

**NEW PROVIDENCE MIDDLE SCHOOL
PROGRAM OF STUDIES
2026-2027**



MIDDLE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

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CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION

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National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence

NEW PROVIDENCE MIDDLE SCHOOL

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Dear NPMS Students and Families:

This Middle School Program of Studies was designed to serve as a guide for our students and their families during their time at the Middle School. In it, you will find a complete listing and a brief description of all courses offered in grades 7-8. In addition, you will find information about the clubs that are offered. The more students become involved in school, the more meaning school will have for them. Our course and co-curricular offerings provide students with the opportunity to discover areas of interest and pursue goals that will lead to success in high school and beyond. Please take some time to talk with your child about their goals and the opportunities offered at the Middle School.

If you have any questions regarding our Program of Studies, be sure to contact your School Counselor.

Best wishes for a rewarding year!

Respectfully,

Michael Criscitello
Principal

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MIDDLE SCHOOL COUNSELING DEPARTMENT

The middle school counselor assists with the social, emotional, and academic needs of students and acts as an important liaison between the student, teacher, and parents. The counselors work with the classroom teachers as well as the Student Assistance Counselor (SAC) to meet the needs of the changing adolescent and develop school-wide character education lessons throughout the year. In addition, they provide classroom lessons on Social Media Safety, HIB/Code of Conduct, and Social-Emotional Learning. The counselors also provide group counseling, implement I&RS and 504 Plans, assist with academic scheduling and testing programs, and help students with the transitions that occur from elementary school, through middle school, and into high school.

Jillian Shadis, *Director of School Counseling*

Kim Chrisostomides, *School Counselor*

Jenna Stickle, *School Counselor*

David Chango, *Student Assistance Counselor (SAC)*

DISTRICT DEPARTMENT HEADS

Jaclyn Kaufmann, *Language Arts, K-6*

Rachel Winard, *Language Arts, 7-12*

Melissa Marano, *Science, K-12*

Scott Ziegler, *Music and Performing Arts, K-12*

Jennifer Pasuit, *Science, Technology, Engineering, & Mathematics, K-12*

Russell Anderson, *Technology & Information Services, K-12*

Michelle Testa, *Mathematics, K-6*

Katie DeAngelo, *Mathematics, 7-12*

Morgan Eriksen, *Visual and Practical Arts, K-12*

Byron Tracey, *Social Studies & World Language, K-12*

Vincent Carangelo, *Physical Education and Health, K-12*

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

LANGUAGE ARTS

7th Grade Language Arts

The 7th grade Language Arts program continues the development of the New Jersey Student Learning Standards. The literacy skills of reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language are taught in an integrative and interactive way. Specifically, there is a strong emphasis on the relationship of the language processes to thinking and learning, which characterizes the course with various literary forms and genres found in poetry, drama, short fiction, non-fiction, and the novel.

The Reading program focuses largely on student-selected books and student-centered discussions, and students have access to extensive classroom libraries so they can explore topics and genres that interest them. The units provide exposure to a variety of genres that students collaboratively and independently evaluate. Furthermore, the units lend themselves to developing crucial skills and strategies necessary to formulate strong written responses to narrative tasks, literary analysis essays, and research simulation tasks. Students learn effective 21st-century communication skills, participate in book club discussions, interpret informational texts, and synthesize the knowledge gained. In addition, students use their critical thinking abilities to develop essays that reflect nuanced arguments and researched claims.

7th Grade Enriched Language Arts

Prerequisites: In 6th Grade, a student must:

- Maintain an A- (90%) average or higher for the year, **AND**
- Two of the three trimester grades must be an A- (90) or higher, and one of the three grades cannot be lower than a B (85%), **AND**
- Earn advanced performance on a department-specific **objective** assessment in 6th grade, **AND**
- Earn advanced performance on a department-specific **essay** assessment in 6th grade.

Please note: There is no additional appeal process for 7th grade Language Arts placement.

In addition to the regular components of the 7th grade Language Arts program, the Enriched Language Arts program studies supplementary literary works that encourage higher-level critical thinking, evaluation, and synthesis.

8th Grade Language Arts

The 8th grade Language Arts program continues the development of the New Jersey Student Learning Standards. The literacy skills of reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language are taught in an integrative and interactive way. Specifically, there is a strong emphasis on the relationship of the language processes to thinking and learning characterizes the course with various literary forms and genres found in poetry, drama, short fiction, non-fiction, and the novel.

The Reading program focuses largely on a mixture of whole-class and student-selected texts, which drives student-centered discussions. Students have access to extensive classroom and Media Center libraries so they can explore topics and genres that interest them.

The Writing program is designed to teach the skills most important to a 21st-century learner, such as writing for authentic audiences and issues. Additionally, there is explicit instruction in the craft of writing. Throughout, students draft, write, revise, and edit for a variety of audiences and purposes. Instruction in grammar, usage, and mechanics is stressed within the editing phase of this process.

8th Grade Enriched Language Arts

Prerequisites: In 7th Grade Language Arts, a student must:

- Maintain a minimum average of A- (90%) in their Language Arts course, **AND**
- Earn advanced performance on a department-specific **objective** assessment, **AND**
- Earn advanced performance on a department-specific **essay** assessment.

Prerequisites: In 7th Grade Enriched Language Arts, a student must:

- Maintain a minimum average of B (85%) in their Enriched Language Arts course, **AND**
- Earn advanced performance on a department-specific **objective** assessment, **AND**
- Earn advanced performance on a department-specific **essay** assessment.

Please note: There is no additional appeal process for 8th grade Language Arts placement.

In addition to the regular components of the 8th grade Language Arts program, the Enriched Language Arts program studies supplementary literary works that encourage higher-level critical thinking, evaluation, and synthesis. Students are also challenged to compose expository writings that stimulate mature and well-developed syntax, sentence construction, vocabulary, and mechanics.

Pioneer Pathways to Excellence - Language Arts

The Pioneer Pathways to Excellence Language Arts program is a 7th-grade semester-long intervention course designed to provide intensive, small-group instruction for students requiring the most support in language arts. Using a structured, differentiated, and adaptive instructional cycle, the course targets skill development in vocabulary, spelling, reading comprehension, writing, and speaking and listening. Instruction is tailored to each student's individual needs through a blend of face-to-face small-group and one-on-one sessions, as well as adaptive online learning tools.

Students will be identified for the elective based on appropriate assessment data, and eligible students will be informed before the school year begins. Student progress is closely monitored using multiple data points to inform instruction and eligibility for continued support. The curriculum integrates New Jersey Student Learning Standard 9—Career Readiness, Life Literacies, and Key Skills, ensuring students not only strengthen their language arts abilities but also build essential real-world competencies. Enrollment and continuation in the program are based on ongoing assessment and demonstrated need.

MATHEMATICS

7th Grade Mathematics

The mathematics program in 7th grade is designed to actively engage students in a variety of activities and explorations that foster and develop an understanding of proportional relationships, computing with rational numbers within expressions and equations, solving problems involving area, surface area, and volume, and drawing inferences about populations based on samples. In 7th grade, instructional time focuses on the following areas:

- *Extend ratios and proportionality*
Students solve real-world problems involving percent increase/decrease, discounts, interest, tips, and taxes. They graph proportional relationships and understand unit rate informally as a measure of the steepness of a line, called its slope.
- *Extend the rational number system*
Students develop a unified understanding of fractions, decimals, and percents as different representations of rational numbers. They use the properties of numbers to explain the rules for adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing with negative numbers. This is applied in

formulating expressions and equations in one variable in order to solve problems.

- *Extend geometric measurement*

Students work with three-dimensional figures, relating them to two-dimensional figures by examining cross-sections. They solve real-world and mathematical problems involving area, surface area, and volume of two- and three-dimensional objects composed of triangles, quadrilaterals, polygons, cubes, and right prisms.

- *Explore statistical designs*

Students build on previous work with single data distributions to compare two data distributions and address questions about differences between populations. They begin informal work with random sampling to generate data sets and learn about the importance of representative samples for drawing inferences.

The curriculum for this course includes 21st Century Skills that promote the use of innovative learning strategies by integrating supportive technologies, performance tasks, and higher-order thinking skills, as well as the integration of global perspectives and financial literacy. The Mathematics curriculum is aligned with the New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Mathematics.

7th Grade Enriched Mathematics

Prerequisites: In 6th Grade, a student must:

- Maintain an A- (90%) average or higher for the year, **AND**
- Two of the three trimester grades must be an A- (90%) or higher, and one of the three trimester grades cannot be lower than a B (85%), **AND**
- Earn advanced performance on a department-specific **skills** assessment administered during 6th grade, **AND**
- Earn advanced performance on a department-specific **concept-application** assessment administered in 6th grade.

Please note: There is no additional appeal process for 7th grade Mathematics placement.

The 7th Grade Enriched Mathematics course explores topics at a greater level of detail than the regular 7th Grade Mathematics course. Students are expected to go beyond applying a formula and must also be able to derive a formula in order to show an understanding of its development and validity. The course is focused on higher-level skills that emphasize prediction, analysis, development, and interpretation of results.

A very small population of students eligible for Enriched Mathematics 7 will be eligible for placement in the high school level honors course, Honors Algebra I. This will be considered only if a student is mature enough to handle a high school-level honors course as a 7th grader. If a student is eligible for the Honors Algebra I course as a 7th grader, he/she will be on track to take Honors Geometry as an 8th grader, and Honors Algebra II as a 9th grader, accelerating his/her mathematics program by two years over the average student. Additionally, every student (regardless of grade level) taking Honors Algebra I (a high school-level course) will be required to take the Algebra I NJSLA assessment.

The curriculum for this course includes 21st Century Skills that promote the use of innovative learning strategies by integrating supportive technologies, performance tasks, and higher-order thinking skills, as well as the integration of global perspectives and financial literacy. The Mathematics curriculum is aligned with the New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Mathematics

8th Grade Mathematics

The mathematics program in 8th grade is designed to actively engage students in a variety of activities and explorations that foster and develop understanding in working with linear equations and their solutions, exploring the idea of a function, and analyzing shapes using distance, angles, similarity, and

congruence. In Grade 8, instructional time focuses on the following areas:

- *Use linear equations to represent problems*
Students recognize equations for proportions ($y=mx$) as special linear equations ($y=mx+b$) in order to understand the constant of slope as a rate of change. Students also use linear equations to describe the relationship between two quantities, such as arm span vs. height. Fitting a model and assessing its fit are done informally. By the end of the year, students solve systems of two linear equations in two variables and relate the systems to pairs of lines in the plane. Problems involving systems and linear functions are analyzed and solved.
- *Investigate the concept of function*
Students recognize that a function is a rule that assigns to each input exactly one output. They understand that functions describe situations where one quantity determines another. Several different representations of functions are investigated.
- *Explore geometric measurement*
Students investigate distances and angles within shapes as they behave under translations, rotations, reflections, and dilations. Ideas of similarity and congruence are further explored involving parallel lines. Students justify and apply the Pythagorean Theorem and its converse. To complete their work on volume, students solve problems involving cones, cylinders, and spheres.

The curriculum for this course includes 21st Century Skills that promote the use of innovative learning strategies by integrating supportive technologies, performance tasks, and higher-order thinking skills, as well as the integration of global perspectives and financial literacy. The Mathematics curriculum is aligned with the New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Mathematics.

Algebra I

Prerequisite: In 7th Grade, a student must:

- Demonstrate successful completion of 7th Grade Mathematics with a cumulative average of A- (90%) or higher.

Algebra 1 is a course designed to emphasize an axiomatic development of the rational number system as a primary objective. Other major topics in the course include solving equations, the rectangular coordinate system, quadratic functions, exponential functions, and applications. The course employs an inductive and deductive approach in the development of content. The student gains an understanding of key concepts and proficiency in various processes, which are necessary for future study in mathematics courses and are also employed in many other fields of study.

The curriculum for this course includes 21st Century Skills that promote the use of innovative learning strategies by integrating supportive technologies, performance tasks, and higher-order thinking skills, as well as the integration of global perspectives and financial literacy. The Mathematics curriculum is aligned with the New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Mathematics. All students (regardless of grade level) taking Algebra I (a high school level course) will be required to take the Algebra 1 NJSLA assessment.

Honors Algebra I

Prerequisite: In 7th Grade, a student must:

- demonstrate successful completion of 7th Grade Enriched Mathematics with a cumulative average of B (85%) or higher.

Honors Algebra I is the first course in the sequence of honors courses. Foundation principles are established in the following areas: solving equations and inequalities, understanding an axiomatic structure, use of variables and algebraic expressions, linear functions leading into quadratic functions,

formulas, and factoring algebraic and polynomial expressions.

The curriculum for this course includes 21st Century Skills that promote the use of innovative learning strategies by integrating supportive technologies, performance tasks, and higher-order thinking skills, as well as the integration of global perspectives and financial literacy. The Mathematics curriculum is aligned with the New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Mathematics. All students (regardless of grade level) taking Honors Algebra I (a high school level course) will be required to take the Algebra I NJSLA assessments.

Honors Geometry

Prerequisites: In 7th Grade, a student must:

- Demonstrate successful completion of Honors Algebra I with a cumulative average of B (85%) or higher.

Honors Geometry is the second course in the sequence of honors courses. Various types of geometry, including plane and solid Euclidean geometry, symbolic logic, and validation of arguments, are introduced. Transformation geometry is a primary mode of development as well as a synthetic proof.

The curriculum for this course includes 21st Century Skills that promote the use of innovative learning strategies by integrating supportive technologies, performance tasks, and higher-order thinking skills, as well as the integration of global perspectives and financial literacy. The Mathematics curriculum is aligned with the New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Mathematics. All students (regardless of grade level) taking Honors Geometry (a high school-level course) will be required to take the Geometry NJSLA assessment.

Pioneer Pathways to Excellence - Mathematics

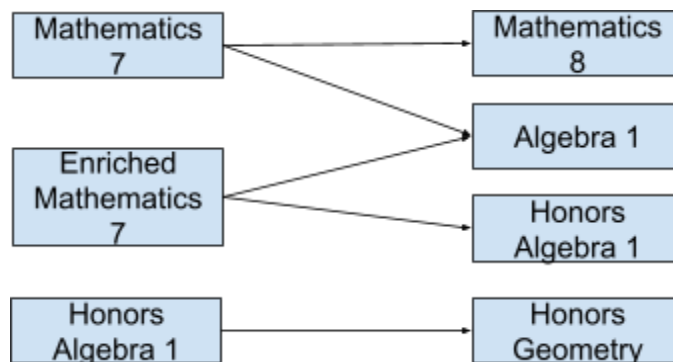
The *Pioneer Pathways to Excellence Math* program is a 7th-grade semester-long intervention course designed to provide intensive, small-group instruction for students who need the highest level of support in mathematics. Through a structured, differentiated, and adaptive instructional cycle, students receive targeted support to strengthen foundational math skills, improve problem-solving and critical thinking, and build confidence in math concepts. Instruction includes a blend of face-to-face small-group and one-on-one sessions, supplemented by adaptive online tools.

Students will be identified for the elective based on appropriate assessment data, and eligible students will be informed before the school year begins. Student progress is monitored using multiple data points to guide instruction and determine eligibility for continued support. The course also integrates *New Jersey Student Learning Standard 9 Career Readiness, Life Literacies, and Key Skills* to help students build essential skills for academic and real-world success. Enrollment and continuation are based on demonstrated need and ongoing assessment.

New Providence Middle School Mathematics Flowchart

7th Grade

8th Grade



MUSIC

The Middle School Music curriculum is aligned with the New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Visual and Performing Arts. Engaging in the four artistic processes (creating, performing, responding, and connecting) encourages all students to develop personal musical capabilities to their greatest potential.

The Middle School offers a full-year music ensemble period for Band, Chorus, and Orchestra. Students have the option of choosing one ensemble or participating in two. All music ensemble students demonstrate their musical and technical growth, stage presence, and audience etiquette during three evening concerts held in the New Providence High School auditorium. Ensembles also perform for adjudication during their annual music trip and have the opportunity to perform for the school district, at festivals, and in the New Providence community. Band, Chorus, and Orchestra are curricular offerings and are graded accordingly. Students may and are encouraged to participate in music ensembles in both seventh and eighth grades.

In seventh and eighth grade Chorus, students learn healthy vocal technique to support their developing and changing voices, ensemble skills, and skills in singing three-part harmony. Students increase their music reading skills by analyzing and singing from various choral octavos throughout the year and by using a system for sight-singing. Choral literature includes art music, folk song arrangements, songs in foreign languages, songs from the theater, and music in pop and jazz styles. More advanced singers may be eligible to participate in select ensembles inside (MS Chorale) and outside (NJMEA/NJACDA) of the school. Students interested in these additional performance opportunities are required to participate in the related major ensemble.

In addition to their ensemble rehearsals, all Band and Orchestra students will attend one lesson per week on a rotating schedule to increase music reading skills, refine tone quality, and further develop playing technique. Students also have the opportunity to study and perform solo and chamber repertoire in lessons and in instrumental recitals. More advanced instrumentalists may be eligible to participate in select ensembles both inside (Jazz Band) and outside (NJMEA) of school. Students interested in these additional performance opportunities are required to participate in the related major ensemble.

District Philosophy - Repertoire Selection for Concerts:

Each teacher enters into the selection process of ensemble literature with the mindset of selecting repertoire based on the quality of composition, aesthetic and educational value, and overall effectiveness with regard to the music education of the students in the ensemble. If the selection is

deemed “good music,” it inherently has validity and educational merit. In selecting literature, teachers endeavor to find music that expands each student’s musical experiences.

In addition to being a catalyst for the development of musical skills and concepts, repertoire should expand each student’s cultural awareness. This repertoire, and accompanying texts (in the case of vocal music), may or may not be associated with holidays - religious or otherwise. Because tradition and culture are rooted deeply within the composition, performance, and enjoyment of music, the study of these traditions and cultures is essential for an optimal musical experience.

Throughout the K-12 experience in the New Providence Schools, students study the historical and cultural aspects of music representative of various holidays and traditions, not only in order to perform the music with greater skill, but also to better understand the world around them. The selections in a single concert comprise a mere snapshot of a student’s complete educational journey.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION & HEALTH

Physical Education is that part of the educational process which contributes to the mental, physical, social, and emotional growth of each child through the medium of physical activity. It is the intent of the physical education program at each grade to plan movement experiences that will strive to:

1. Develop motor skills necessary to successfully perform a variety of physical activities.
2. Develop a level of physical fitness that will enable active physical participation and enhance the learning of motor skills.
3. Develop knowledge, understanding, and the benefits of involvement in physical activity and its contributions to a healthful lifestyle.
4. Develop an awareness of social skills and socially acceptable behavior.
5. Motivate students to achieve their physical potential through a comprehensive physical education program.
6. Promote interest and proficiency in activities that will enable students to participate successfully, now, as well as in the future.

Health Education is a sequential and age-appropriate instructional program to help students develop positive behaviors and attitudes that contribute to a healthy, active lifestyle. Health literacy in the 21st Century will have a strong emphasis on incorporating technology, global perspectives, and interdisciplinary connections.

Instruction is designed around the three 2020 New Jersey Learning Standards for Comprehensive Health and Physical Education, shown below:

- A. Standard 2.1 Personal and Mental Health
 - a. Personal Growth and Development
 - b. Pregnancy and Parenting
 - c. Emotional Health
 - d. Social and Sexual Health
 - e. Community Health Services and Support
- B. Standard 2.2 Physical Wellness
 - a. Movement Skills and Concepts
 - b. Physical Fitness
 - c. Lifelong Fitness
 - d. Nutrition

- C. Standard 2.3 Safety
- Personal Safety
 - Health Conditions, Diseases, and Medicines
 - Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs
 - Dependency, Substance Disorder, and Treatment

SCIENCE

7th and 8th Grade Science and Engineering

The Middle School Science and Engineering courses are designed around the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) and the New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Science (NJSLS-S). These courses integrate the three dimensions of the NGSS: the disciplinary core ideas, the science and engineering practices, and the crosscutting concepts into the science classroom in order to engage students in experiences that lead to a deeper understanding of the natural and designed world.

As the NJ Model Science Curriculum states:

The goal of the middle school science education curriculum is to produce students who have gained sufficient knowledge of the practices, crosscutting concepts, and core ideas of science and engineering to engage in public discussions on science related issues, to be critical consumers of scientific information related to their everyday lives, and to continue to learn about science throughout their lives. They should come to appreciate that science and the current scientific understanding of the world are the result of many hundreds of years of creative human endeavor. It is especially important to note that the above goals are for all students, not just those who pursue careers in science, engineering, or technology or those who continue on to higher education (p. 9, NRC, 2012). Given this goal, an integrated science curriculum model should drive the formation of middle school science curriculum because:

- *The nature of science is complex and multidisciplinary.*
- *Learning theory research in science shows an expert knowledge base develops better through interdisciplinary connections and not through isolated content.*
- *Effective research based practices for curriculum and instruction in science and engineering are supported through this approach.*

The courses both integrate an examination of the engineering design process and are designed to help students engage in scientific inquiry by incorporating the Science and Engineering practices that ask students to:

- Ask questions and define problems
- Develop and use models
- Plan and carry out investigations
- Analyze and interpret data
- Use mathematics and computational thinking
- Construct explanations and design solutions
- Engage in an argument from evidence
- Obtain, evaluate, and communicate information

Middle school science is taught as a process in which students construct an understanding of scientific core ideas through investigations and analysis of observed phenomena. The following are the specific

science units explored:

7th Grade Science and Engineering Units

- Structure and Properties of Matter
- Changes in Matter
- Chemical Reactions
- Structure, Function, and Information Processing
- Growth, Development, and Reproduction of Organisms
- Inheritance and Variations of Traits
- Organization for Matter and Energy Flow in Organisms
- Earth Systems

8th Grade Science and Engineering Units (Standard and Enriched)

- Evidence of Common Ancestry
- Selection and Adaptation
- Stability and Change on Earth
- Human Impacts on Earth Systems and Global Climate Change
- Relationships Among Forms of Energy
- Forces and Motion
- The Electromagnetic Spectrum

Both curricula are aligned with the 2020 New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Science (NJSLS-S).

8th Grade Enriched Science and Engineering

Prerequisites: In 7th Grade, a student must:

- Maintain an A- (90%) average or higher for the year in 7th-grade Science.
- earn advanced performance on a department-specific assessment.

The Enriched Science and Engineering 8 course will incorporate more rigorous investigations of phenomena and engage students in complex problem solving that requires higher-level critical thinking, computational skills, and analytical skills. It will also provide opportunities for extended open-ended inquiry of complex, authentic tasks.

SOCIAL STUDIES

7th Grade Social Studies Semester 1

The first semester of seventh-grade Social Studies is an examination of American history beginning with Native Americans, factors that led to European exploration, subsequent colonial conflict, and the events leading to the American Revolution. Students will then look deeply at the foundations of American governing institutions, culminating in the creation of the Constitution. Strong emphasis will be placed on the use of primary and secondary source reading and interpretation.

7th Grade Civics Semester 2

The second half of the year is an in-depth examination of Civics, and the values and principles underlying the American system of constitutional democracy, the function and limitations of government, and the role of a citizen in a democratic society. This will provide students with an understanding of the concept of government as it exists at the federal, state, and local levels. They will integrate real-life skills into a broader understanding and analysis of government actions and roles. By the end of the semester, they will have had a comprehensive look at the rights and responsibilities of citizens within the United States.

8th Grade Social Studies

The 8th grade Social Studies course continues the examination of American history, covering the years from the Federalist period through 1877. Topics will include the growth of American industry, technological change, the age of Jackson, westward expansion, the rise of sectionalism, reform movements, the Antebellum period, the Civil War, and the attempts at rebuilding the nation during the era of Reconstruction. Strong emphasis will be placed on the use of primary and secondary source reading and interpretation.

Midyear, all students will take the 9th grade World History placement test. Students who qualify will be invited to take AP World History, Honors World History, or World History based on their standing.

The Social Studies curriculum is aligned with the 2020 New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Social Studies.

S.T.E.M.

Over the three STEM elective courses, students collaborate in small groups and use the engineering design process to develop their creativity, critical thinking, communication, and problem-solving skills. In the seventh grade, students explore PLTW Design and Modeling and Coding, and in the eighth grade, PLTW Automation and Robotics. These courses are designed around a student-centered classroom, where students are encouraged to determine their optimal pace, make choices in how to best achieve their learning objectives, and seek peer and teacher feedback.

The New Providence School District is proud to offer Project Lead The Way (PLTW) courses as part of its comprehensive portfolio of available electives. PLTW is the nation's leading provider of high-quality STEM-focused curricula designed to help students develop the skills needed to succeed in the global economy.

Through a comprehensive activity-, project-, and problem-based curriculum, PLTW transforms classrooms into collaborative spaces where students apply what they know, identify problems, find unique solutions, and lead their own learning.

PLTW Design and Modeling

In *PLTW Design and Modeling*, students are provided opportunities to apply the engineering design

process to creatively solve problems. Students learn and utilize methods for communicating design ideas through sketches, solid models, and mathematical models. Students gain an understanding of how models can be simulated to represent authentic situations and generate data for further analysis and observation. Students work in teams to identify design requirements, research the topic, and engage stakeholders. Teams participate in design challenges, fabricate and test their designs, and make necessary modifications to optimize the design solution. [Adapted from PLTW Gateway Curriculum]

Coding

Coding is an interactive, hands-on, inquiry-based STEM elective that combines aspects of science, technology, engineering, math, and 21st-century skills to introduce students to coding and the culture of creative computing. Students use a design-based learning approach that emphasizes creating, personalizing, collaborating, and reflecting. The course is also designed to support familiarity and increase fluency with computational creativity and computational thinking. It encourages the exploration of key computational thinking concepts, such as sequences, loops, parallelism, events, conditionals, operators, data, and key computational thinking practices, including experimenting and iterating, testing and debugging, reusing and remixing, abstracting and modularizing, while addressing authentic problems. [Adapted from Tynker Curriculum]

PLTW Automation and Robotics

In Automation and Robotics, students assume the role of interns and work in teams to identify design requirements and create prototypes that meet the needs of clients. They are given the opportunity to combine mechanisms with input and output devices to automate the mechanisms. They also explore different aspects of automation and robotics, and experience how solving real-life problems involves the teamwork of mechanical engineers, software developers, and electrical engineers.

[Adapted from PLTW Gateway Curriculum]

In addition, the engineering design process and STEM concepts are integrated into the 7th and 8th-grade Science programs where appropriate.

Middle School students will also have the opportunity to engage in a variety of extracurricular STEM activities and competitions as members of the Robotics, Technology, and STEM clubs. These may include, but are not limited to, VEX Robotics Competitions, Science Olympiad, and TSA competitions.

WORLD LANGUAGE

Students must choose a World Language in 7th grade.

They will remain in the same language for their middle school career.

Spanish A- 7th Grade

Spanish A provides the student with an introduction to the Spanish language and the culture of the Spanish-speaking world. Emphasis is on the development of listening and speaking skills as well as reading and writing. Elements of the course include vocabulary related to daily life, the sound and spelling system, and elementary linguistic structures that support conversation. The World Languages curriculum is aligned with the New Jersey Student Learning Standards for World Languages.

Spanish B - 8th Grade

Spanish B is offered to students who have successfully completed level “A”. Emphasis is on the further development of listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills through the introduction of additional vocabulary and more advanced linguistic structures. Basic communication skills are stressed as students continue to explore a wide variety of cultural topics and read short selections in Spanish. After completing a full two-year sequence in Spanish, the goal is for students to enter Spanish 2 in

9th grade after demonstrating a high level of proficiency on the 8th grade Spanish Language placement test. The World Languages curriculum is aligned with the New Jersey Student Learning Standards for World Languages.

French A- 7th Grade

French A provides the student with an introduction to the French language and the culture of the French-speaking world. Emphasis is on the development of listening and speaking skills as well as reading and writing. Elements of the course include vocabulary related to daily life, the sound and spelling system, and elementary linguistic structures that support conversation. The World Languages curriculum is aligned with the New Jersey Student Learning Standards for World Languages.

French B - 8th Grade

French B will continue to engage students in the basic elements of the French language and culture that they began in French A. Through interactive lessons using everyday vocabulary, students will continue to speak, read, write, and understand spoken French. The course will also cover cultural aspects of the language with regard to sports, weather, holidays and vacationing, pastimes, clothing, shopping, the home, and customs not only in France but also in the Francophone World. After completing a full two-year sequence in French, the goal is for students to enter French 2 in 9th grade after demonstrating a high level of proficiency on the 8th grade French Language placement test. The World Languages curriculum is aligned with the New Jersey Student Learning Standards for World Languages.

TECHNOLOGY LITERACY

Technology Literacy continues to be an integral part of student learning at New Providence Middle School. Technology is integrated throughout all subject areas. Middle school students engage in curriculum-related technology activities designed by their classroom teacher, technology specialists, and/or library media specialists. Students are encouraged to use technology for personalized learning, problem-solving activities, and to utilize technology as a tool to transfer knowledge and communicate their understanding effectively.

The New Jersey Student Learning Standard 9.4 Life Literacies and Key Skills includes instruction focused on the following core ideas:

- Creativity and Innovation
 - Gathering and evaluating knowledge and information from a variety of sources, including global perspectives, fosters creativity and innovative thinking.
- Critical Thinking and Problem-solving
 - Multiple solutions often exist to solve a problem.
 - An essential aspect of problem-solving is being able to self-reflect on why possible solutions for solving problems were or were not successful.
- Digital Citizenship
 - Detailed examples exist to illustrate crediting others when incorporating their digital artifacts in one's work.
 - There are tradeoffs between allowing information to be public and keeping information private and secure.
 - Digital footprints are publicly accessible, even if only shared with a select group. Appropriate measures, such as proper interaction, can protect online reputations.
 - Digital communities are used by individuals to share information, organize, and engage around issues and topics of interest.
 - Digital technology and data can be leveraged by communities to address the effects of

- climate change.
- Global and Cultural Awareness
 - Awareness of and appreciation for cultural differences is critical to avoid barriers to productive and positive interaction.
- Information and Media Literacy
 - Increases in the quantity of information available through electronic means have heightened the need to check sources for possible distortion, exaggeration, or misrepresentation.
 - Digital tools make it possible to analyze and interpret data, including text, images, and sound. These tools allow for broad concepts and data to be more effectively communicated.
 - The mode of information can convey a message to consumers or an audience.
 - Sources of information are evaluated for accuracy and relevance when considering the use of information.
 - There are ethical and unethical uses of information and media.
 - There is a need to produce and publish media that has information supported with quality evidence and is intended for authentic audiences.
- Technology Literacy
 - Some digital tools are appropriate for gathering, organizing, analyzing, and presenting information, while other types of digital tools are appropriate for creating text, visualizations, models, and communicating with others.
 - Digital tools allow for remote collaboration and rapid sharing of ideas, unrestricted by geographic location or time.

ELECTIVE COURSES

The seventh and eighth-grade curricula incorporate elective courses that are offered for shorter periods of time and provide varied opportunities in the student's program. Elective courses will be offered from among the following curricular areas:

Grade 7 Electives

Coding (STEM)

Coding is an interactive, hands-on, inquiry-based STEM elective that combines aspects of science, technology, engineering, math, and 21st-century skills to introduce students to coding and the culture of creative computing.

Creative Writing

A multi-genre course designed around having students write short fiction, memoir, and poetry. Students will practice imaginative writing using process writing techniques.

PLTW Design and Modeling (STEM)

In Design and Modeling, students are provided opportunities to apply the design process to creatively solve problems. Students learn and utilize methods for communicating design ideas through sketches, solid models, and mathematical models. [Adapted from PLTW Gateway Curriculum]

Painting with Pixels

Students create artwork using the latest image design software. In this course, students will learn to draw and paint with pixels and how to be proficient in digital media.

Introduction to Drama and Stagecraft

Students learn the basics of theatre arts by exploring a character through such activities as pantomime, improvisation, and effective speaking using articulation, projection, and breathing. Students also explore elements of technical theatre by exploring the use of such elements as costumes, props, and scenery.

Music Exploratory 7

In this course, students will examine the relationship between past and present musical events and discrepancies, experience authentic music-making by means of personal performance, and witness live and recorded performances. In addition, students will be exposed to group collaboration, recognize interdisciplinary connections, and implement technology as a creative and problem-solving tool.

The Art of Debate

Students will practice writing and speaking arguments. They will take part in debates, create podcasts, and give TED-Ed talks.

Visual Art - 2D Focus

Students will sharpen their observational and representational skills by investigating a range of media and techniques from both a historic and contemporary perspective. Students will be encouraged to find their own voice during the art-making processes of creating two-dimensional works, including drawing, painting, printmaking, and/or collage, as they achieve their art-making goals.

Grade 8 Electives

Digital Art and Creative Thinking

In this course, students will continue to use graphic software to create visually exciting images that clearly communicate ideas to the viewer. Students will also have the opportunity to explore how to animate artwork, so it can reach an audience beyond print.

Acting and Performance

Students with previous experience will continue to build skills and knowledge in acting through analysis, discussion, and classroom performance. Students practice writing for the theater and explore various theater roles and functions. Public performances may serve as a culmination of specific instructional goals.

Financial Literacy

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the essential concepts of personal finance, how important financial decisions are made, and how spending behaviors are created. Awareness of topics such as budgeting, credit, interest, and income will lead to a greater understanding of how money impacts both the individual and society as a whole.

Investigative Journalism

Students will explore aspects of journalism such as writing about events, using an objective tone of voice, and creating effective stories. Students will practice journalism by using process writing techniques.

Media Mashup

Students will read texts that are outside the box of traditional reading and writing. They will examine graphic novels, poetry, and creative nonfiction.

Music Exploratory 8

In this course, students will continue to examine the relationship between past and present musical events and discrepancies, experience authentic music-making by means of personal performance, and witness live and recorded performances. In addition, students will be exposed to group collaboration, recognize interdisciplinary connections, and implement technology as a creative and problem-solving tool.

PLTW Automation and Robotics (STEM)

Students are given the opportunity to combine mechanisms with input and output devices to automate the mechanisms. Students take on the role of interns and work in teams to identify design requirements and create prototypes to meet the needs of clients. They also explore different aspects of automation and robotics, and experience how solving real-life problems involves the teamwork of mechanical engineers, software developers, and electrical engineers. [Adapted from PLTW Gateway Curriculum]

Visual Art - 3D Focus

Students will learn to translate their two-dimensional skills into three-dimensional forms through the exploration of natural, abstract, and synthetic sculptural forms using materials that may include clay, plaster, and mixed media. Student artists will develop perceptual, creative, technical, and problem-solving skills in a sculptural context, including safety procedures for processes, media, and techniques.

NOTE: Grades are assigned for these elective courses and are included for honor roll status.

MEDIA CENTER

The New Providence High School/Middle School Media Center serves the staff and students of both schools. In addition to a large print and audiovisual collection, the media center has a network of computer workstations that offer access to the Internet and online subscription databases that support research in all curriculum content areas. Middle School teachers plan research projects in conjunction with the media specialists, and relevant instruction in information literacy skills is integrated into the lesson plans for each media center class visit. The Media Center is open to Middle School students who need to work on assignments before and after school, from 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday, and until 3:30 p.m. on Friday.

HOMEWORK

Homework is assigned to reinforce the learning experience of the classroom, to develop good study habits, and to encourage the self-discipline necessary for successful academic achievement. Middle School students can expect up to 1 hour and 40 minutes of homework per night. In addition, students are expected to devote 30 minutes per night to recreational reading of their choice

SUMMER READING

During the summer, students are required to complete readings. Suggested reading lists and the assignment forms can be found on the [New Providence Middle School Summer Reading](#) page. Students are asked to submit the completed assignment to their teachers during the first week of school in September.

CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Sign-ups for co-curricular [clubs](#) will be announced in the Fall.

- Art Club
- Book Club
- Chorale
- Drama Club
- eSports
- Gaming Club
- Jazz Band
- Math Club
- Peer Leadership
- Robotics Club
- STEM Club
- Student Council
- Student Services Organization
- Technology Club
- Yearbook Club