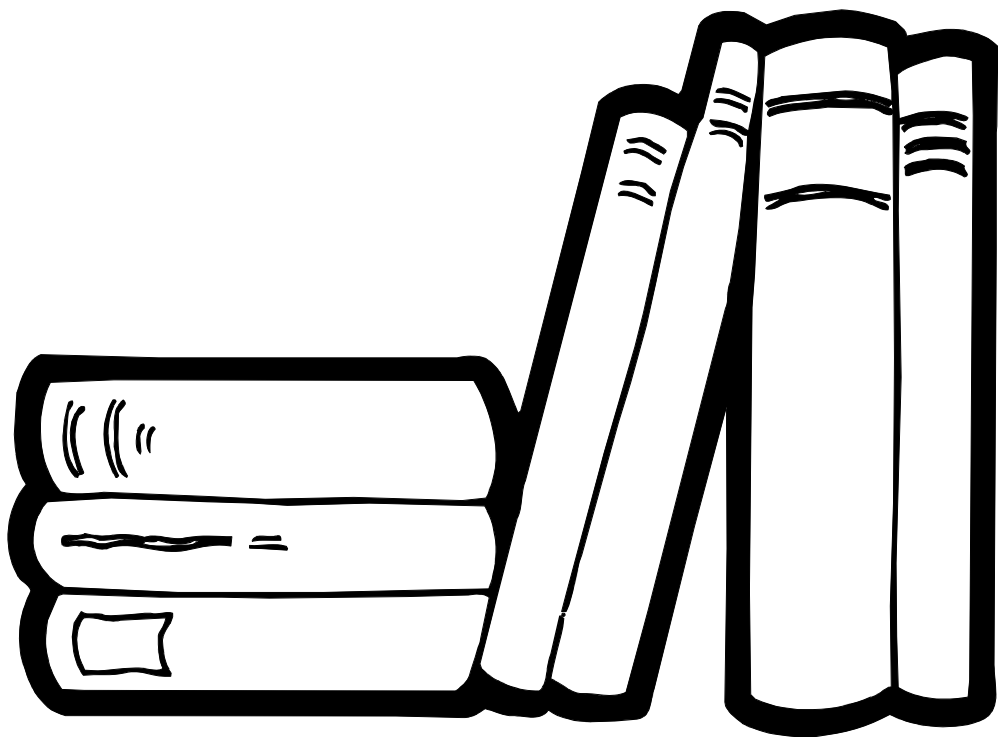


AMHERST REGIONAL  
MIDDLE SCHOOL

**Program of Studies**



**2011-2012**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

AMHERST REGIONAL MIDDLE SCHOOL VISION STATEMENT .....	1
WELCOME FROM ARMS LEADERSHIP TEAM .....	2
AMHERST-PELHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS .....	3
REGISTRATION AND FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL: GENERAL INFORMATION .....	4
SEVENTH GRADE .....	5
DESCRIPTION OF SEVENTH GRADE COURSES .....	5 - 8
EIGHTH GRADE .....	8
DESCRIPTION OF EIGHTH GRADE COURSES .....	8 - 11
EXPLORATORY COURSES .....	11
ACADEMIC STUDY .....	12
DESCRIPTION OF MUSIC PERFORMANCE PROGRAM .....	12 - 13
DESCRIPTION OF WORLD LANGUAGE PROGRAM .....	13 - 15
ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS .....	15 - 18
SPECIAL EDUCATION SUPPORT SERVICES .....	18 - 19
GRADING .....	20
REGISTRATION OF STUDENTS NEW TO THE SCHOOL DISTRICT .....	21
WITHDRAWAL AND RE-ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES FOR FAMILIES ON SABBATICAL ..	22

*AMHERST REGIONAL MIDDLE SCHOOL  
VISION STATEMENT*

*Amherst Regional Middle School is a learning community that challenges and supports every member's intellectual, social, emotional and physical growth. It is a safe, creative, and inclusive community that respects and values academic excellence, individual responsibility, and life-long learning. Amherst Regional Middle School is a place in which the uniqueness of each individual is recognized, embraced, and appreciated.*

AMHERST - PELHAM *Regional* SCHOOL DISTRICT  
AMHERST, MASSACHUSETTS

Amherst Regional Middle School  
170 Chestnut Street  
Amherst, Massachusetts 01002  
(413) 362-1800 FAX (413) 549-9812 [www.arps.org/ms](http://www.arps.org/ms)

Michael Hayes, Principal  
Betsy Dinger, Assistant Principal

February 2011

Dear Students and Families;

It is our pleasure to present the Amherst Regional Middle School (ARMS) Program of Studies. Please read this document carefully to help you understand both the required courses and the electives available.

We are proud to be able to provide students with a comprehensive middle school experience which provides a standards-based curriculum, diverse opportunities for students to explore a variety of disciplines, and a commitment to supporting each student to reach their potential. The following is a list of components available to students:

- ◆ Each team consists of an English, social studies, math, and science teacher. These teams see the same group of students and, therefore, are able to integrate curriculum and get to know the students deeply. This provides a bridge from the elementary to high school models.
- ◆ Attached to each team is at least one Special Education teacher. This allows for students on Individual Education Plans (IEPs) to fully participate on teams. Additionally, an English Language Education (ELE) teacher is attached to one team in each grade.
- ◆ All students participate in our Exploratory program which enables each student to take a semester of Art, Drama, Computers, and Technology Education while at ARMS.
- ◆ Students take Physical Education twice a week during both years at ARMS.
- ◆ World Language electives include Spanish, French, Latin, and Chinese.
- ◆ Music electives include Chorus, Orchestra, and Band.
- ◆ ARMS offers a comprehensive intervention program which includes both regular education and special education services.

Because there are so many required courses, there are very few electives for students. The registration form only asks families to pick a World Language and Music elective option. Some students do not take both a language and music course because of their support needs. Parents/guardians of students with an IEP will be able to make final support and elective decisions at the spring transition meeting.

There are many opportunities for incoming 7<sup>th</sup> graders and new 8<sup>th</sup> graders to get to know the middle school. Over the next few months, 6<sup>th</sup> graders will meet their Guidance Counselor and the Dean of Students; come to the middle school for a half day; and there will be an orientation evening for parents/guardians. Additionally, we have another orientation in August for those who were unable to attend the spring events.

Transitioning to middle school is stressful for students and families. This is a natural part of the process. Please let us help you with this transition. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact one of us or your guidance counselor. You can email us or call the main office (362-1800) to be directed to the right person who can answer your questions.

We look forward to meeting you and working together to have a great 2011-2012 school year!

Michael Hayes  
Principal

Betsy Dinger  
Assistant Principal

**AMHERST-PELHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS**

Education is a continuous process. Each child is unique and has an individual capacity for continuous growth and development. The schools must set high expectations for student achievement and must help each student achieve our educational goals to his or her fullest potential. The schools have the responsibility to prepare students to contribute positively to a pluralistic society. The goals of the school are:

**INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT**

- To develop in each student the academic skills of reading, writing, speaking, computation, and critical thinking.
- To provide the student with the skills, experience, and attitudes necessary for success in higher education and/or career placement.

**PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**

- To stimulate students' intellectual curiosity, to promote their intellectual and aesthetic development, and to foster in them a desire for life-long learning.
- To enable each student to:
  - achieve physical and emotional well-being and a sense of personal worth;
  - identify and explore her or his own spiritual, moral, and ethical values;
  - to discover and to develop talents, and to express values and feelings creatively through various means.

**HUMANISTIC DEVELOPMENT**

- To develop in each student an understanding of the social, physical, aesthetic, and biological realms and their relationship in an interdependent and technological world.
- To develop in each student an understanding of diverse cultures and to create and sustain a multi-cultural environment in which each student is respected fully and each respects others.

**CIVIC DEVELOPMENT**

- To foster an understanding of the historical, political, and cultural framework of our society.

## ***REGISTRATION FOR SEVENTH GRADE***

All sixth graders receive a copy of this Program of Studies and a Registration Form from their 6<sup>th</sup> grade teacher. Sixth grade teachers are asked to collect all registration forms and return them to the middle school by **Friday, April 8**. Please complete and submit the Registration Forms to your sixth grade teacher on time. We do not schedule classes for any student until the Registration Form, *signed by a parent or guardian*, is received.

We will be available to answer your questions and help you and your sixth grader complete your registration. We look forward to meeting you at the following events:

- Mr. Sadiq, 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Guidance Counselor and Mr. Ferro, Dean of Students, visit each elementary school to meet with 6<sup>th</sup> grade students. At this time, students will learn about the offerings at the middle school.
- An orientation for all parents/guardians: **Thursday, March 24 from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the Amherst Regional Middle School**. At this time, parents will have several presentations about the middle school structures and curriculum and an opportunity to learn about elective and support offerings.
- Special Education Transition Meetings jointly chaired by Elementary and Middle School Educational Team Leaders. These meetings are scheduled by your Elementary School, and are typically held on-site at the Elementary School.

In late spring, we invite all sixth graders to visit with us at the middle school. At this time, 6<sup>th</sup> grade students from the elementary schools are paired to shadow a now 7<sup>th</sup> grade student at the middle school to get a glimpse of a middle school student's day.

## ***REGISTRATION FOR EIGHTH GRADE***

The Program of Studies and all Registration Forms are distributed in Advisory. Students consult with their Advisor, ARMS Teachers, and their family in choosing courses. Registration Forms are completed at home and returned to school *signed by a parent or guardian*. We do not schedule classes for any student until the Registration Form bearing the parent/guardian signature is received.

## ***REGISTRATION FOR STUDENTS NEW TO THE DISTRICT***

Seventh and Eighth Grade students who move into the district begin their registration process with our Interim Registrar, Michaela Tarr. Please make an appointment by calling 413-362-1703.

## ***THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL***

Seventh Grade Students and students new to the district arrive at 7:45 a.m. for first day and additional orientation activities.

Eighth Grade Students begin their first day of school two hours later (approximately 9:45 a.m.)

# SEVENTH GRADE

**Courses:** Required courses are English, Math, Science, Social Studies, Exploratory, Academic Study, and PE. Electives include several World Languages and Music Classes. Please note the prerequisites before signing-up for Music Performance classes!

We also offer courses designed to support students in their academic studies through our Special Education Program, and English Language Learner Program.

## DESCRIPTION OF SEVENTH GRADE COURSES

### ENGLISH 7

#### **OVERARCHING ENDURING UNDERSTANDING for English Language Arts:**

*Literature and language help us explore and express our understanding of ourselves, our environment, and others. We do this through reading, writing, speaking, and listening.*

The English Language Arts curriculum at Amherst Regional Middle School is based on Enduring Understandings. We explore these deeper understandings by probing essential questions through literature, writing, language and critical thinking. As our students come to their own unique understandings, they own what they are learning and it resonates with them. The seventh grade curricular units center around the questions: Who am I? Who are They? Who are We? All ARMS seventh graders will experience the multi-novel literature circle units Understanding Differences and Character and Environment, and whole class text units Identity (An Island Like You - Judith Ortiz Cofer and The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian - Sherman Alexie), Poetry (A Suitcase of Seaweed -Janet Wong), and World Mythology (World Myths and Folktales, How the World Began: Creation in Myths and Legends). Additional units will fit into the year according to the teacher and team's integration plans.

The English Language Arts, reading, writing, speaking, listening, and thinking, are recursive. They are learned and relearned, improved and embellished throughout an individual's school career. In our classrooms, language intersects with writing and literature, and numerous connections are made by integrating with the curricula of other departments; we know this is the way our students learn well. In our student-centered classrooms, you will see writing process workshops, literature circles, cooperative learning, and project-based learning to help our students improve in the English Language Arts.

It is our mission and goal to challenge all students in our classes. To meet that goal, we modify and extend our content and instruction for individual students as needed. Every core unit of 7<sup>th</sup> grade English has with it an accompanying Challenge project intended to further stretch students' critical thinking and literacy skills and will be factored into their English grade.

### SOCIAL STUDIES 7

#### **OVERARCHING ENDURING UNDERSTANDING for Social Studies:**

*Acting as a member of a global society requires understanding the diversity of world views. An individual's world view is shaped by his/her environment, family, community, culture and experiences. How does an individual develop his/her world view?*

The Social Studies curriculum at Amherst Regional Middle School is based on a number of enduring understandings. Enduring understandings are "big ideas" uncovered by essential questions which guide learning. They help students to see relationships and patterns in the content of the course. While we

begin with a common question, "How does an individual develop his/her world view?", the inquiry process enables students to discover their own unique answers.

The seventh grade social studies curriculum includes six units. In the introductory unit, students will apply the five themes of geography to projects focused on the question "Who Am I?". The next four units answer the question, "Who Are They?" by exploring the enduring understandings that help define an individual's world view. The enduring understandings include how a person's environment, identity development, and diversity within and between cultures shape her/his world view. These enduring understandings will be examined through a series of case studies drawn from various regions of the world. The final unit asks students to answer the question "Who Are We?" by applying the enduring understandings from the prior units in a culminating project about global connections.

To support student learning of essential knowledge, the use of a variety of skills is necessary. Some skills in Social Studies are content-specific, while others are shared across departments. In 7<sup>th</sup> grade, students begin to think chronologically, comprehend a variety of sources, engage in historical analysis and interpretation, conduct research and engage in issues analysis and decision-making. In addition, students continue to practice and improve skills in reading strategies, writing, communication, organization, cooperative learning, study skills, and research.

## SCIENCE 7

### **OVERARCHING ENDURING UNDERSTANDING FOR Science:**

*The natural world is composed of interdependent systems. Understanding how natural systems work enables us to take care of them.*

The science curriculum at Amherst Regional Middle School is based on a number of Enduring Understandings. These understandings are "big ideas" supported by essential questions that guide both exploratory learning activities and direct instruction.

Science 7 is an introductory life science course designed to enable our students to become knowledgeable about the natural world by learning about basic life science concepts and about the natural systems that function within the world. The goals for the 7th grade year are several. The first is to promote an appreciation for the nature of science and how scientists do their work. This allows students to build a perspective on how science connects to the world and how they interact with it. Second, we want students to build a solid base for later study in the life sciences, by learning about the characteristics of living things, cell theory, natural selection, and the human body. Third, they will begin to understand the complex interrelationships between systems in the natural world. Conceptual model building towards these goals is achieved through interactive laboratory activities, group discussion and projects designed to facilitate critical thinking and observation skills.

Note-taking, test-taking, lab procedural, and group and study skills are emphasized throughout the year. Students will use a variety of materials for curricular resources including Holt's Cells, Heredity and Classification, Glencoe's Ecology and Human Body Systems textbooks and teacher-generated materials.

In an effort to differentiate instruction and challenge our Science minds, students may elect to complete projects, labs or activities beyond that of the classroom to be completed independently which will challenge them in an area of interest or expertise.

## **MATH 7**

### **OVERARCHING ENDURING UNDERSTANDING FOR Mathematics:**

*Mathematics is a system for organizing the world quantitatively. We use mathematics to analyze, problem solve, and communicate about ourselves and our world.*

*The tools of mathematics allow us to:*

- ◆ *Understand and model relationships.*
- ◆ *Compare quantities to make informed decisions.*
- ◆ *Efficiently measure and compare one, two, and three dimensional shapes.*
- ◆ *Make sense of situations that involve numbers that are not whole and/or positive.*

For seventh grade math, students focus on concepts around ratio and proportion, fractions, decimals, and percents, two and three-dimensional geometry, negative and positive integers, probability and measures of central tendency, patterns and relationships (with an introduction to linear relationships), and writing and solving expressions and equations.

With all units that are taught, the focus is on having students not only be able to acquire the skills needed to do the math, but to also understand the concepts behind the topic. This will help students remember the math that they are learning and help them to learn math in later years. In addition to this, students can appreciate the real world applications of the math they are learning.

In seventh grade math, all students are given the opportunity to accelerate by doing honors level work in each unit. A main focus of the honors level work is to have students develop their ability to think abstractly and to effectively problem solve when faced with unfamiliar and challenging situations. Much of the honors level work focuses on writing, and using, expressions and equations. Successful completion of the honors level work, in addition to the regular curriculum material, prepares students for the Honors Algebra class in eighth grade.

We use the IMPACT Course 2 book as our main curriculum resource. With this book and additional materials, we focus on students being able to problem solve, and to communicate mathematically, both verbally and in writing.

All incoming seventh graders are given a pre-test to help us determine their levels of experience and proficiency with a variety of math topics. Some students, based on a strong performance on this pre-test, as well as feedback from their sixth grade teachers, may then take a placement test which includes the material to be covered in grade seven, both the regular work and the honors level work. If a student's results on this placement test indicate their readiness, they will be offered the opportunity to move into an eighth grade Honors Algebra class as a seventh grader.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

The goals for our program are to teach students to become a physically-educated person. A physically-educated person becomes competent in a variety of movement and skills, understands strategies and concepts, participates regularly in physical activity, maintains a level of fitness, and exhibits responsible personal and social behavior.

The Middle School Physical Education Program introduces students to a variety of team, individual, and partner activities. We also work on group games that provide social and cognitive interaction in a physically active environment which is inclusive to many different skill levels. The program provides students with activities and games they can learn and play outside of school and encourage students to be more active in their daily lives.

The fitness segment of the curriculum includes a warm up and stretching. Fitness concepts are introduced to students to use as a basis for understanding exercise and activity in relation to being fit and healthy for a lifetime. Our emphasis is to help students understand and value the benefits of daily physical activity over a lifetime.

## EIGHTH GRADE

**Courses:** Required courses are English, Math, Science, Social Studies, Exploratory, Academic Study, and PE. Electives include several World Language and Music Classes. Please note the prerequisites before signing-up for both World Language and Music Performance classes!

We also offer courses designed to support students in their academic studies through our Special Education Program, and English Language Learner Program.

### DESCRIPTION OF EIGHTH GRADE COURSES

#### ENGLISH 8

##### **OVERARCHING ENDURING UNDERSTANDING for English Language Arts:**

*Language and literature are essential tools for managing, creating and responding to change with knowledge, insight, intent, and an understanding of essential characteristics that endure throughout these changes.*

The English Language Arts curriculum at Amherst Regional Middle School is based on Enduring Understandings. We explore these deeper understandings by probing essential questions through literature, writing, language, and critical thinking. As our students come to their own unique understandings, they own what they are learning and it resonates with them. The eighth grade curricular units center on the idea of *change*. All ARMS eighth graders will experience the multi-novel literature circle units Transformations and Speaking Out (including the poetry of Langston Hughes), and the whole class text units Speaking out, (To Kill a Mockingbird - Harper Lee), Transformations (Chains - Laurie Halse Anderson), Coming of Age Narratives (America Street), Humanity (Of Mice and Men - John Steinbeck), and Drama (Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* or the dramatic adaptation of *To Kill a Mockingbird*). Additional units will fit into the year according to the teacher and team's integration plans.

The English Language Arts, reading, writing, speaking, listening and thinking, are recursive. They are learned and relearned, improved and embellished throughout an individual's school career. In our classrooms, language intersects with writing and literature, and numerous connections are made by integrating with the curricula of other departments. We know this is the way our students learn well. In our student-centered classrooms, you will see writing process workshops, literature circles, cooperative learning, and project-based learning to help our students improve in the English Language Arts.

It is our mission and goal to challenge all students in our classes. To meet that goal, we modify and extend our content and instruction for individual students as needed. Every core unit of 8<sup>th</sup> grade English has with it an accompanying Challenge project intended to further stretch students' critical thinking and literacy skills and will be factored into their English grade.

## **SOCIAL STUDIES 8**

### **OVERARCHING ENDURING UNDERSTANDING FOR SOCIAL STUDIES:**

*The promise of America is one of opportunity. America's story must be told from diverse perspectives to understand how access to opportunities changes over time. Because the struggle for opportunity continues today, we have a responsibility to shape American society to make the promise a reality. Is America a land of opportunity?*

The Social Studies curriculum at Amherst Regional Middle School is based on a number of enduring understandings. Enduring understandings are "big ideas" uncovered by essential questions which guide learning. They help students to see relationships and patterns in the content of the course. While we begin with a common question, "*Is America a land of opportunity?*", the inquiry process enables students to discover their own unique answers.

The eighth grade social studies curriculum includes six units. The units we study will span from the founding of the country into late 19th century. In the introductory unit, students will apply the historical method of inquiry, based on the collection and evaluation of evidence, to prepare them to uncover the stories of America's past. The next five units examine changes in America: political change, technological change, cultural interaction and change, conflict, compromise and change, and social change. These changes frame the opportunities afforded to various groups in American society. At times, changes brought opportunity to some and obstacles to others.

In 8<sup>th</sup> grade, students formulate their own questions as they appreciate historical perspectives, compare competing historical narratives, imagine alternative historical outcomes, and understand that interpretation of history is subject to change as new information is uncovered. In addition, students continue to think chronologically, comprehend a variety of historical sources, engage in historical analysis and interpretation, conduct research and engage in issues analysis and decision-making. Students also continue to practice and improve skills in reading strategies, writing, communication, organization, cooperative learning, study skills, and research.

## **SCIENCE 8**

### **OVERARCHING ENDURING UNDERSTANDING for Science:**

*The natural world is composed of matter and energy. Understanding how matter and energy change and stay the same in the natural world allows us to interact with the world responsibly.*

The science curriculum at Amherst Regional Middle School is based on a number of Enduring Understandings. These enduring understandings are "big ideas" supported by essential questions that guide inquiry-based learning and direct instruction.

Science 8 is an introductory physical science and engineering course designed to help students develop an understanding of how matter and energy change and stay the same in the natural world. Primary goals are to: promote enthusiasm for science; help students develop the ability to make informed decisions based on evidence; and help students acquire the ability to interact with the world responsibly. Fundamental physical and chemical and concepts are developed through hands-on labs and project-based activities. The units of study include: Measuring Matter; Particle Motion; Atoms and the Periodic Table; Chemical Change; and Motion, Forces and Energy. Students will use a textbook, Holt's Introduction to Matter, and a variety of teacher-generated materials.

In an effort to differentiate instruction and challenge our Science minds, each teacher may develop, in conjunction with the student, projects beyond that of the classroom. The projects are to be completed independently and will challenge them in an area of interest or expertise.

## **MATH 8**

### **OVERARCHING ENDURING UNDERSTANDING for Mathematics:**

*Mathematics is a system for organizing the world quantitatively. We use mathematics to describe and predict change in order to make informed decisions in our world.*

*The tools of mathematics allow us to:*

- *Organize data and make decisions after analyzing quantitative relationships between two variables.*
- *Make a complex situation easier to understand through simplifying expressions and solving equations.*
- *Measure angles and use their properties when navigating and building.*

In Math 8 students focus on topics in conceptual algebra that support the state frameworks. Students explore specific relationships in a real life context using graphs, tables and equations. The focus is on linear relationships, but students also begin to explore some non-linear relationships. In addition to this, students do abstract work with solving equations and simplifying expressions. There are also units in Geometry including angles, transformations and the Pythagorean Theorem. In a statistics unit, students learn about measures of central tendency as well as several ways to organize and interpret data. Successful completion of the Math 8 curriculum prepares students to take IMP 1, Algebra I, or Algebra I Honors in ninth grade.

The eighth grade Honors Algebra class, while touching on similar topics from Math 8, follows the curriculum map of the Honors Algebra course offered at the high school. The work in this class focuses on a deep exploration and comparison of variable relationships including linear, inverse, exponential and quadratic. Students are expected to use these relationships to solve real world problems by solving simultaneous equations symbolically and working with multiple forms of quadratic equations. Successful completion of this curriculum prepares students to take either IMP 2 or Geometry Honors.

Students use the IMPACT Course 3 book as a resource for both courses and the Foerster Algebra I book in the Honors Algebra course. However, much of the material is created and revised by the mathematics department. The focus is on students being able to problem solve and to communicate about their mathematical thinking both verbally and in written form.

Placement for eighth grade math is recommended in June of seventh grade. Results of the seventh grade final exam as well as the student's work throughout seventh grade inform this recommendation. New students entering eighth grade will be given an exam to recommend their appropriate placement.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

The goals for our program are to teach students to become a physically-educated person. A physically-educated person becomes competent in a variety of movement and skills, understands strategies and concepts, participates regularly in physical activity, maintains a level of fitness, and exhibits responsible personal and social behavior.

The Middle School Physical Education Program introduces students to a variety of team, individual, and partner activities. We also work on group games that provide social and cognitive interaction in a physically active environment which is inclusive to many different skill levels. The program provides students with activities and games they can learn and play outside of school and encourage students to be more active in their daily lives.

The fitness segment of the curriculum includes a warm up and stretching. Fitness concepts are introduced to students to use as a basis for understanding exercise and activity in relation to being fit and healthy for a lifetime. Our emphasis is to help students understand and value the benefits of daily physical activity over a lifetime.

## **EXPLORATORY CLASSES**

The following are the descriptions for each exploratory. During the two years a student is here at the middle school, each student will receive a total of one semester of each exploratory class. We are currently looking at different models on how best to do this.

### **COMPUTER APPLICATIONS**

Students will learn to use computer applications and web authoring tools to complete academic tasks. Students in this course create PowerPoint slide shows, Excel spreadsheets, and Access data bases as academic projects. Students create web sites as platforms to process and display academic work. In these portfolios, students place examples of work from all their subjects to create an archive of their learning at the middle school.

### **TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION**

The main focus in this class will be on combining elements from subjects such as Math, Science, Computers and Art in order to solve realistic, complex problems using the Engineering Design Process model. Students will be equipped with basic design skills that include freehand sketching, formal measured drawing, Computer Aided Design (Pro Desktop) and Engineering Simulation Software (WestPoint Bridge Builder). They will be taught how to use a variety of tools, equipment and machinery in safe and appropriate ways while completing a number of challenging practical projects in groups and individually.

All areas of study in this class are linked to the Massachusetts State Frameworks for Engineering and Technology and the eighth-grade Science and Technology MCAS. This class also aims to prepare students for Engineering, CAD and other Technology Education programs at the Amherst Regional High School. Some time will be spent looking at the role technology, designers and engineers play in shaping our modern world as well as investigating technology or engineering based career paths.

### **ART**

The art curriculum caters to students' lifelong engagement in the arts. The program will expand students' knowledge of visual concepts and visual literacy, and build on the individual learner's knowledge, skill and experience by exploring new methods in media and technique. Students will work in a wide variety of media and practice, including drawing, painting, 3-D and 2-D design. The interdisciplinary curriculum strives to foster a more sophisticated level of art production through art history and art criticism. Students will engage in self reflection and expression through art.

### **DRAMA**

Drama class is designed to give students an opportunity to study and practice the art of creating for the stage. Students will work on a variety of projects including improvisation, script writing, character study and a final performance piece. Students will read a variety of scripts and work on adapting text for the stage. Students complete reflective writing centered around their experience. Each student will be required to play a character in a scene or one act play. During rehearsal time, there is a focus on the skills of memorization and character development. In addition, students measure their collaborative process which is necessary for successful rehearsals and final play product. All students perform in their play at the end of the semester; some students choose to perform for a public audience.

## **ACADEMIC STUDY**

All students participate in Academic Study two times per week. Small class sizes allow for individualized attention and the opportunity for students to ask in-depth questions, explore new concepts, and develop skills. Students work with their teachers to identify the Academic Study class that best meets their individual needs and academic goals. For example, some students choose to receive general math, algebra or English support. Other students may choose to receive organizational support to build skills and strategies to be successful in school. Still others will focus upon in-depth exploration of subjects of interest while learning to apply skills such as the use of the inquiry method. Groupings change regularly to allow students access to a combination of offerings over the course of the year.

## **MUSIC PERFORMANCE COURSES**

The musical ensembles in the Amherst Regional Schools are unique among course offerings in the schools, since their culminating activities involve performances in which all students participate together. Each person in the ensemble not only participates in but also contributes to the final result. Performances are the central activities of these ensembles. Each September every student enrolled in a performing ensemble receives a schedule of performances and after-school rehearsals of the ensemble. This schedule is meant to be shared with parents as soon as it is distributed.

### **CHORUS 7 AND 8**

Chorus is open without audition to any student seriously interested in singing in a choral ensemble. Chorus classes rehearse four days a week and present three evening concerts in addition to other scheduled performances each year. Chorus sings music in classical, jazz, blues, folk, popular, and show music styles. Students learn proper voice production, music reading, and singing in parts.

Students in Chorus will experience the full historical range of the choral repertoire. This will include both secular and sacred music. The choosing of music is based on National and State Standards as well as the historical place of the piece in Choral repertoire. When singing a “sacred” piece, time is taken to outline the musical value of the piece which will include elements pertinent to vocal pedagogy and touch briefly on what the pieces liturgical usage might have been.

### **BAND 7**

Seventh grade band is open to all students who play a woodwind, brass, or percussion instrument. Students will develop technical and musical skills on their instruments as well as individual and ensemble listening skills. Individual practice outside of rehearsal each week is required. Private lessons are highly recommended but not required.

Requirements for enrollment: Student must read music and have a minimum of two years' participation in an elementary band or orchestra program.

### **BAND 8**

Eighth grade band is open to all students who have participated in Seventh grade band. Students new to the district should schedule an audition with the conductor. Eighth grade band performs more advanced and varied literature. Students continue to refine individual technical and musical skills as well as the more advanced ensemble skills of intonation, balance, and blend. Individual practice outside of rehearsal each week is required. Private lessons are highly recommended but not required.

Requirements for enrollment: Seventh grade band or permission of conductor.

## ORCHESTRA 7 AND 8

The orchestra is open to seventh and eighth grade students who play the violin, viola, cello or double bass. This ensemble performs three evening concerts each year. It develops technical skills and musicianship through the learning of selections representing a variety of musical styles. Sight-reading and music literacy is emphasized throughout the year.

## CONCERTS

The Band, Chorus and Orchestras present concerts in the elementary schools and evening concerts at the Middle School. All members may also audition to participate in the annual Massachusetts Music Educator's Western District Junior High Festival.

Please note: If family plans for trips or other obligations conflict with a performance schedule, the student should consult with the director of the ensemble. If a concert is missed, the student must present a note to the director immediately upon return to school. Lack of participation in a performance will result in a significant reduction of the student's grade for the marking period in which the absence occurs. Excused absences also deprive the student of a culminating activity that cannot be replicated. In the event of an excused absence from a performance, the student will be asked to perform a portion of the concert repertoire for the director. Having completed this, the student will receive partial credit for the performance missed. Neglecting to notify the director will result in the student receiving no credit for the performance part of the grade (35%). Students who sign up for performing music are expected to continue in the course for a full year.

## WORLD LANGUAGES

The world language department offers students the opportunity to begin or continue the study of several languages. These are courses taught in the Middle School and are designed particularly for this age group. Students who wish to begin a foreign language will be placed in the 1A level course. Extensive experience in a foreign language, such as living abroad, will be considered by the foreign language teachers in placing students at a higher instructional level. After a testing and observation period at the beginning of the school year, adjustments may be made in the placement of students.

Most students in the Middle School are enrolled in one of our World Language classes. Some students enroll in two languages. For some students it is appropriate to delay the study of world language until high school. The choice of language is important. Many students choose the language in Middle School that they will study all the way through 12<sup>th</sup> Grade. Sticking with one language for six years allows the student to achieve the highest level of proficiency.

The 1A course is designed for the student wishing to begin the study of a foreign language. **It is not designed for native speakers of the target language.** Native speakers of one of the languages we teach at the Middle School may choose a different language. In high school, students will have the opportunity to place into an appropriate level course in their heritage language.

In levels 1A and 1B, each corresponding to a year of study, students will master essential skills in speaking, listening, reading, and writing. In addition, students will use these skills to explore cultural topics essential to understanding the context of the target language, and in a broader sense, the elements common to world cultures.

Upon completion of the curriculum, students will demonstrate oral proficiency in such areas as greeting and leave-takings, expressing likes and dislikes, following directions, comparing and contrasting, expressing needs, and narrating in the present tense. Proficiency will also be demonstrated in reading/writing sentences and paragraphs on a variety of topics such as geography, weather, holidays, family, friends, home, school, leisure activities, etc.

Students should expect intensive conversational practice and regular homework. Classes are conducted primarily in the foreign language. Because of the interactive nature of language learning in class, civility and cooperation, as well as willingness to use the target language, are essential ground rules for this level.

## **WORLD LANGUAGE COURSES**

### **CHINESE 1A**

This is a beginning Chinese course. Its design is based on the proficiency principles and emphasis is on oral communication. Students will acquire the ability to communicate about themselves and others, to express basic ideas and needs, and to interact with others. The students will learn how to communicate in daily-life situations and how to understand the cultural aspects of China. The teaching method for this course will emphasize interactive and task-oriented activities. Upon completion of Chinese 1A, students should acquire a survival level of competency. Homework assignments will include listening, oral and written work. A portfolio assessment will be used and both oral and written evaluations will be included. The course offers daily opportunity to work in pairs or small groups with an emphasis on oral expression.

### **FRENCH 1A**

This introductory course is for students who wish to begin their study of French. Emphasis will be on oral communication through creative manipulation of memorized vocabulary expressions. Homework assignments will be both oral (memorization of vocabulary and dialogues) and written (grammar and vocabulary-based exercises). Student assessment will include oral and written evaluations. The course offers daily opportunity to work in pairs or small groups with an emphasis on oral expression.

### **SPANISH 1A**

This introductory Spanish course is for students who wish to begin the study of Spanish. There is emphasis on conversation as well as creative writing assignments and reading. Students can expect daily homework assignments which will include memorization of vocabulary and/or written exercises. Students will undergo both oral proficiency and written proficiency evaluations in which accuracy in spelling and pronunciation will be stressed. The course offers daily opportunity to work in pairs or small groups with an emphasis on oral expression.

### **LATIN 1A**

This is the course for students who wish to begin the study of Latin. Students will learn to read simple Latin and translate it into correct English. Students will build a basic Latin vocabulary and use it to help improve their English vocabulary through a study of derivatives. As students learn Latin grammar, they will increase their understanding of English grammar through a comparative study of the two languages. Students will be introduced to the culture of the Roman world including such topics as clothing, names, travel, slavery, mythology and country life. Frequent quizzes are used to evaluate students' understanding of linguistic material. The course requires the completion of daily written homework. Assignments may include translation, grammatical exercises, or dictionary work with English derivatives.

### **CHINESE 1B**

#### **PREREQUISITE: CHINESE 1A**

This course is offered to students who have successfully completed Chinese 1A. Emphasis will continue to be placed on oral communication regarding different topics of daily-life situations. Students will learn more complicated sentence patterns and structures, and more Chinese character writings, which will give them more in-depth ability to express their knowledge and opinions in Chinese. Students will be expected to communicate orally on more topics of daily-life situations. Homework assignments will include both oral and written work. A portfolio assessment will be used and both oral and written evaluations will be included. The course offers daily opportunity to work in pairs or small groups with an emphasis on oral expression.

## **FRENCH 1B**

**PRE-REQUISITE:** FRENCH 1A

This course is offered to students who have successfully completed French 1A. Emphasis will continue to be placed on developing oral proficiency through creative manipulation of material. Daily homework assignments will be both oral and written. Students will be expected to write multi-paragraph compositions. The course offers daily opportunity to work in pairs or small groups with an emphasis on oral expression.

## **SPANISH 1B**

**PRE-REQUISITE:** SPANISH 1A

This course is offered to students who have successfully completed Spanish 1A. The course emphasizes oral communication and grammar. Since students taking this course have had at least one year of Spanish, they are expected to do independent projects on Spain and its culture, to write short essays and to comprehend reading selections. Students will be expected to write multi-paragraph compositions. The course offers daily opportunity to work in pairs or small groups with an emphasis on oral expression.

## **LATIN 1B**

**PRE-REQUISITE:** LATIN 1A

This course is a continuation of Latin for students who have completed Latin 1A. Students will learn to read more complex and longer selections of Latin and to translate into correct English. Students will continue to increase Latin and English vocabulary. Students will begin a study of Roman legend and history, examining the stories the Romans told about their heroes, and the myths they loved. Students will present brief written, oral, and visual reports on topics in vocabulary derivation, mythology, and history. Homework requirements are similar to those for Latin 1A. Quizzes will continue to be used to assess students' mastery of linguistic concepts.

### **English Language Education Program (ELE)** **Identification of Students Acquiring English as a Second Language**

The Amherst-Pelham Regional Middle School provides a range of instructional programs for students who are English language learners (ELLs). Identification and placement of students is made by the English Language Education [ELE] staff through the use of both state and district wide language assessments. These assessments are administered upon enrollment, annually, and upon exiting from the program. They are administered in order to determine each student's English language proficiency. Students who are not yet proficient in English are provided with ELE instruction and native language support in science and math, but not limited to.

### **Description of Instructional Programs for Students Acquiring English**

#### **The ELE PROGRAM AND ELL levels**

There are four levels of ELL: Beginner (Level 1), Early Intermediate (Level 2-A), Intermediate (Level 2-B), and Transitional (Level 3). Students who are not yet proficient in English are assigned to one of these four ELL levels. Students progress from one level to the next as they acquire more proficiency in English. Progress is determined through the use of various assessments including student's performance in class, annual proficiency assessments (SLEP) and standardized assessments required by Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (MEPA R/W and MELA-O). Students receive Sheltered English Instruction (SEI) until they are proficient in the areas of listening, speaking, reading, and writing in English. Once English language is acquired at an advanced level they exit out of the ELE program. Students at the Intermediate and Transitional levels have the opportunity

to work inclusively in the Language Arts and Social Studies classrooms with the collaboration of ELE teachers and subject matter teachers. All students participate in math, science and other grade level required courses. ELE teachers monitor the academic progress of exited ELLs for two years, as it is mandated by the Massachusetts Department of Education.

### **The LAU Program**

The Amherst-Pelham Regional Middle School LAU program provides bilingual translation support for students who are not yet proficient in English. Bilingual interpreters are assigned to work with the students in the math and science classes, as well as the study hall. Students continue to receive bilingual support until they are able to learn solely in English, at which time, they transition out from this portion of the program.

### **Supplementary Tutorial Services for Students Acquiring English Language**

When available, students from the University of Massachusetts and other organizations are available to tutor English language learners in most subject areas after school and during study halls.

## **DESCRIPTION OF ELE COURSES**

### **ELE Oral Communication 7/8**

ELE Oral Communication is designed to introduce students at the Beginning and early Intermediate levels of English to the new language and culture. Emphasis is on developing listening and speaking skills through a range of interactive activities. These activities facilitate the acquisition of meaningful and appropriate communicative skills in English about daily life, social and academic situations, the students' home cultures, and the culture of American public schools, the local community, and the United States. Listening, speaking, reading, and writing activities are used to engage students in this acquisition process. Students must achieve proficiency at this level in order to transition from the course

### **ELE Literature and Composition 7/8**

This course is designed for beginning and early intermediate students of English as a new language. Students in the course develop English language skills through the study of selected topics from the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade English Language Arts curriculum. Curriculum units are explored through the lens of 7<sup>th</sup> grade school wide essential questions: Who Am I? Who are They? Who are We?, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade theme of Change. Language and literature help students explore and express an understanding of the environment, others and themselves. Students in the course explore units/topics on Autobiography, Speaking Out, Transformation, Identity, Poetry, Mythology/Folktales among others. Students will read books individually at home, and collectively in class. They are expected to have a reading for pleasure book at all times and read every night. Students will read a variety of literature pieces: short stories, novels, poems and plays among other genre. They will analyze reading pieces through literature circles, reading responses and journal entries. Reading, writing, listening, and speaking are ways in which students access the curriculum. The course helps students acquire and build new vocabulary, improve communication, and develop writing skills. English grammar, usage and mechanics will be taught and writing process techniques will be used. Through a variety of writing activities, students will learn how to write a three to a four paragraph essay. They will demonstrate their learning in a variety of ways, including presentations and/or an end-of-the-year publication.

### **ELE Social Studies 7/8**

This course is designed for students of English as a new language at the beginning and early intermediate levels. Students in the course develop English language skills through the study of selected topics from the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade social studies curriculum. Curriculum units are explored through the

lens of 7<sup>th</sup> grade school wide essential questions: Who Am I? Who are They? Who are We?, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade theme of Change. Students will learn and delve into the Five Themes of Geography, Biomes Culture and American History, from founding of the country into late 19<sup>th</sup> century, including Reconstruction among other topics. Subtopics include environment, language, religion, and the impact of people interactions. They are encouraged to go beyond facts and be critical thinkers. Student in the course work on developing and improving skills in reading strategies, writing, speaking, listening, organization, cooperative learning, and study skills. The course will help students acquire concepts and vocabulary in geography, U.S. history, current events (e.g., immigration), world cultures and global issues. It also provides the space for students to share, learn, and appreciate each other experiences and backgrounds.

### **ELE Literature and Composition 7**

This course is an inclusion model in the team Language Arts class, designed for ELL students at the Intermediate and Transitional/Advanced levels. The ELE teacher and the English team teacher work in collaboration with the students. Students read a variety of literary genres: poetry, short stories, mythology, novels and non-fiction. They will read, write, listen and speak to access the curriculum and share new understandings. Through the use of problem solving strategies students will understand concepts and discuss character, point of view, plot, theme, mood, and setting in literature. They are expected to have a reading book at all times and read every night. Students will learn vocabulary-building and reading and strategies skills. They will analyze reading pieces through literature circles, reading responses and journal entries. Students will write paragraphs, essays, and poems using creative, narrative, descriptive, expository and critical modes. English grammar, usage and mechanics will be embedded in the course, and writing process techniques will be used. Students will demonstrate their learning in a variety of ways including an end of year presentation.

### **ELE Social Studies 7**

This course is an inclusion model in the social studies class, designed for ELLs at the Intermediate and Transitional/Advanced levels. The ELE teacher and the social studies team teacher work in collaboration with the students. The course helps students develop English language skills through the 7<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum framework that include a variety of units/topics such as the Five Themes of Geography, Culture/World Cultures ,and Biomes among others. These units are explored through three essential questions: Who am I? Who are We? and Who are They? The students explore the local community of Amherst and the larger region. Through the examination of history, geography, cultures, political division, economy and people of the region students develop and improve reading, writing, speaking and listening skills. The course includes the 5 themes of geography, and a "case study" (country or region) selected from the Massachusetts Curriculum Framework Learning Standards of World Geography which is aligned with the Massachusetts framework and standards.

### **ELE Literature and Composition 8**

This course is an inclusion model in the team Language Arts class, designed for ELLs at the Intermediate and Transitional/Advanced levels. The ELE teacher and the English team teacher work in collaboration with the students. Students in the course explore literature through broad thematic units on Transformations, Speaking Out, Personal Narrative, and Wartime Experiences among others. Students read historical fiction novels, short stories, poems, plays, expository, autobiographies to explore social and political issues, and universal human conditions, and make connections with themselves and the world around: text to text, text to self, and text to the world. They will analyze reading pieces through literature circles, reading responses and journal entries. Students read, write, listen and speak to access the curriculum and share new understandings. Through a variety of writing strategies and techniques such as process writing students will improve their skills. They will use multimedia/genre to demonstrate new understandings. Students will use writing for a variety of audiences and purposes, including writing to learn (reflection), expository (to inform and explain), creative and persuasive writing.

## **ELE Social Studies 8**

This course is an inclusion model in the team social studies class, designed for Intermediate and Transitional/Advanced levels students of English. The ELE teacher and the social studies team teacher work in collaboration with the students. The course helps develop English language skills through the study of the social, political, historical context of the United States, from the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the reform era. Students learn to use social science inquiry methods using a variety of grade level primary and secondary source materials. Students will gather information through reading a variety of documents and texts. The use of the inquiry method is taught in this course-“what is like to be a historian”, “how is history constructed.” They will also use the library effectively for research. In this course, students are encouraged to go beyond understanding facts about U.S. history to think about point of view, to compare and contrast, generalize and draw conclusions. In addition to developing reading and expository writing skills in English, this course will help acquire concepts and vocabulary in geography, U.S. history, current events, and world cultures. This course follows the district's curriculum guideline that is in alignment with the Massachusetts History and Social Science Curriculum Framework.

## **Special Education Support Services**

At the Middle School, we provide a comprehensive continuum of services for students with special needs. Entrance into special education begins with the referral process outlined by the Massachusetts special education regulations. Each student participates in a comprehensive evaluation process designed to assess strengths and needs. If a student is found to have a disability which requires specialized instruction, an individual education plan is written. The plan includes student-centered goals, which are addressed in a variety of models. These services may be special education services which are documented in their IEP, or may be general education services. The following models for delivering programs and services are most often used, in a variety of combinations to ensure the least restrictive environment:

1. Consultation to staff and parents/guardians
2. Inclusion support when instruction in content areas is delivered in a general education setting
3. ELA Skills- targeted instruction to address specific needs in reading comprehension and writing
4. Math Skills- targeted instruction to address specific needs in math
5. Organization Skills- focus upon developing and applying organizational skills and strategies
6. Direct instruction in content areas delivered in a special education setting
7. Reading Tutorial- targeted instruction to address basic reading (decoding) skills

## **SPECIALIZED SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS:**

### **AIMS (Academic Individualized Mainstream Support)**

The AIMS Program is designed to support the education of students identified as having higher functioning autism spectrum disorders, or similar learning profiles, in the least restrictive environment. No two students in the AIMS program have the same schedule or program. We design each student's education programming, support services, and schedule to meet individual needs. For example, some students in the AIMS program receive instruction in general education classes for the majority of their day, but take a special education skills class as often as the IEP (Individual Education Plan) team decides is necessary within a week. Activities within skills classes are tailored to support each student's organizational, academic, behavioral, sensory, and social-emotional needs. Other students in the AIMS program may be included in general education classes for some core academic subjects (e.g. Science), but receive intensive, individualized instruction in other academic subjects (e.g. Math). Students may receive speech/language services, occupational therapy, physical therapy, or reading tutorial based on the specified needs in their IEP. Also, students within the AIMS program may receive direct support

within their general education classes from an instructional assistant. The focus and frequency of this support also varies according to the student's specified needs. The AIMS liaison directly supervises any instructional assistants working with students in the AIMS program and maintains the necessary communication with regular education teachers, parents, related service providers, and school administration to foster students' success.

## **ESSENTIAL SKILLS PROGRAM**

The essential skills program is designed to support the education of students identified as having intensive special needs. The students in the program have multiple disabilities including language, motor, behavioral, cognitive, and sensory impairments. The students receive their education in an inclusive environment that meets the needs of individual students.

Individual programs often emphasize communication skills, adaptive living skills, academic skills, community and work skills, social engagement and positive behavioral support. Students may receive speech/language services, occupational therapy, and physical therapy based on the specified needs in their IEP.

Students typically receive direct support within their general education classes from an instructional assistant. The focus and frequency of this support varies according to the student's specified needs. The essential skills liaison directly supervises the instructional assistants working with students in the program and maintains the necessary communication with regular education teachers, parents, related service providers, and school administration to foster students' success.

## **BRIDGES**

The Bridges Program is designed to support the education of students identified as having social, emotional, academic or behavioral challenges, in the least restrictive environment. We design each student's educational programming, support services, and schedule to meet individual needs, modifying whenever appropriate. The classroom is self contained with potential for all four content subject areas to be taught in a small group setting, or, the student may integrate into general education classes, depending on their continually assessed needs and strengths. This is an academic setting where students are taught the standards based curriculum that is aligned with the regular education setting, therefore the students' experiences are aligned with their general education peers and prepare them for MCAS. The students in the program may receive additional resources in accordance with their IEP, such as Therapeutic Counseling in groups or individually, as well as Speech, Occupational or Physical Therapies. Case management services are also provided to facilitate coordination between school and community based service providers. In addition to teaching staff and instructional assistants, the program is supported by a Therapeutic Teacher/Counselor so that social skills, pragmatics, and life skills may be integrated into the curriculum. The ultimate goal is to give every opportunity for students to be supported in the least restrictive environment while receiving the academic and emotional supports they need to be successful at the Middle School.

# **GRADING**

## **MARKING SYSTEM**

Report cards are distributed three times during the school year so that students and parents become aware of the progress being made in each subject. All seventh and eighth grade courses are divided into trimesters. We use letter grades to show achievement in each course. There is space on the report card for teachers to write comments, or teachers may use computer-coded comments that print on the report card.

Progress reports are distributed at the middle of each trimester. These progress reports let students know how they are currently doing in each subject.

## **HONOR ROLL**

Students make the Honor Roll at the end of a trimester if they achieve B- or better in each subject. The Honor Roll list is published in the Amherst Bulletin at the end of each trimester.

## REGISTRATION OF STUDENTS NEW TO THE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Parents of a student new to the Amherst-Pelham Regional Schools must first enroll their child in school with the Registrar. Please call (413) 362-1703 to make an appointment with the Registrar, or write to Registrar, c/o Amherst-Pelham Regional High School, 21 Mattoon Street, Amherst, Massachusetts 01002. We ask that parents provide proof of residence within the region at the time of registration (e.g., lease, purchase agreement, recent utility bill).

Massachusetts state law requires the following immunizations and documentation for all students before they can enroll. Parents must provide the dates that the immunizations were given by presenting documented records.

	GRADES 7-12
<b>Hepatitis B</b>	3 doses
<b>DTaP/DTP/DT/Td (Diphtheria-Tetanus) Td Booster</b>	4 doses DTaP/DTP or 3 doses Td Td booster must be within the past 5 years before entering 7 <sup>th</sup> grade
<b>Polio</b>	4 doses (unless third dose was given after the fourth birthday)
<b>MMR (Measles/Mumps/Rubella)</b>	2 MMR (First dose must have been after 1 <sup>st</sup> birthday)
<b>Varicella</b>	2 doses or documentation of having had chicken pox

- Questions pertaining to immunization requirements can be answered by Health Services in your child's school.
- A copy of a physical examination that has been completed within the last six (6) months must be provided. If the student intends to participate in school sponsored sports, sports physical examination must be submitted less than 13 months from start of sports' season. Medical and/or religious exemptions for immunizations require written documentation.
- A birth certificate or passport must also be shown at the time of enrollment.

It is helpful if parents bring an unofficial transcript from the previous school to assist in grade placement and selection of courses. We will send for an official transcript after enrollment takes place, or the parent can request in writing that the former school mail the transcript directly to us.

Students are placed in ninth grade upon successful completion of the eighth grade. In order for a student to be placed in tenth grade, s/he must have earned 16 credits, and in eleventh grade s/he must have earned at least 36 credits. The minimum for placement in twelfth grade is 58 credits.

Students who are native speakers of languages other than English or whose home language is other than English are required to be tested by the English as a Second Language Department Head before they are placed in English and social studies classes.

After officially enrolling their child, parents are then ready to meet with a guidance counselor. If ELL testing is required, the Registrar will arrange for it. Then the Registrar notifies the guidance department that a new student has been enrolled and that an appointment should be arranged with one of the counselors. In this conference, the counselor reviews the student's previous records, discusses selection of appropriate courses with the parents and student, and builds an appropriate schedule.

The entire process of registration may take two or three days to complete. We will be glad to send the parents any materials needed for registration prior to arrival in Amherst. This will speed up the process and will assist parents and students who are new to the system. Once here, a student may be required to take placement tests so that we can determine the most appropriate classes.

## WITHDRAWAL AND RE-ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES FOR FAMILIES ON SABBATICAL

When a family has finalized its plans for sabbatical leave, we ask that the parent(s) or guardian(s) of a student at the Middle School notify the student's guidance counselor **and** the secretary in the principal's office. Procedures for withdrawal and re-enrollment will be explained at this time.

Several weeks prior to departure, parents should request transfer forms, clearance cards, and information release forms. These forms must be completed, **signed by parents(s) or guardian(s)** and returned to the Middle School secretary.

Students who leave during the school year should understand that a grade with Withdrawn-Pass or Withdrawn-Fail is recorded on the report card and transcript and no credit is awarded unless **all** course requirements are completed. The receiving school may award grades and credits for those courses completed under their jurisdiction. **Students who leave just prior to the end of a course should meet with individual teachers to negotiate the details of completing the course requirements.** When the student completes all of the requirements, the teacher may award a final grade and/or credit.

Parents and students could save much time and effort by meeting with the appropriate school staff for academic planning before departure. They should meet with the student's guidance counselor to be sure that they understand the ARHS graduation requirements if the student intends to return to ARHS, to plan an academic program for the new school, and to plan for courses that will be necessary when the student returns to ARHS. Parent(s) or guardian(s) should call the school health office to request a copy of the student's health records for the new school. The office secretary at the Middle School or the Registrar at the High School can provide unofficial copies of the student's transcript to be hand-carried to the new school.

While on sabbatical in the spring, parents or students should write to the Principal at the Middle School during March to request course registration materials for the following school year. Parent(s) or guardian(s) should also request that the temporary school forward the student's official records to the Registrar's Office as well as provide an unofficial copy of the records to be hand-carried to the re-enrollment appointment with the Registrar. The Interim Registrar is Michaela Tarr, and her office is located in the High School at 21 Mattoon Street, Amherst, MA 01002 (Phone: 413-362-1703).

Upon return to the Amherst Region, parent(s) or guardian(s) should first call the Registrar for a re-enrollment appointment. The Registrar will check the student's records and will notify the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the necessary re-enrollment procedures, such as proof of immunization or a physical examination. Students and parent(s) or guardian(s) should be aware that course work completed outside of the Region does not count toward a student's Amherst Regional High School grade point average. Credit toward graduation will be determined by the Registrar and the Instructional Director. Finally, after completing all re-enrollment procedures, the family should call the office secretary for an appointment with the appropriate guidance counselor. At this meeting, the student, parent(s) or guardian(s) and guidance counselor will plan a schedule of courses unless the student previously requested, filled out, and returned a course selection worksheet and has already been scheduled. The school strongly encourages the parent(s) or guardian(s) to attend this meeting with the student to be sure that everything is in order and to begin reorientation to the Regional Schools.