

PROGRAM OF STUDIES

2010-2011



WILMINGTON MIDDLE SCHOOL
WILMINGTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Wilmington Middle School will provide a safe learning environment for all students and will inspire academic and social confidence, promote citizenship, and encourage responsibility resulting in well-rounded individuals.

Table of Contents

Parent Information Letter.....	3
Guidance Services.....	4
English Language Arts.....	5
Mathematics.....	6
Science.....	7
Social Studies.....	8
Grade 6 Reading, Introduction to Foreign Language.....	9
Grade 7/8 Reading, Foreign Language.....	10
Unified Arts.....	11
Performing Arts.....	13
Grade 6 Course Selection Sheet.....	15
Grade 7 Course Selection Sheet.....	16
Grade 8 Course Selection Sheet.....	17

Policy of Non-Discrimination

It is the policy of the Wilmington Public Schools not to discriminate on the basis of race, gender, color, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, age, or disability in its educational programs, services, activities, or employment practices. Inquiries regarding the application of the Wilmington Public Schools' nondiscrimination policy may be referred to: Paul Ruggiero, Director of Administration and Finance.

Dear Parents and Students:

The program of studies reflects the current curriculum of the Wilmington Middle School in alignment with the Massachusetts State Curriculum Frameworks.

The faculty, staff and administration of the Wilmington Middle School are dedicated to providing the strategies and tools for the academic success of the middle school student. We work collaboratively to provide a program that is designed to transition students from the intermediate to the secondary level.

At Wilmington Middle School, the students are organized into houses: Challenger, Discovery and Explorer. Most of their academic subject teachers and some of their unified arts teachers will be from the assigned house. This will let the students and their teachers spend time determining what is the best way for them to learn and grow. The students and teachers in their house and grade level are called a team. Teaming provides the framework for interdisciplinary instruction, teacher collaboration, and strong parent school communication.

Students are required to take academic core courses in mathematics, language arts, science and social studies. In addition to the core curriculum, sixth grade students take reading and have a choice of either Introductory French or Spanish, while seventh and eighth grade students have a choice of French, Spanish, or Reading. All students participate in the Unified Arts Program, which offers two tracks: Performing Arts or Non-Performing Arts.

Please review the Program of Studies with your child and complete the Course Selection Sheet for the grade level that your child will be entering during the 2010-2011 school year.

Sincerely,
Christine McMenimen
Principal

Guidance Services at Wilmington Middle School

The Wilmington Middle School Guidance staff works closely with students, teachers, and parents to ensure student success and promote social adjustment. In weekly meetings with grade level team teachers, counselors and teachers share information and maintain contact with parents and guardians, providing a network of support for our students.

The staff of two guidance counselors and a part-time social worker also participate in the Special Education process as members of the decision-making team, and oversee all 504 accommodation plans. In addition, the counselors at WMS play an integral role in the smooth transition of students into the middle school at the sixth grade level and, at the end of grade eight, assist students in their adjustment to the high school experience through close contact with Wilmington High School guidance staff.

Please feel free to contact the Guidance staff with any concerns or comments.

Guidance Department 978-694-6080

Mrs. Marie Cahalane - Guidance Curriculum Team Leader

Mrs. Deborah Hornung

Mrs. Kelly Laroche

Ms. Stacie Bilowz

Wilmington Middle School's
Core Values
Responsibility, Citizenship, Confidence

English Language Arts

Grade 6

Students in Grade 6 develop their skills in language, literature comprehension, and written composition. They participate in many activities such as oral discussions, group work and independent presentation. Vocabulary exercises use context clues and roots and suffixes. Additionally students begin to model more complex sentences in both oral and written communication. They read selections from their anthologies and other texts that emphasize genre, theme, settings, characters and plots about different cultures. Students write creatively and analytically on longer assignments and pay attention to clear thinking, topic sentences, appropriate supporting details and concluding sentences. Some assignments include research and study skills.

Grade 7

Seventh graders build their language skills by giving oral presentations about works of literature. They study the ways characters in literature speak and the vocabulary they use. Student reading assignments are more frequent and longer. Class discussions analyze the mood, tone, and atmosphere of the selections using supporting details. Students are asked to relate literary works to their settings and historical periods. In addition, students read epic tales, poetry and drama, and they write persuasively using primary and secondary sources.

Grade 8

Grade 8 students participate in group discussions and interviews. Their writing assignments are corrected for weaknesses in mechanics and usage. They read non-fiction, poetry, and dramatic literature, as well as novels, which explore common themes and conflicts in society. Their writing assignments are focused on persuasion, contrast and analysis. Also, they are given the opportunity to write multi-paragraph compositions that have clear topic development.

Mathematics

Grade 6

This course completes a solid foundation in numbers and arithmetic, and begins informal algebra development using the *Impact Math* program. Students look for, describe, extend, and generalize geometric and numeric patterns. Important topics related to factors, multiples, fractions, and decimals are also reviewed. Students also develop an understanding of percentages. Interpreting and creating coordinate graphs, two dimensional geometry, statistical displays and basic probability concepts are emphasized. Students examine variables and use them to describe rules and build mathematical expressions. An introduction to solving equations by using the backtracking and guess-check-and-improve methods is also an integral part of this course. All sections of grade 6 math are heterogeneously grouped.

Grade 7

This course begins a more formal treatment of algebra while covering important non-algebra topics, such as ratio and proportion, three dimensional geometry, and statistical sampling. Through the continuation of the *Impact Math* program, students develop an understanding of exponents and scientific notation. Algorithms for operations with signed numbers are a major focus of this course. Students investigate graphs, tables, and equations for linear relationships and learn to use balance and ribbon models to develop the "doing-the-same-thing-to-both-sides-method" for solving equations. Arithmetic concepts are reviewed in applications and review exercises. There are two levels of instruction in seventh grade math; students are placed in either Math I or Math II.

Grade 8

This course focuses on algebra, emphasizing symbolic, graphical, and tabular representations. Students will complete the third year of the *Impact Math* program. Non-algebra topics include transformational geometry, combinatorics, and statistical modeling. Students begin with a review of linear variation, and then learn to solve equations and systems of equations symbolically. Students will also explore graphs, tables, and equations for quadratic and reciprocal relationships. Techniques for re-writing algebraic expressions including the study of factoring and operations with algebraic fractions are also studied in this course. There are three levels of instruction in eighth grade math; students are placed in Honors Math, Math I, or Math II.

Science

Grade 6

The sixth grade science student centered curriculum focuses on a hands-on approach to learning, enhanced by the technology available at the middle school. Topics span all domains of science including life science, earth and space science and physical science. The scientific method is incorporated to all areas of study throughout the school year. Students demonstrate their knowledge through lab activities, tests and quizzes, and short and long term projects.

Grade 7

The seventh grade science curriculum provides an integrated approach to science. Focus is given to the four domains as described in the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks for Science and Technology/Engineering: Inquiry, Life, Earth and Physical Science. Students complete the seventh grade with the knowledge of each of these areas through lecture, discussion, hands on demonstrations and laboratory work. Students are introduced to and have emphasis placed on the metric system, the use of the scientific method in controlling experiments, and have functional use of the major equipment found in the science lab.

Grade 8

In the eighth grade, students experience the culmination of a three year integrated science series with an emphasis on physical science, which builds upon prior knowledge that students have attained in grades six and seven. The emphasis of the curriculum is Physical Science, and major topics addressed include motion, forces and energy, elements of biology, heredity, chemistry and earth science.

Social Studies

Grade 6

Sixth graders study the origin of human beings in Africa and the ancient civilizations that flourished in the Mediterranean area. They study the religions, governments, trade, philosophies, and art of these civilizations as well as the powerful ideas that arose in the ancient world and profoundly shaped the course of world history. These ideas include monotheism, democracy, the rule of law, individual worth, personal responsibility, the alphabetic principle for a writing system, and scientific thought.

Grade 7

In grade seven, students study the world outside the United States and North America. Students systematically learn geography around the world by addressing standards that embed five major concepts: location; place; human interaction with the environment; movement and region. Location refers to either absolute location indicated by longitude and latitude, and to relative location, indicated by direction, distance, or travel time. The concept of place refers to the physical and man-made characteristics of a place such as a town or city. Human interaction with the environment encompasses the many ways in which people have adapted to their surroundings or altered them for economic reasons. The movement of people, goods, and ideas is the fourth concept. The fifth area refers to ways of categorizing the areas of the earth, such as by climate or religion.

Grade 8

Grade eight students study the development of world civilizations after the fall of the Roman Empire up through the Age of Enlightenment. Students study the history of the major empires and political entities of this period: the empires of India, the Chinese dynasties, the Byzantine Empire, and the major nation states that emerged in Medieval Europe. Students examine the important political, economic, and religious developments of this period, including the development of Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam and the conflicts between them in different parts of the world. Students will study the development of various political structures, secular thought, and religious divisions that occurred during European history. Some of the themes of focus for the year are cooperation and conflict, change, diversity, innovation, and cultural diffusion.

The Reading and Introductory Foreign Language Programs at the sixth grade level are included during core curriculum time. All sixth graders are enrolled in Reading and have a choice of either Introductory French or Spanish. Students attend both courses for year long classes on alternating days.

Grade 6 Reading

All sixth grade students will take a reading course, which follows the core curriculum. Emphasis is placed on strengthening vocabulary and comprehension skills using a variety of materials. Daily exercises are given to students to help them strengthen their written responses to a variety of comprehension questions. Daily discussions about the reading material will enable the students to learn from their peers. Vocabulary building exercises are enforced through context clues. Students are encouraged to read aloud on a daily basis.

Grade 6 Foreign Language

Introductory French and Spanish*

Foreign language students in grade six learn vocabulary that enables them to greet others and respond to greetings, name classroom objects, identify family members, and exchange information on school and subjects studied using the target language. In addition, students gain familiarity with distinctive aspects of Francophone and Hispanic culture, holidays and traditions, as well as the geography of the Francophone and Hispanic world.

**The foreign language that students' select in the sixth grade will be their "language of study" while at Wilmington Middle School for sixth, seventh and eighth grade.*

Grade 7 and 8 Reading

Students participate in a reading course in lieu of a foreign language. The seventh and eighth grade classes are designed to improve the reading skills of those students who need reading re-enforcement before moving onto the secondary school. Emphasis is placed on strengthening vocabulary and comprehension skills using a variety of materials. Daily exercises are given to students to help them strengthen their written responses to a variety of comprehension questions. Daily discussions about the reading material will enable the students to learn from their peers. Vocabulary building exercises are enforced through context clues. Students are encouraged to read aloud on a daily basis.

Foreign Language

French and Spanish

Grade 7

In the study of foreign language in grade seven, students recognize, produce, and comprehend all sounds in the target language. Grammatical concepts including informal and formal pronouns as well as regular and irregular verb conjugation are studied. Oral and written communication to convey information about family, friends, school, home, and food is developed. Students also compare and contrast, using the English language, differences and similarities in families, foods, schools, and holidays in the United States and in countries where the target language is spoken.

Grade 8

Students studying Foreign Language in Grade Eight demonstrate knowledge of all noun/adjective and verb agreements in all written and oral work, understand the concept of reflexive verbs and use them to express daily routines, and conjugate verbs in the present tense. Oral and written communication in the target language is used to describe sports and other leisure activities, air and train travel, food, and clothing. Using English language skills, students compare and contrast holiday celebrations, vacations, shopping and travel in the United States and in Francophone/Hispanic countries.

Unified Arts

The Unified Arts requirements at the Middle School consist of physical education, health, and technology education. Students may also choose one of two tracks: performing arts or non performing arts. A performing arts student will choose either band, strings, or chorus as their area of performance. A non performing arts student will enroll in the general music course. All students may choose electives from the following Unified Arts courses: math workshop, computer literacy, and visual arts.

Physical Education:

Physical Education balances cooperation and competition by exposing students to a variety of individual and team activities. Focus is on participation and enjoyment so the students will continue to be active into adulthood.

Health:

The students in our sixth grade classes through our eighth grade classes learn how to take charge of their health through physical health and fitness, build safe and healthy relationships, and learn to make safe decisions concerning tobacco, drugs, and alcohol. These classes follow the Massachusetts Health Framework. Our goal is to build a resilient child.

General Music:

Music classes at the Middle School provide an introduction and more advanced study in music making. Students learn the basics of music through reading, playing, listening and composing activities. They write songs for their instruments and learn about many different styles of music through listening examples.

Math Workshop

The Math Workshop class is designed to help students who need support with developing mathematical concepts and number sense. Emphasis is based on the student's areas of weakness on results from the MCAS Exam. This course is assigned by teacher/principal recommendation only.

Computer Literacy:

Computer Literacy provides basic instruction in Microsoft Word, Microsoft Power Point and Microsoft Excel. Proper keyboarding skills are also emphasized in each class.

Visual Arts:

Students will be provided with knowledge, skills, and understanding of Visual Arts education in a structured and sequential program which encourages students to develop physically, creatively, socially and perceptually. The Visual Arts program promotes creative problem solving which helps to develop the whole intellect that can contribute to the promotion and integration of concepts common to all academic areas.

Literary Circles:

This Grade 7 and 8 elective will allow students the opportunity to analyze, interpret and appreciate current selections from the genre of young adult literature. Vocabulary development, active reading strategies, and presentation skills will be stressed. Students will have choices in their reading content based on interest and on reading levels.

Technology Education:

The multimedia curriculum provided with each module supports a wide range of practical tasks and experiences. Science, engineering, math and technology concepts are intricately woven throughout the range of available topics and modules. Each of the modules in our Scan TEK lab is complete with all necessary hardware, software and curriculum materials necessary to complete the prescribed assignments for that particular module. The labs are controlled by a computer- based classroom management software package called Class Act. This software package will track all students' activities, attendance, and grading for their entire experience over their three years at Wilmington Middle School.

Media:

The sixth grade Media course. The first segment looks at reference books and the second segment introduces students to the location of materials in the WMS Library/Media Center and the available technology resources. The focus for the course is finding the best source to effectively and efficiently answer a given reference question.

Performing Arts

Band:

6th Grade Band

6th Grade Band students use the knowledge and skills that they developed during their elementary band lessons for practical application in a performance based setting. Students have the opportunity to not only refine their technical music skills, but also further explore the expressive qualities of music, which include music theory and conducting.

7th and 8th Grade Band

7th-8th Grade Band students will continue to expand their technical grasp while learning and performing more difficult and challenging music. Several students will be given the opportunity to mentor younger musicians by acting as section leaders and coaches for the 6th Grade Band. All Band students will perform at least twice a year at winter and spring concerts.

Chorus:

Students involved in Chorus will develop their skills through singing and music reading activities. Throughout the 3 years of chorus, students will be exposed to more complex music, including advanced harmonies and languages. Students' music reading skills and depth of knowledge of various composers and genres will continue to grow. Performances will happen each year, but the focus of the class is on group and individual music skills. Students will gain confidence as they add to the music repertoire that they have from elementary school. Students will be involved in learning to read music at a more advanced level, analyzing the form and structure of many different genres of music and especially the real-world skill of working as a large team to create something together.

Strings:

Middle School Strings is a continuation of the Elementary Strings program and a prelude to High School Strings. Students entering the Middle School Strings have participated in the Arch of Bows Ceremony and the year-end concerts.

The focus of 6th and 7th Strings is preparation for the Lake George, NY competition which occurs every two years. On the cruise ship Lac du Saint Sacrement, two independent NY judges grade the orchestra on intonation, rhythm, and other technical music skills. An average score of 85 or better will qualify the members to join the HS Strings as world ambassadors representing Wilmington at the State House in a concert for the Governor as they receive their citations from the MA Legislature and Senators Kerry and Kennedy, Boston Mayor Menino, and Representative Miceli. This concert is followed by a week-long concert tour of a European country and command performance for a dignitary, such as Mayor of Paris, Dublin, Lucca, Vienna, or London.

8th grade strings prepare for their transition to the HS Strings where they will learn the HS repertoire and prepare for their trip abroad which they earned at Lake George. They are also mentors for the younger members and leaders of their MS orchestra.

All three grade levels will study advanced musical selections, will mentor younger members, and participate in community service projects. In the past, they have performed for nursing homes, homeless shelters, and have raised thousands of dollars for the Middle School sign located on the wall of the MS auditorium and the High School lawn sign.

Strings is a graded class and each student prepares a series of selections. Their dedication to the program, attendance at lessons, and their mastery of the music is reflected in their Strings grade. There are currently 350 Strings members in Wilmington in grades 4-12. They are supported by a strong and dynamic parent organization, Strings Attached Parent Support, Inc.

Wilmington Middle School
Incoming Grade 6 Course Selection Sheet
2010-2011

STUDENT INFORMATION:

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____

Currently Attends (*check one*): North West Other _____

REQUIRED COURSES: *All sixth graders will be enrolled in the following required courses.*

Courses within their respective house:

Language Arts	Social Studies	Math	Science
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Courses outside their respective house:

Physical Education	Technology Education	Health	Reading
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ELECTIVE COURSES: *Please choose your courses carefully. All course selections are final.*

Foreign Language: Choose the Foreign Language that you would like to study at WMS by placing a check mark in the box to the **left** of the course name. **Language descriptions are on the back of this sheet.**

Foreign Language		
	3611	French
	3612	Spanish

Performing Arts: Each sixth grade student will choose **ONE of the following:** Band, Strings, Chorus, or General Music. Please place a check mark in the box to the **left** of the course name.

Performing Arts		
	9916	Band
	9926	Strings
	9936	Chorus
	9621	General Music

Unified Arts: **Please prioritize the following course selections:** Please **prioritize** your choices (with “1” being the highest) by placing a number to the **left** of the elective course. Every effort will be made to give students their top selections.

Unified Arts		
	9611	Art
	8611	Computer Literacy
	1261	Media
Tchr Rec only		Math Workshop***

***Upon the recommendation of your classroom teacher and MCAS data, students may be placed in Math Workshop.

Student Signature: _____

Parent Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Please return this sheet to your fifth grade classroom teacher.

Wilmington Middle School
Incoming Grade 7 Course Selection Sheet
2010-2011

STUDENT INFORMATION:

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____

House (*circle current*): Challenger Discovery Explorer

REQUIRED COURSES: *All seventh graders will be enrolled in the following full-year courses.*

Language Arts	Social Studies	Science
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Requires Teacher Recommendation:

	Math I
	Math II

Grade 6 selection	French
Grade 6 selection	Spanish
School Rec only	Reading

All seventh graders will be enrolled in the following courses:

Physical Education	Technology Education	Health
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ELECTIVE COURSES: *Please choose your courses carefully. All course selections are final.*

Performing Arts: Each seventh grade student will choose **ONE of the following:** Band, Strings, Chorus, or General Music. Please place a check mark in the box to the **left** of the course name.

Performing Arts		
	9917	Band
	9927	Strings
	9937	Chorus
	9721	General Music

Unified Arts: **Please prioritize the following course selections:** Please **prioritize** your choices (with “1” being the highest) by placing a number to the **left** of the elective course. Every effort will be made to give students their top selections.

Unified Arts		
	9711	Art
	8711	Computer Literacy
	1271	Literature Circles
Tchr Rec only		Math Workshop***

***Upon the recommendation of your classroom teacher and MCAS data, students may be placed in Math Workshop. **Course description is on the back of this sheet.**

Student Signature: _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please return this sheet to your homeroom teacher.

Wilmington Middle School
Incoming Grade 8 Course Selection Sheet
2010-2011

STUDENT INFORMATION:

Last Name: _____

First Name: _____

House (*circle current*): Challenger Discovery Explorer

REQUIRED COURSES: *All eighth graders will be enrolled in the following full-year courses.*

Language Arts	Social Studies	Science
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Requires Teacher Recommendation:

	Honors Math
	Math I
	Math II

Grade 7 continuation	French
Grade 7 continuation	Spanish
School Rec only	Reading

All eighth graders will be enrolled in the following courses:

Physical Education	Technology Education	Health
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ELECTIVE COURSES: *Please choose your courses carefully. All course selections are final.*

Performing Arts: Each eighth grade student will choose **ONE of the following:** Band, Strings, Chorus, or General Music. Please place a check mark in the box to the **left** of the course name.

Performing Arts		
	9918	Band
	9928	Strings
	9938	Chorus
	9821	General Music

Unified Arts: **Please prioritize the following course selections:** Please **prioritize** your choices (with "1" being the highest) by placing a number to the **left** of the elective course. Every effort will be made to give students their top selections.

Unified Arts		
	9811	Art
	8811	Computer Literacy
	1281	Literature Circles
	Tchr Rec only	Math Workshop***

***Upon the recommendation of your classroom teacher and MCAS data, students may be placed in Math Workshop. **Course description is on the back of this sheet.**

Student Signature: _____

Parent Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Please return this sheet to your homeroom teacher.