economic events of the United States with special emphasis on how these events impacted the state of Pennsylvania. The curricular themes of study are based on the outline of our textbook and aligned with specific Pennsylvania Academic Standards.

World Language

World Language 7

Throughout the entire academic year, students will participate in their chosen World Language course on alternating days of Physical Education. The World Language 7 course options are 7th grade French, German, and Spanish.

7th
Grade

Each language class teaches conversational and topical phrases relevant to the seventh grade learner (e.g., hobbies, describing yourself and others, etc). Additionally, grammar topics such as articles, adjectives, subject pronouns, and verb conjugations are introduced. Students speak, listen, read, and write in the target language while learning in an environment that encourages them to communicate, connect, and explore their world.



8th
Grade

French I Compacted/Extended

French I Compacted/Extended class meets every day of the academic year. It is an academic course which has a midterm and final exam. The French Level I Compacted/Extended curriculum includes reading, writing, listening to and speaking French. Most of the class is conducted in the French language. Culture is used as a foundation for each lesson. Students are encouraged to engage in a variety of functional and practical activities to help practice speaking and to reinforce grammatical concepts. Through the course of the year, students begin to experience the benefits of learning French. There is a strong emphasis on writing and speaking in this course.

German I Compacted/Extended

In this full-year course, 8th grade students begin developing the basic language learning skills of speaking, writing, listening and reading in German. Emphasis is placed on basic language functions, grammar and structure such as verb conjugations, word order of statements and questions, case understanding and noun groupings. Vocabulary development focuses on topics such as personal introductions and descriptions, family, hobbies and school. Additional topics such as geography of German-speaking Europe, regional language variations plus cultural and holiday celebrations are also highlighted.

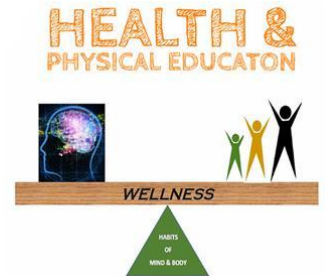
Spanish I Compacted/Extended

Spanish I Compacted/Extended is a course that meets every day of the academic year. This course continues the development of language learning skills related to speaking, writing, listening and reading in Spanish. These skills are developed through the study of relevant thematic units such as pastimes, family, and food. Grammatical concepts include genders of nouns, adjective agreement, subject pronouns, verb conjugations and sentence structure. These units of study are infused with vocabulary, history and culture, thus providing students with a well-rounded, meaningful exposure to the Spanish-speaking world.

Physical Education and Health

Physical Education 7 and 8

Physical Education courses are designed to empower students to develop habits of mind and body that support wellness throughout a lifetime. A strong emphasis is placed on each student attaining a healthy level of personal fitness, learning strategies to improve wellness through regular physical activity, and creating and achieving personal fitness goals. In addition, a diverse curriculum of team sports, individual sports, lifetime activities, dance, strength training, and cooperative games expose students to an array of knowledge and skills while helping students foster an appreciation for an active lifestyle. Building upon the 7 th grade curriculum, the 8 th grade curriculum will increase physical fitness intensity as well as demand a higher level of knowledge and skills.



Health Education 8

Health Education is a course designed to present age-appropriate content with skill-based activities to promote health and wellness. This course provides comprehensive coverage and up-to-date information on health and wellness topics including mental and emotional well-being, social health and wellness, substance abuse, nutrition, physical fitness, and anatomy/physiology of body systems. A strong focus of this course is on developing and practicing skills such as decision-making, refusal/conflict/resolution, goal-setting, accessing and evaluating health information, advocating for personal, and community health and communication.



Art Education

Introduction to Art 7

Students will engage in both 2D and 3D projects using various mediums (materials), always covering the Elements and Principles of Design and the Pennsylvania State Standards for Art Education as well as the National Visual Arts Standards. Students are evaluated using summative, formative, and benchmark art assessments. These assessments emphasize classroom effort and new art techniques taught and demonstrated, as well as reflective writings. The 7th grade art program is cumulative and sequential based on previous art experience. A spring school-wide Art Show highlights students' efforts.



Introduction to Art 8

Introduction to Art 8 is a cumulative and sequential course following 7th grade art. It is the last mandatory art course available to students. This 8th grade art class emphasizes the engagement of students using both 2D and 3D projects. Various mediums are introduced, focusing student attention on increasing artistic skills, thought processes, and art-specific techniques. The Elements and Principles of Design and the National Visual Arts Standards are used in class. Students in 8th grade art are evaluated using summative, formative, and benchmark assessments. These assessments emphasize classroom effort and new art techniques taught, demonstrated, and implemented on their final projects. This 8th grade art class completes the visual art studies that students began in kindergarten. At the completion of this course, students will be prepared to enter Foundations of Studio Art at the High School. In conjunction with the spring band concert a school-wide art show highlights both 7th and 8th grade student's art projects.

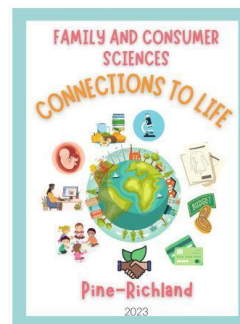


Family and Consumer Science

Family and Consumer Sciences 7

7th grade Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) is an introductory course. Students will concentrate on the following units:

- Smart Shopping and Budgeting
- Sewing Machine Project and Light Hand-Sewing
- Introduction to Foods and the Kitchen
- Child Development with a focus on Babysitting



Students will learn through hands-on, real-life application projects. Topics include machine sewing skills with completion of a functional project, responsible babysitting, basic food and nutritious breakfast preparation, applying MyPlate food guidelines, keeping a kitchen clean and safe, use of major appliances and kitchen equipment, decision-making, values, goal setting, communication skills, and managing time and resources. The students will also study the various ages and stages of childhood development, examine discipline techniques, and the importance of reading at any age.

Family and Consumer Sciences 8

8th grade Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) is an intermediate course. Students will concentrate on the following units:

- Food and Nutrition
- Space Design
- Fashion History/Smart Shopping
- Budgeting and Check Writing
- Sewing Machine/Community Service Project

In this hands-on, real-life application class, students will practice cooking skills, food and kitchen safety, and nutrition. The students will plan and prepare nutritious meals and healthy snacks. Students will acquire skills to balance home, work and family, as well as financial management skills, such as check writing and budgeting. Students will then apply management skills to a consumer project in which they will virtually-shop for a clothing outfit with a budget. Students will explore space design by creating multiple floor plans of their current bedrooms. Students will also use their acquired sewing skills to serve the community by creating pillowcases that will be donated to Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh North.

Technology Education

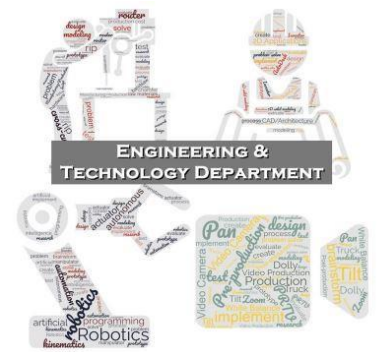
This Gateway to Technology (GTT) program, associated with Project Lead the Way, addresses the interest and energy of middle school students while incorporating national standards in mathematics, science, and technology. This activity-oriented, cutting-edge program shows students how technology is used in engineering to solve everyday problems.

Design and Modeling 7

Students begin to recognize the value of an engineering notebook to document and capture their ideas. They are introduced to and use the design process to solve problems and understand the influence that creative and innovative design has on our lives. Students use industry-standard 3D modeling software to create a virtual image of their designs and produce a portfolio to highlight their creative solutions.

Automation and Robotics 8

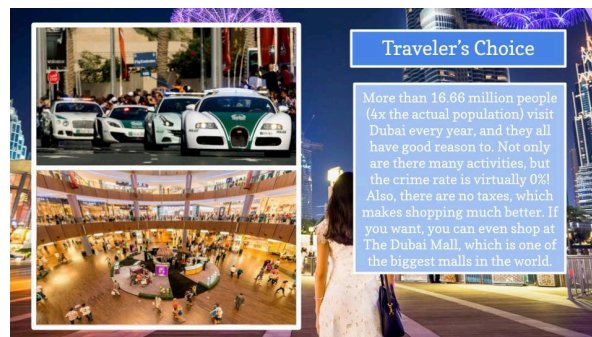
Students learn about mechanical systems, energy transfer, machine automation, and computer control systems. Students use a robust robotics platform to design, build, and program a solution to solve an existing problem. While programming, students will use motors for movement, and sensors such as limit switches and light sensors for feedback. Problem solving through analysis of code, communication and teamwork are emphasized in this course.



Business Education

Computer Applications 7

In addition to enhancing student keyboarding skills, this course will introduce students to intermediate and advanced word processing skills utilizing the primary Google Suite tools including Gmail, Drive, Docs, Sheets, Slides, Forms, Calendar, and Hangouts. These programs will be used to create brochures, presentations, and projects to become better acquainted with proper presentation techniques in the classroom while in front of peers. Digital citizenship will also be addressed as part of this course, including the responsible use of today's ever-changing social networking applications and websites. Below you will find a student example of a travel itinerary project where students planned a trip while considering a budget and exchange rates.



Introduction to Business 8

This course is designed to introduce students to the many facets of a business. Students will learn how to decipher between a want and a need, identify forms of ownership, and develop an understanding of the importance of marketing and budgeting. We will examine how to market a product and go through the marketing mix. We will introduce budgeting using Google Sheets and identify skills needed to financially succeed. Students will also create a fictitious business and develop a business plan using Google Apps for Education. Internet safety will be addressed as part of this course, including the responsible use of today's ever-changing social networking applications and websites. Below you will see a student example of a budget project. Using their assigned job, the student selected an apartment based on their monthly budget.



7th and 8th Grade Performing Arts

Band 7 and 8

Students in grades 7 and 8 may choose band as a performing ensemble. Prior knowledge of a woodwind, brass, or percussion instrument is required. Students learn a variety of musical styles and techniques and develop their skills through scale studies, drone work and challenging pieces. Students will have the opportunity to audition for honors bands in the area, including PMEA District Band, Northern Area Honors Band, and Allegheny Valley Honors Band. Students in the PRMS band program are eligible to audition for the PRMS Jazz Band, which uses standard jazz ensemble instrumentation. Attendance at concert performances is required.



Choir 7

Seventh grade choir is a course that emphasizes excellent ensemble singing, improving each individual's vocal technique, and high-level performance of quality literature. Class activities include warm-up and sight-singing exercises, instruction of proper vocal practices, and rehearsal of challenging choral selections for mixed ensembles. Attendance at concert performances is required.

Choir 8

Eighth grade choir is a course that emphasizes more advanced excellent ensemble singing, improving each individual's vocal technique, and high-level performance of quality literature. Class activities include warm-up and sight-singing exercises, the teaching and implementation of more challenging vocal practices, and rehearsal of choral selections of higher difficulty for mixed ensembles. Attendance at concert performances is required.

Orchestra 7 and 8

Orchestra is an elective that is offered to any student who has at least one year of experience on the violin, viola, cello, or bass. During orchestra, students will work on improving string-playing techniques, music theory, and ear training in all genres of music. Grading is based on daily participation, practicing, daily performance, and written/performance-based exams. Attendance at concert performances is required.

A Note About Course Offerings

2025-2026 course offerings listed in this guide are tentative and subject to change, depending upon enrollment, general student interest, available staffing, and other resources.

All students are therefore advised that registration for a course does not guarantee placement in that course or that the course will be offered during the 2025-2026 school year.

The district is committed to minimizing alterations in the course selection guide and will notify students of any changes in the availability of a course for which they have registered.

Pine-Richland Central Office Directory

702 Warrendale Rd., Gibsonia PA 15044
Phone: 724-625-7773 | Fax: 724-625-1490
www.pinerichland.org

Dr. Brian R. Miller	Superintendent	x 6100
Barbara Williams	Administrative Assistant to Superintendent	x 6100
Dr. Michael Pasquinelli	Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Education and Curriculum	x 6110
Dr. Kristen Justus	Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Education and Curriculum	x 6121
Carolyn Will	Administrative Assistant to Assistant Superintendent	x 6110
Chris Juzwick	Director of Financial and Operational Services	x 6303
Rachel McCarthy	Accounting Specialist	x 6300
Rebecca Powell	Accounts Receivable and Payable Specialist	x 6306
John Stoughton	Transportation and Facilities Use Coordinator	x 6200
Abigail Cercone	Secretary	x 6307
Alexia Meijer	Human Resources Support	x 6301
Davida van Mook	State Reporting Coordinator/PIMS Coordinator	x 6000
Brian Glickman	Director of Human Resources and Legal Affairs	x 6201
Doris McCartney	HR, Employee Benefit Programs Administrator	x 6302
Sarah Merhaut	Human Resources Database Administrator	x 6304
Erin Hasinger	Director of Communications	x 6202
Steve Karpinski	Media Services Specialist	x 1505
Andrew Mundy	Media and Web Services Coordinator	x 6203
Shawn Stuebener	Director of Technology	x 6305
Jeff Zimmerman	Director of Facilities	x 6750
Bruce Reimer	Assistant Director of Facilities	x 6754
Jamie Rucker	Assistant Director of Facilities	x 6751
Parker Freshwater	School Security Officer	x 1606
Ryan Wilson	Sodexo Food Services Manager	x 2236

Pine-Richland Pupil Services Directory

3811 Bakerstown Rd., Gibsonia, PA 15044
Phone: 724-443-7230 | Fax: 724-443-7374

Dr. Maura Paczan	Director of Student Services	x 6501
Brenda Provenzano	Special Education Secretary	x 6501
Mary Pegher	Administrative Assistant to Director of Pupil Services	x 6500
Dr. Greta Kuzilla	Assistant Director of Student Services/Special Education	x 6501
Dr. Melissa Ramirez	School Psychologist	x 6504
Carolyn Welshonce	Social Worker	x 7807

Pine-Richland School Board

The [Pine-Richland School Board](#) is made up of school directors who set policy for the school district. The board reorganizes every year in December.

2025 Board of Directors

Mr. Philip Morrisette, President
Mrs. Lisa Hillman, Vice President
Mr. Marc Casciani, Treasurer
Mrs. Christina Brussalis, Director
Mr. Joseph Cassidy, Director
Mrs. Ashley Fortier, Director
Mrs. Leslie Miller, Director
Mrs. Amy Terchick, Director
Mr. Michael Wiethorn, Director



Pine-Richland School District will not discriminate in its education programs, activities or employment practices, protected classification. Announcement of this policy is in accordance with state and federal laws, including Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 and Sections 5043 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

