

**Program of Studies
2024-25**

**Pelham Middle School
Pelham, NY**



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A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRINCIPAL

Dear PMS Families,

Welcome to Pelham Middle School's **2025-2026 Program of Studies!** This guide has been designed to provide you with an understanding of the academic opportunities and programs offered at Pelham Middle School, as well as the vision that guides us as educators and lifelong learners.

At Pelham Middle School, we believe that all learners need to be rigorously challenged; that all learners need to be empowered with both the basic skills and the critical thinking ability that will enable them to become productive contributing members of a diverse, yet increasingly interdependent, world.

We believe in the value of both individual effort and group cooperation.

We believe that our school needs to be a safe, caring place of learning; a place that recognizes the unique value of each person who studies or works in our midst.

We want to build and continually nurture a school climate that recognizes the importance of serious work and fun too; a school climate that delights in the wonder, energy, and excitement of students in the middle grades of their public education.

As an IB World School and a [National School of Character](#), we strive to make a positive impact on the world around us. Through demonstrating personal responsibility and embracing challenges, we act as continuous learners. When we experience discomfort or encounter conflict, we learn through *self-reflection*— asking tough questions of ourselves, asking curious questions of others, and being prepared to be changed by what we hear. Here, we are committed to creating a safe and caring environment where every person is supported, celebrated, challenged, and treated with worth and dignity.

At Pelham Middle School, we foster an environment where students can develop positive behaviors and characteristics that make our school a place for students to learn and grow into productive, happy young adults. These characteristics are embodied in Pelham P.R.I.D.E., our acronym that stands for behaviors that all students should strive to meet. When our students are Prepared, Respectful, Involved and Determined in all areas of school, the results are excellent!

Sincerely,
Lynn M. Sabia,
Principal

MIDDLE SCHOOL ACADEMIC PROGRAM

At Pelham Middle School, we foster academic success through carefully orchestrated programs that reflect the social, emotional, and intellectual needs of young adolescents. We recognize that 10 to 14 year olds are developmentally poised for significant intellectual growth and are cognitively ready for high-level academic challenges. We also recognize, however, that this can be best achieved in a safe and inviting environment that supports the significant changes in their physical development and social behavior, as well as rapid development in the emotional intelligence of our students. Flexible and varied instruction, individualized learning, and collaborative, cross-disciplinary approaches are utilized in a facility designed for this age group. Our teachers and students share ownership of learning in the classroom, during after-school activities and through annual outdoor educational experiences.

IB-Middle Years Programme

Pelham Middle School is an International Baccalaureate World School offering the IB Middle Years Programme to all of its students. As an IB World School, our goal is to help develop well-rounded students who respond to challenges with optimism and an open mind, are confident in their own identities, make ethical decisions, join with others in celebrating our common humanity, and are prepared to apply what they learn in real-world, complex, and unpredictable situations.

The Middle Years Programme (or “MYP”) provides a framework of learning that encourages students to become creative, critical, and reflective thinkers. By emphasizing intellectual challenge and encouraging students to make connections between their studies in traditional subjects and the real world, the MYP fosters the development of skills for communication, intercultural understanding, and global engagement: essential qualities for young people who will one day become global leaders.



OVERVIEW OF DEPARTMENTS

Art Department

The Pelham Middle School Art Department strives to provide opportunities for exploration, expression and creative decision making in an environment that encourages students to tap into their innate creative potential. Through developmentally appropriate and differentiated art challenges in a variety of media, students develop problem-solving skills and aesthetic awareness to be communicated through the lens of their own experience. Learning about art throughout history and the art of other cultures further inspires students to discover their own artistic voice in our world. Students will also learn the relevance of art skills and art knowledge, as it relates to the real world and practical application. These important elements of the curriculum are synonymous with the framework of the IB Middle Years Programme.

English Department

The English Department of Pelham Middle School is dedicated to promoting independent, critical thinkers, inspired to read, write, speak and listen in a way that demonstrates genuine appreciation for the power of words and a variety of literature that encourages empathy and concern for others, the world around us, and relevant issues facing us today.

Health Department

The PMS Health Education Program is aligned with New York State Education Health Standards. In grades 7 and 8, students work to understand human growth and development, and recognize the relationship between behaviors and healthy development. They will understand ways to promote health and prevent disease, and will demonstrate and practice positive health behaviors. Students will also understand the influence of culture, media and technology in making decisions about personal and community health.

Mathematics Department

Math courses at Pelham Middle School are focused and cohesive—designed to support student access to the knowledge and understanding of the mathematical concepts that are necessary to function in a world very dependent upon the application of mathematics, while providing educators the opportunity to devise innovative programs to support this endeavor. Math courses in grades 6-8 are rigorous; they encourage a balance of conceptual understanding, procedural fluency and application and represent a significant level of achievement in mathematics that will enable students to successfully transition to High School level math courses.

Music Department

The Pelham Public Schools offers a wide variety of music programming for all students K-12. Winter and spring concerts are widely attended across all levels.

Physical Education Department

At Pelham Middle School, we believe that physical activity is critical to the development and maintenance of good health. Our goal is to develop physically educated individuals who have the knowledge, skills and confidence to enjoy a lifetime of healthful physical activity.

Our students are expected to participate enthusiastically and demonstrate responsible personal behavior while engaging in physical activities, handle equipment safely and responsibly, accept teammates regardless of ability and treat opponents with respect and courtesy.

Science Department

The science courses at Pelham Middle School are aligned to New York State's Science Learning Standards (NYSSLS). Concepts in science are part of a spiralled and sequential progression that begins in elementary school. The curriculum is divided into four major areas including life science, physical science, Earth and space science, and engineering. The standards also place a heavy emphasis on a three dimensional approach to learning articulated in the national Next Generation Science Standards. Students explore core ideas, crosscutting concepts, along with science and engineering practices. An experience in Pelham Middle School science is rooted in natural phenomena and inquiry. Standards and practices are also aligned to the International Baccalaureate's instructional framework and science's role as a global force for innovation and progress is also explored through that lens. For more information:

<https://www.nysed.gov/sites/default/files/programs/standards-instruction/ms-science-learning-standards.pdf>

Social Studies Department

The Pelham Schools believe that the purpose of social studies is to help students assume their role as responsible citizens in America's constitutional democracy and as active contributors to a society that is increasingly diverse and interdependent with other nations of the world. Students will learn to think critically, to consider all points of view, and to recognize the diversity of their nation and the global community.

Technology Department

Pelham Middle School embraces technology education as a program of instruction designed to assist all students in meeting state intermediate standards for technology. Students will use concepts of science, mathematics, social science, and language arts in a hands-on, systems-based approach to problem solving that guides students in the understanding, design, and development of systems, devices, and products.

World Language Department

The World Language Department seeks to create an environment that enables students to communicate in the target language, to appreciate cultural differences, to develop understandings of cultural and linguistic heritages, and to become lifelong language learners and world citizens.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARTICIPATION IN HONORS/ACCELERATED COURSES

Honors/Accelerated coursework provides an opportunity for students to gain skills and demonstrate competencies at a higher level. Advanced coursework provides other benefits as well, including:

- Improving a student's self-confidence and image of self.
- Demonstrating a student's preparedness for high school-level coursework.
- Earning high school credit(s) before entering high school.
- Reducing future costs for higher education.
- Reducing the amount of time that the student must spend in secondary and/or post-secondary school.

Characteristics of a Successful Honors/Accelerated Student

Self Motivated: Ability is a strong component of placement, but attitude is a bigger factor. A student must be capable *and* willing to do the work to be successful in an honors or accelerated course. Self-motivation must exist in school and beyond to balance school/activity/home life.

Organized: Students must be able to manage their time and keep track of all assignments. An Honors student must communicate with teachers when something is confusing or when he/she needs questions answered. Honors students also should be willing and interested in attending Academy Period.

Hard Working: Be prepared for nightly homework per Honors class. Students should always put forth their best effort. Honors students are enthusiastic about learning and show that enthusiasm in class by participating in whole class, group and individual class activities. Honors students also must be willing to accept and act on constructive criticism, always striving to move from good to great.

Efficient: Honors students have a variety of things going on in high school. They need to learn to prioritize and utilize any time available to complete assignments (e.g. Independent Study Period, Academy Period, library after school, etc). An Honors student should be on time for class and regularly be in attendance.

Resilient. Students should be prepared to rise to the challenge they will encounter in their advanced classes, and seek support as needed.

At Pelham Middle School, we offer the following Honors/Accelerated courses:

Grade 7	Grade 8
Math 7 Accelerated **	Algebra 1 **
World Language (beyond grade level 7)	World Language (beyond Level I)
	English 8 Honors
	Social Studies 8 Honors
	Studio in Art

****** For more information about our Math programs and offerings, including accelerated courses, please use this [LINK](#)

Guidelines for Selecting Honors/Accelerated Classes

Entrance guidelines are meant to guide students in making appropriate choices in support of academic success. When students do not meet the guidelines and choose to take the advanced class, the likelihood of success in the class is diminished. Additionally, transferring out of an Honors/Accelerated class in the fall may require substantial schedule changes. Please use these expectations and recommendations for Honors/Accelerated students as a guide and speak to your counselor and/or your classroom teacher to ensure that appropriate courses are selected. While these courses are open to any student wishing to enroll, parents/guardians and students should consider the profile of students who typically experience success in Honors/Accelerated courses. The decision to enroll in these courses ultimately rests with the parents and the students in consultation with counselors and teachers.

It is recommended that, as a student selects coursework, the following guidelines are considered for success;

- Successful completion of prerequisite coursework
- Current cumulative average in prerequisite course:
 - 80% in an honors/accelerated level course
 - 85% in a non-honors/non-accelerated level course
- Careful consideration of demands of extracurricular activities, community service, athletics and homework.

The effort required by students is greater than that required for comparable non-honors classes. Because of this, students and parents should carefully consider if concurrently taking more than one honors class would be in the student's best interest.

Procedure for Enrolling in Honors/Accelerated Courses

For rising seventh grade students:

In January/February of the current school year, information will be mailed home electronically regarding the two different levels of Math offered to seventh grade students. A link to a Google Form will be included in the notification, and families will submit their request for placement using that form. ****If no form is returned by the final deadline as outlined in the letter, students will by default be placed in regular Math 7.***

For rising eighth grade students:

In January/February of the current school year, information will be sent electronically regarding the honors or accelerated courses being offered for the following year. A link to a Google Form will be included in the notification, and families will submit their request for placement using that form. ****If no form is returned by the final deadline as outlined in the letter, students will by default be placed in English 8 (non-honors), Social Studies 8 (non-honors), and the next course in the sequence of their current Math class.*** (Math 7 will be automatically enrolled in Math 8; Math 7A will be automatically enrolled in Algebra 1.) **Studio in Art:** Students may also choose to be considered for placement in Studio in Art, a high school level Art class. The application procedure for this course will be sent separately to all seventh grade parents.

For rising ninth grade students:

The transition process begins in the winter of the current school year, with a classroom presentation by the 9th grade counselor to the 8th grade students. This is followed by a visit to the high school to meet with one of the high school counselors, during which they will be given more detailed information about choosing both core academic and elective courses.

In approximately the third quarter of the current school year, families will receive information regarding ninth grade course selection and placement for the following year (academic and elective courses). At this time, information will also be provided about the process to be followed for making changes to any of the classes listed.

Requests to advance World Language Placement:

Requests must be made to the Principal, after which a written and oral exam will be administered to determine the appropriate World Language placement for the student.

Supports Provided for Students in Honors/Accelerated Classes

The following supports are provided by Pelham Middle School to help students succeed in Honors/Accelerated courses:

- Academic Supports
 - Drop-in math tutoring is available before/after school.
 - Academy Period is available daily from 2:51-3:11pm with any teacher
- Non-Academic Supports
 - Counseling services are available to all students (1:1) with student's counselor.

SIXTH GRADE PROGRAM

Sixth Grade Courses
ENGLISH ENRICHMENT
LANGUAGE ARTS
SOCIAL STUDIES
MATH & MATH ENRICHMENT
SCIENCE
WORLD LANGUAGE (Spanish, French, Italian or Mandarin)
ART & MUSIC (Semester courses)
PHYSICAL EDUCATION
Electives: Chorus, Orchestra, Band (Jazz Band by audition only)

Welcome to Sixth Grade!

The transition to Pelham Middle School is a key focus in 6th grade. Academically, students explore various concepts in Language Arts, Science, Social Studies, World Language, English Enrichment and Math. In each subject, they will build upon previously learned knowledge to create foundational academic skills that they will use throughout their secondary academic lives. In each subject, as they learn more complex concepts, they will develop critical thinking, problem solving abilities, and independence as learners. Furthermore, students will engage in cooperative learning while focusing on the practices of an IB Learner and will develop their study strategies all while fostering a positive attitude towards learning.

Course Descriptions

ENGLISH ENRICHMENT 6:

This course covers an extensive list of reading comprehension strategies such as making text connections, inferencing, analyzing themes, characterization, and understanding of an author's purpose. Students also learn how to understand nonfiction text features and identify differences between nonfiction text structures. These skills can assist them in their other 6th grade courses and beyond. Since the majority of the focus is on reading comprehension, the

writing assignments involved are predominantly responses to literature. The curriculum requires students to participate in class discussions and focuses heavily on ELA Speaking & Listening standards.

LANGUAGE ARTS 6:

In this course students will develop and strengthen their writing skills through three reading research projects. Each project will develop students' research skills. Students start with simple databases and progress to combined use of databases, books, and internet sources (website evaluation). Projects correspond to a novel and/or independent reading book. These writing pieces will add to the development of their skills, specifically grammar, spelling, and punctuation. These skills will be worked on in isolation as well to gradually teach students to incorporate them into their independent writing.

SOCIAL STUDIES 6:

This course guides students through the development of human civilizations from Prehistoric Times to the Medieval Period. Students will explore how geography, religion, achievements, politics, and economics shaped early societies, focusing on key civilizations like Ancient Egypt, Greece, Rome, and the river-valley cultures. They will analyze the transition from nomadic lifestyles to settled communities and examine innovations in agriculture, trade, and governance. The course highlights the cultural and political achievements of ancient societies, including the democratic ideals of Greece, the engineering feats of Rome, and the societal structures of the Middle Ages. Emphasis is placed on the enduring legacies of these civilizations, such as their contributions to art, law, and philosophy. Through hands-on projects, map studies, and analysis of historical sources, students will build critical thinking skills and an appreciation for the interconnectedness of early human history. This course prepares students for further study by providing a solid foundation for world history and cultural understanding.

MATH 6 and MATH ENRICHMENT:

In Grade 6, instruction focuses on five areas: (1) connecting ratio and rate to whole number multiplication and division and using concepts of ratio and rate to solve problems; (2) completing understanding of division of fractions and extending the notion of number to the system of rational numbers, which includes negative numbers; (3) writing, interpreting, and using expressions and equations; (4) deepening understanding of area, surface area and volume; and (5) developing understanding of simple probabilities and statistical thinking. Students enrolled in Math 6 also have an enrichment block that is embedded in the schedule, alongside the standard period every other day, to provide additional contact time and support in mathematics.

For more information:

<https://www.nysed.gov/sites/default/files/programs/curriculum-instruction/nys-next-generation-mathematics-p-12-standards.pdf>

SCIENCE 6:

The sixth grade curriculum will encompass concepts and skills in the areas of physical science, chemistry, life science, and engineering. These areas are part of the New York State Science Standards and are spiralled from 6th through 8th grade. An understanding of scientific inquiry and process is stressed in the beginning of the year and is carried throughout the year's work as students engage in student centered experiments and investigations. A three dimensional approach is taken in our science spiral and is a continuation of the K-5 program. Students learn core ideas, science and engineering processes, and crosscutting concepts anchored in natural phenomena.

For more information:

<https://www.nysed.gov/sites/default/files/programs/standards-instruction/ms-science-learning-standards.pdf>

WORLD LANGUAGE 6 (Spanish 6, French 6, Italian 6, Mandarin 6):

Sixth grade language acquisition (French/Italian/Mandarin/Spanish) is an introductory course. Students are immersed in the language and culture by engaging in a variety of hands-on activities applied to real-world settings. Language learning is enhanced by cross-cultural understanding and appreciation. Listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills are introduced through the Five Cs of Language Learning: Communication, Cultures, Comparisons, Connections, and Communities. This class meets every other day.

ART 6:

In grade six, Art is a one semester course, meeting on alternate days. Projects include drawing 3d shapes with pencil shading and colored pencils. Students work with clay, watercolors and acrylic paints. Through exploration of concepts and materials, students will build foundational art skills that will prepare them for 7th and 8th grade Art.

MUSIC 6:

Music is a one semester required class for sixth grade students, meeting on alternate days. This class focuses on music appreciation, history, and basic notation. The students will learn about the instruments within various ensembles, such as the symphonic orchestra, jazz ensembles, mariachi bands, rock bands, and more. The students will also learn the basic principles of audio technology through the use of microphones, amplifiers, and chrome music lab. Additionally, the students will learn how to play guitar over the course of the semester. The purpose of this class is to demonstrate the joy of music, and to help students discover their own musicality.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION 6:

Physical Education is a year-long course that meets every other day. Students will experience a variety of movement based units that are aligned to New York State Learning Standards.

Students will be provided opportunities to enhance physical fitness, social skills, and self-expression in a safe and challenging environment. Additionally, students will gain the skills and knowledge to become competent movers who are able to pursue lifelong physical activity. Some examples are basketball, team handball, soccer, volleyball, badminton, and pickleball. The 6th grade Physical Education experience has an additional focus on fitness concepts such as the components of health related fitness and developing a fitness plan.

CHORUS 6:

Chorus is open to all students who enjoy singing and want to get better at it. In addition to strengthening their voices, students will also be involved in the following: learning a variety of choral music from different cultures and in other languages, rhythmic and melodic notation, sight-singing and ear training. *Concert participation is **mandatory** and is an important culmination of the work done in class.

ORCHESTRA 6:

Orchestra students are expected to already have experience from Elementary School. The level of difficulty will progress throughout each year. The students will develop and refine their understanding of music theory as well as their technique on their instruments. Elements of music theory, history, and appreciation will be woven into each class to help the students develop their musicianship. Instrumentation includes violin, viola, cello, and double bass. *Concert participation is **mandatory** and is an important culmination of the work done in class.

BAND 6:

Band students are expected to already have band experience from Elementary School. The level of difficulty progresses with each grade level band ensemble. Students are engaged to strengthen their understanding of music as well as technique on their individual instruments. Elements of music theory, music history, and music appreciation will often be woven into our everyday activities to strengthen our overall musicianship. Instrumentation for Middle School Band includes woodwinds, brass, and concert percussion. *Concert participation is **mandatory** and is an important culmination of the work done in class.

JAZZ BAND:

The Middle School Jazz Band is an auditioned-based ensemble. Auditions are held in the Spring of the previous school year, and the class is made up of students in grades 6-8. In Jazz Band, students explore the styles of Rock, Swing, Blues, Funk, and Latin Music. Jazz Band also exposes students to different concepts of improvisation, allowing them to develop new skills on their instruments. *Concert participation is **mandatory** and is an important culmination of the work done in class.

SEVENTH GRADE PROGRAM

7th Grade Courses
ENGLISH
SOCIAL STUDIES
MATH & MATH ENRICHMENT or MATH 7 ACCELERATED
SCIENCE
WORLD LANGUAGE (Spanish, French, Italian or Mandarin)
ART
TECHNOLOGY
HEALTH (semester course)
PHYSICAL EDUCATION
Electives: Chorus, Orchestra, Band (Jazz Band by audition only)

Welcome to Seventh Grade!

The 7th-grade curriculum offers a well-rounded educational experience designed to foster critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration. Core subjects like English, Social Studies, Math, and Science emphasize analytical skills, hands-on learning, and global perspectives, while World Language courses build communication skills and cultural understanding. Electives in Art, Technology, Music (Chorus, Orchestra, Band, and Jazz Band), and Physical Education encourage creative expression, teamwork, and physical well-being. Health education promotes lifelong wellness, and accelerated options like Math 7 Accelerated provide advanced learners with opportunities for enrichment. Team-building experiences through trips and grade-level activities strengthen social and emotional skills, fostering a supportive community among students. Seventh grade serves as a pivotal year, bridging the gap between elementary and secondary school, helping students develop independence, confidence, and the skills needed for future academic and personal success.

Course Descriptions

ENGLISH 7:

This course focuses on a variety of reading experiences, writing enrichment, morphology instruction, and explicit instruction of grammar concepts. Reading experiences include whole-class novels, independent reading, and student book clubs. Within these reading experiences, students learn to interpret literary elements, such as characterization and conflict, and apply their understanding of these concepts to the overall themes of the novels. Book clubs offer students the opportunity to make connections across themed novels and practice effective discussion techniques/norms. Students also complete non-fiction reading, supplemented with reading comprehension skill work through weekly “Articles of the Week”. Writing enrichment focuses on organization and structure following the RACES writing strategy (Restate, Answer, Cite, Explain, Summarize), as well as work to develop a unique style and voice that enhances writing clarity and effectiveness. Students apply the writing process, from pre-writing to publishing, and utilize both paper and electronic resources to craft their best work. Students also participate in an extensive research project that encourages global philanthropy and directly impacts the lives of people who face water insecurity or toxicity. Morphology and grammar instruction look to supplement students’ ability to be effective readers, writers, and thinkers. Overall, the work completed in English 7 looks to foster lifelong learners, develop students’ love of reading, encourage critical thinking, help students build empathy and compassion, and see the world through a global and universal perspective.

SOCIAL STUDIES 7:

This course focuses on the key moments that transformed the nation through 1870, the development of cultural ideologies, the struggles of marginalized and oppressed groups, and understanding how North American geography shaped its people. Students will explore topics like pre-Columbian societies, the exploration and settlement of the New World, Native Americans in New York, Colonial America, the Articles of Confederation, the Constitution, leadership from Washington to Jackson, westward expansion, sectionalism, the Civil War, and the Reconstruction era. They will learn to analyze texts for bias, propaganda, and motive while working with primary and secondary sources. Students will sharpen their essay-writing skills, tackle document-based questions, and use charts, graphs, and maps to deepen their understanding. These activities are designed to build critical thinking skills and a better understanding of the complexities of American history.

MATH 7:

In Grade 7, mathematics instruction focuses on three areas: (1) developing understanding of and applying proportional relationships; (2) developing understanding of operations with rational numbers and working with expressions and linear equations; and (3) drawing inferences about populations based on samples. In addition to exploring the key areas of the

mathematics standards, students are expected to apply their knowledge and make sense of the world using mathematical concepts. Students enrolled in Math 7 also have an enrichment block that is embedded in the schedule, alongside the standard period every other day, to provide additional contact time and support in mathematics.

For more information:

<https://www.nysed.gov/sites/default/files/programs/curriculum-instruction/nys-next-generation-mathematics-p-12-standards.pdf>

MATH 7 Accelerated:

This course combines the standard Math 7 curriculum with pre-Algebra from Math 8 to prepare students for Algebra one year earlier than high school. The class covers more concepts in one year than the standard New York State 7th grade curriculum. As a result, instruction moves through the curriculum at an accelerated pace.

In accelerated math, the curriculum that is typically taught in a later year is introduced earlier. For example, the pre-Algebra that is typically taught in Math 8 is taught in Math 7A.

*** For more information about our Math programs and offerings, including accelerated courses, please use this [LINK](#)*

SCIENCE 7:

Science 7 is aligned with the New York State Next Generation Learning Standards. Using carefully selected phenomena, students will use disciplinary core ideas to make sense of how or why it occurred. They will use science and engineering practices to develop their ideas and discoveries. Crosscutting concepts will also be introduced to help students make connections between this work and other areas of science. This approach to science will foster a collaborative experience within the classroom and support the practice of investigative participation and understanding.

For more information:

<https://www.nysed.gov/sites/default/files/programs/standards-instruction/ms-science-learning-standards.pdf>

WORLD LANGUAGE 7 (Spanish 7, French 7, Italian 7, Mandarin 7):

Seventh grade language (French/Italian/Mandarin/Spanish) meets every day and is a continuation of sixth grade language. It is the first half of the High School Level 1 course in which students will develop the basic skills of listening, reading, writing and speaking in the target language while applying them in authentic and contextual situations. Five International Baccalaureate thematic units are taught through the course of the year. Students also learn cultural aspects connected to their language of study that will enrich their learning experience.

ART 7:

In this seventh grade course, students will further develop art skills while incorporating more complex concepts, such as context, to convey ideas and emotions through their art. They are

encouraged to use their artistic skills to express personal ideas, emotions, and experiences. When working from observation or imagination, students are encouraged to experiment with ideas and various media, and to document their artistic process.

TECHNOLOGY 7:

Our Technology program is fully aligned to the IB Middle Years Programme (MYP). It is a challenging framework that encourages students to make practical connections between their studies and the real world. MYP uses the Design Cycle as a way to structure inquiry and analysis of problems, the development and creation of feasible solutions, as well as the testing and evaluation of the student's solutions. Solutions can be models, prototypes, products or systems that students have developed. Students learn from each other through authentic experiences and cooperative learning.

HEALTH 7:

The seventh grade Health education program is aligned with New York State Health education standards. During this class, students investigate various appropriate health topics, and work to develop the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors that enable each of us to make responsible decisions regarding health. Units covered include Physical Health, Mental Health, Emotional Health, Occupational Health and Sexual Health.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION 7:

Physical Education is a year-long course that meets every other day. Students will experience a variety of movement based units that are aligned to New York State Learning Standards. Students will be provided opportunities to enhance physical fitness, social skills, and self-expression in a safe and challenging environment. Additionally, students will gain the skills and knowledge to become competent movers that are able to pursue lifelong physical activity. Some examples are basketball, team handball, soccer, volleyball, badminton, and pickleball. The 7th grade Physical Education experience has an additional concentration on sportsmanship skills and social emotional learning concepts.

CHORUS 7:

Chorus is open to all students who enjoy singing and want to get better at it. In addition to strengthening their voices, students will also be involved in the following: learning a variety of choral music from different cultures and in other languages, rhythmic and melodic notation, sight-singing and ear training. There will also be homework assignments not to exceed once per week. Most assignments will be on our web based software, Music First. This program allows students to sing into their computer or phone and get immediate feedback.

*Concert participation is **mandatory** and is an important culmination of the work done in class.

ORCHESTRA 7:

Orchestra students are expected to already have experience from Elementary School and/or their previous years of Middle School. The level of difficulty will progress throughout each year. The students will develop and refine their understanding of music theory as well as their technique on their instruments. Elements of music theory, history, and appreciation will be woven into each class to help the students develop their musicianship. Instrumentation includes violin, viola, cello, and double bass. *Concert participation is ***mandatory*** and is an important culmination of the work done in class.

BAND 7:

Band students are expected to already have band experience from Elementary School and/or their previous year(s) of middle school. The level of difficulty progresses with each grade level band ensemble. Students are engaged to strengthen their understanding of music as well as technique on their individual instruments. Elements of music theory, music history, and music appreciation will often be woven into our everyday activities to strengthen our overall musicianship. Instrumentation for Middle School Band includes woodwinds, brass, and concert percussion. *Concert participation is ***mandatory*** and is an important culmination of the work done in class.

JAZZ BAND:

The Middle School Jazz Band is an auditioned-based ensemble. Auditions are held in the Spring of the previous school year, and the class is made up of students in grades 6-8. In Jazz Band, students explore the styles of Rock, Swing, Blues, Funk, and Latin Music. Jazz Band also exposes students to different concepts of improvisation, allowing them to develop new skills on their instruments. *Concert participation is ***mandatory*** and is an important culmination of the work done in class.

EIGHTH GRADE PROGRAM

8th Grade Courses
ENGLISH 8 or ENGLISH 8 Honors*
SOCIAL STUDIES 8 or SOCIAL STUDIES 8 Honors
MATH 8 or ALGEBRA 1
SCIENCE 8
WORLD LANGUAGE (Spanish 1, French 1, Italian 1 or Mandarin 1)
ART 8 (STUDIO IN ART: By Selection Process Only)
TECHNOLOGY 8
HEALTH 8 (semester course)
PHYSICAL EDUCATION 8

Welcome to Eighth Grade!

Our main focus for 8th grade is to foster student independence, as well as academic growth. Students will begin building their high school transcripts by having the opportunity to take high school level World Language, Studio in Art and Algebra classes. Eighth graders will sharpen their study and research skills, and be challenged in ways that will require them to take risks and demonstrate both persistence and resilience in problem solving. We expect our 8th grade students to be good role models for the rest of the school by being kind and empathetic toward their peers.

Mid-year, the high school transition process begins when students are visited by the high school counseling department, who will explain the course selection process, share core course and elective options, and begin planning for their high school sequence.

Course Descriptions

ENGLISH 8:

This course provides students with the opportunity to hone their skills in reading, literary analysis, and writing. Throughout the year, students engage with a carefully curated selection of texts -- ranging from novels, short stories, and poems to historical documents and more -- both in and outside of class. Students analyze these texts individually, collaborate in literature circles, and engage in group discussions as a whole class. Key themes in the literature include personal identity, coming of age, community, overcoming adversity, and personal journey. Students also strengthen their speaking and listening skills through active participation in Socratic Seminars. Additionally, they refine their writing abilities by exploring new strategies, engaging in writing workshops, and receiving individualized feedback through one-on-one conferences. This course culminates in the IB Community Project, providing students with a meaningful way to apply their learning through an authentic service experience. Ultimately, this course aims to foster critical thinking, enhance literacy skills, and build student confidence, all while encouraging a love for language and literature.

ENGLISH 8 HONORS:

English 8 Honors is designed for students who have mastered the skills assessed in English 7 and are ready for a challenging learning experience that goes above and beyond grade level expectations. This honors-level enrichment course offers an engaging and intellectually stimulating environment, while continuing to foster a personal love for language and literature. Throughout the course, students read and analyze a variety of complex texts independently while actively participating in collaborative activities such as Socratic Seminars, Literature Circles, and class discussions. Key themes explored include personal identity, coming of age, community, overcoming adversity, and personal journey. By utilizing various learning approaches in the classroom, students develop critical thinking skills and strengthen their ability to analyze literature in depth. In writing, students continue to refine their structural skills by exploring new writing strategies, engaging in peer review, and receiving individualized feedback through writing workshops and one-on-one conferencing. Using a 9th grade writing rubric, students are equipped with the tools necessary for success as they transition from middle school to high school-level writing throughout the year. The course culminates in the IB Community Project, providing students with an authentic opportunity to apply their learning in a real-world context. English 8 Honors is specifically designed for students who have a passion for language and literature, and are ready for a more rigorous academic challenge. This course is ideal for students eager to engage with complex texts, deepen their analytical skills, extend their writing abilities, and prepare for high-school level coursework.

SOCIAL STUDIES 8:

This course continues the chronological study of the history of the United States that began in seventh grade. It begins with the post-Reconstruction Era and continues through to the present-day, incorporating geography, economics, government, and civic participation. Social Studies skills that are emphasized include the research process, identification and consideration of historical context, chronological reasoning, causation, creation of an argument with supporting evidence, essay composition using primary source documentation, and interpretation of different sources and perspectives. Through this course, our 8th grade students develop into deeper critical thinkers and responsible global community members.

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MATH 8:

In Math 8, instructional time focuses on three areas: (1) formulating and reasoning about expressions and equations, including modeling an association in bivariate data with a linear equation, and solving linear equations and systems of linear equations; (2) grasping the concept of a function and using functions to describe quantitative relationships; (3) analyzing two- and three-dimensional space and figures using distance, angle, similarity, and congruence, and understanding and applying the Pythagorean Theorem.

For more information:

<https://www.nysed.gov/sites/default/files/programs/curriculum-instruction/nys-next-generation-mathematics-p-12-standards.pdf>

ALGEBRA 1:

Algebra 1 covers the New York State Next Generation Mathematics Learning Standards for Algebra. Students will study topics including: Functions- Domain/Range; Applications of Functions; Factoring; Quadratic Functions and Equations; Quadratic-Linear Systems; Sequences; Other Functions including Absolute Value, Exponential and Piecewise; and Statistics. ***Algebra in 8th grade is a commencement level course. This means that the***

high school transcript will reflect a student's performance in this class. Both the final grade and the Regents grade will be reported in the high school record. All students are required to sit for the New York State Regents Examination in Algebra.

For more information:

<https://www.nysed.gov/sites/default/files/programs/curriculum-instruction/nys-next-generation-mathematics-p-12-standards.pdf>

****** For more information about our Math programs and offerings, including accelerated courses, please use this [LINK](#)

SCIENCE 8 :

Science 8 is the third course in our middle school science sequence. It continues the spiral from 6th and 7th grade in the same four areas: life science, physical science, Earth and space science, and engineering. The core concepts, science and engineering practices, and crosscutting pieces of the three dimensional science instructional approach is once again used to deliver a student centered, inquiry driven curriculum. At the end of Science 8, students will sit for the New York State Science Learning Standards (NYSSLS) Grade 8 assessment.

For more information:

<https://www.nysed.gov/sites/default/files/programs/standards-instruction/ms-science-learning-standards.pdf>

WORLD LANGUAGE Level 1 (Spanish 1, French 1, Italian 1, Mandarin 1):

Eighth grade language (French/Italian/Mandarin/Spanish) is a continuation of seventh grade language acquisition. In this course, students will study the target language and further develop their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. They will revisit and refine the knowledge acquired in Levels 6 and 7. Five additional International Baccalaureate thematic units are taught at this level. The customs and traditions of the target language countries will be further explored as well as how people interact with each other on a daily basis. **As a commencement level course, the high school transcript will reflect the student's performance in this class. Both the final grade and the Checkpoint A final exam grade will be reported in the high school record.** This class meets every day and the PMHS numeric grading scale is used for all assessments.

ART 8:

In 8th Grade Art, students use a variety of materials and concepts to express their ideas and identities, as well as hone their skills. In addition, all art challenges are delivered with inspiration from art history and contemporary art. Students will learn how to critique famous works of art, as well as that of their peers, using the language of art (elements and principles of art and design). Projects include hand building and glazing a functional object with clay, drawing an important landmark and using printmaking and watercolors to put it in a setting, exploring typography by designing an illuminated letter, learning to draw a room that shows a sense of depth and space using one-point perspective, learning how to depict realism and

depth in an observational drawing, and conceptualizing and creating a grade-wide large scale mural. Students will hone their foundational skills, with the hope that they will further art studies in high school. 8th Grade Art meets every other day for the full school year.

STUDIO IN ART:

8th Grade Studio in Art is a foundational course that is a prerequisite to Studio in Drawing and Painting at PMHS. This rigorous class is designed for artistically advanced and passionate 8th grade students who will benefit from an accelerated track of art learning that will enable them to reach the highest level of art learning (AP Art and Design) by 11th grade. This full year, daily class is an art studio environment in which students will learn various art techniques, explore and master a variety of media, and express their personal identities. Each area of study/creation is introduced and reinforced with references from art history and contemporary art. Students will create both 2-dimensional and 3-dimensional pieces, using/combining many different materials, including graphite, colored pencil, acrylic paint, watercolor, printmaking, collage, computer graphics, and clay. In addition, students will dive deeply into art history and contemporary art through special performance-based projects and field trips. Careers in Art is another important area of focus; guest speakers from various art professions visit the class throughout the year to teach students about many exciting art professions. This course satisfies the NYS Art requirement necessary for graduation, but it is designed for students who intend to continue the sequence of advanced art studies at PMHS that culminates with AP Art and Design. ***As a commencement level course, the high school transcript will reflect the student's performance in this class. The final grade will be reported in the high school record.***

TECHNOLOGY 8:

Tech 8 immerses students in numerous web-based applications and Internet resources. Units are aligned with the eighth-grade core content curriculum and are designed to promote strategic thinking and problem solving skills through technology-based activities and projects. This course will continue to evolve as new technologies are introduced in order to foster continued support in student learning which will play a role in their higher education and the 21st century workforce skills. As a supplemental class to core content, Tech 8 will utilize programs such as Tynker, Google, and Whitebox Learning to practice applicable skills such as story-telling, logic, creative and critical thinking, designing of structures, and coding. Digital Citizenship is also highly emphasized with incorporated materials from the Common Sense Education curriculum.

HEALTH 8:

The eighth grade Health education program is aligned with New York State Health education standards. During this class, students investigate various appropriate health topics, and work to develop the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors that enable each of us to make responsible decisions regarding health. Units covered include Physical Health, Mental Health, Emotional Health, Occupational Health and Sexual Health.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION 8:

Physical Education is a year-long course that typically meets every other day. Students will experience a variety of movement based units that are aligned to New York State Learning Standards. Students will be provided opportunities to enhance physical fitness, social skills, and self-expression in a safe and challenging environment. Additionally, students will gain the skills and knowledge to become competent movers that are able to pursue lifelong physical activity. Some examples are basketball, team handball, soccer, volleyball, badminton, and pickleball. The 8th grade Physical Education experience has an additional concentration on exploration of lifelong physical activities as well as community resources.

CHORUS 8:

Chorus is open to all students who enjoy singing and want to get better at it. In addition to strengthening their voices, students will also be involved in the following: Learning a variety of choral music from different cultures and in other languages, rhythmic and melodic notation, sight-singing and ear training. There will also be homework assignments not to exceed once per week. Most assignments will be on our web based software, Music First. This program allows students to sing into their computer or phone and get immediate feedback. Eighth grade students will also have sectional lessons where they can have instruction in small groups. Concert participation is **mandatory** and is an important culmination of the work done in class.

ORCHESTRA 8:

Orchestra students are expected to already have experience from Elementary School and/or their previous years of Middle School. The level of difficulty will progress throughout each year. The students will develop and refine their understanding of music theory as well as their technique on their instruments. Elements of music theory, history, and appreciation will be woven into each class to help the students develop their musicianship. Instrumentation includes violin, viola, cello, and double bass. *Concert participation is **mandatory** and is an important culmination of the work done in class.

BAND 8:

Band students are expected to already have band experience from Elementary School and/or their previous year(s) of middle school. The level of difficulty progresses with each grade level band ensemble. Students are engaged to strengthen their understanding of music as well as technique on their individual instruments. Elements of music theory, music history, and music appreciation will often be woven into our everyday activities to strengthen our overall musicianship. Instrumentation for Middle School Band includes woodwinds, brass, and concert percussion. *Concert participation is **mandatory** and is an important culmination of the work done in class.

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RELATED SERVICES

The Pelham Public School District is committed to providing special education and related services to students with disabilities through a continuum of service delivery models that offer these services in the least restrictive environment and in an integrated setting with non-disabled peers. Our district programs stress access to the general education curriculum, improvement in student academic performance, and meeting the individual academic and affective needs of students. Through a strong collaborative relationship among professional staff, administrators, parents, and students, we strive to achieve our goals and provide a well-coordinated learning experience for our students with disabilities.

In District Programs

The school system maintains a core staff in each building to address student needs. Called “Pupil Personnel Services,” this support includes areas such as health, social-emotional wellness, speech, special education, counseling and psychological services. The Pelham Public Schools offer comprehensive special education programs for students who require alternative instructional support, based upon a disability identified by the Committee on Special Education. Our schools offer a continuum of programs including: Academic Skills, Consultant Teacher, Special classes, and Integrated Co-Taught classes.

Related Services

Related services currently provided within the district include speech and language therapy, psychological services, occupational therapy, and physical therapy. Additional related services could include Teacher of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing or Teacher of the Visually Impaired. These services are provided to students with disabilities in conjunction with their special education and/or general education programs. The related service professionals address knowledge and skills, which are not typically included in subject area curriculum. The goal of the district is to provide these services through district personnel, whenever practical.

Consultant Teacher Services

Consultant teachers provide direct and indirect services to students with disabilities who participate in full-time general education programs. Direct consultant teacher services are provided to students in a general education classroom. A special education teacher provides indirect consultant teacher services to general education teachers to assist them in making environmental and/or instructional modifications for students with disabilities in order for these students to be successful learners. They serve as a specialized, highly skilled resource to the general education teacher.

Academic Skills Services

Academic Skills class provides specialized supplementary instruction in a small group setting of up to five students who have similar academic, social, physical, and management needs. The Academic Skills teacher addresses specific academic and organizational difficulties experienced by the students and offers support for students in their general education classes as well as supplemental instruction.

Academic Skills/ Consultant Teacher Services

This service is ideal for students who do not require the full three-hour per week of pullout service in an Academic Skills class, but could instead benefit from direct instruction and special teacher support. The program is offered as a combination Academic Skills/ Consultant model for a total of 3 hours in a 6-day cycle.

Integrated Co-Teaching

Districts use the terminology “integrated co-teaching,” consistent with the regulatory requirements, so that the level of services provided to a student is clear and consistent among school districts. Integrated co-taught classes are programs in which the special education teacher co-teaches with the general education or content area teacher in the general education classroom. The special education teacher offers more intensive support than in the consultant teacher model, including developing modified materials, instructional techniques and behavioral strategies. In grades 5-11, co-taught classes are available in various subject areas and have been particularly effective for students who in the past may have been taught in a separate special class setting. The integrated co-teaching model is proving to be effective for many students each year, including students enrolled in Regents level courses in grades 8 through 11.

Special Class Services

A special class provides primary instruction in one or more academic areas. The maximum class size for a special class program ranges from six to fifteen students. In the Pelham Public Schools, the majority of special classes have an enrollment of up to twelve students. Special classes are typically staffed by one teacher and at least one teaching assistant. Students are grouped together for special class instruction based on the similarity of their needs. Grouping by needs is based on present levels of academic achievement and learning rate, levels of physical and social development, and the management needs of students in the classroom. At the middle school level, special classes are offered in several of the core academic areas based on student need. Students are mainstreamed for specials/electives and various academic courses.

Special class offerings have expanded in the middle and high school in recent years, to allow increased numbers of Pelham students to be educated within the district.

Supplemental Services

It is important to note that there are times that students need reteaching of class material, support to remain on task, or organizational assistance for short and long term class assignments. Such students may not require an integrated co- taught class in which a certified special education teacher must be in attendance. Teacher assistants and school monitors are employed to meet these specific student needs at various times during the school day. These staff members may assist in delivering testing and program accommodations for one or more class periods.

Therapeutic Support Program (TSP)

The Therapeutic Support Program (TSP) provides a safe, supportive learning environment with personalized opportunities for each student to develop the social, emotional and academic skills, strategies, and knowledge, to become a responsible, successful, compassionate, internationally minded citizen.

TSP delivers individualized therapeutic and academic services to students who demonstrate significant emotional, social, and/or psychological need. Through intensive positive behavioral intervention support; academic assistance and monitoring; crisis intervention; and, ongoing communication with staff, parents, and healthcare providers, TSP maximizes student growth and success. TSP provides educational opportunities and experiences that foster respect, problem-solving, and responsibility, while helping students develop personal, community, and global consciousness. Identified students in the middle school are provided with a structured, organized form of instruction, therapeutic opportunities, and supervised mainstreaming by highly trained staff, creating a comprehensive network of academic and social-emotional support.

Foundations of Learning

Students are accepted into this specialized program based on educational needs, not a specific classification. Students work toward alternative learning standards based upon the NYS curriculum, and their own individual differences. Students are typically struggling with basic academic or communication skills, and may exhibit mild behavioral demands.

OTHER SUPPORTS

ENL - English as a New Language

The curriculum in English as a New Language (ENL) classes is aligned to the New York State English as a New Language and English Language Arts Standards. Instruction focuses on the needs of English Language Learners (ELLs) at the various levels of English proficiency (Entering, Emerging, Transitioning, Expanding, Commanding). Students exit the program upon achieving the Commanding level of proficiency on the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT). Our stand alone class is designed for English Language Learners that are at the Entering stages of their English language proficiency. Students receive instruction supporting all aspects of the English Language with emphasis on foundational skills and vocabulary development: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. At this level, students are being prepared to take the NYSESLAT.

Academic Intervention Services (AIS)

AIS provides targeted support for qualified students who need additional help meeting grade level standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics. This service is provided to students in grades six through eight. Through small group individualized instruction, AIS focuses on building fundamental skills for students who need extra support. Placement in AIS is determined using multiple data points, including performance on New York State Assessments.

Wilson Reading

Wilson Reading provides targeted support for students who have significantly below grade level decoding skills. This intensive systematic program features direct instruction in phonology, morphology and orthography through multi-sensory approaches. Placement in Wilson Reading is determined using multiple data points.

