

# Middle School *Program of Studies* 2018-2019

Grades 6-8



Jonas Clarke Middle School  
William Diamond Middle School  
Lexington Public Schools

---

Lexington, Massachusetts

# **Lexington Public Schools Lexington, Massachusetts**

## **Middle School Administration**

### **Jonas Clarke Middle School**

17 Stedman Road, Lexington, MA 02421

781.861.2450

Anna Monaco, *Principal*

Jonathan R. Wettstone, *Assistant Principal*

Mary Barry-Ng, *Assistant Principal*

### **William Diamond Middle School**

99 Hancock Street, Lexington, MA 02420

781.861.2460

Jennifer E. Turner, *Principal*

Bayard Klimasmith, *Assistant Principal*

Elizabeth Sharp, *Assistant Principal*

## **Central Administration**

Mary Czajkowski, Ed.D.

*Superintendent of Schools*

Christine Lyons, M.Ed, Ph.D.

*Interim Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and Professional Learning*

Ian Dailey

*Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Business*

Jennifer Judkins

*Director of Educational Technology*

Ellen Sugita

*Director of Special Education*

Karen Slusser

*Assistant Director of Special Education*

Monica Visco

*Director of Human Resources*

Michael Cronin

*Director of Public Facilities*

## **School Committee Members**

Eileen Jay, Chair

Alessandro Alessandrini

Kathryn Colburn

Kathleen Lenihan

Deepika Sawhney

**Lexington  
Middle Schools  
Program of Studies 2018-2019**

***A Message to Parents***

Middle School Philosophy

Both Jonas Clarke Middle School and William Diamond Middle School are communities committed to the academic, social and emotional growth of all students.

We believe that successful middle schools place the individual learner at the center of both organizational and curricular planning. Our courses and our teaching are designed to support each student's individual growth. During middle school, students will work to develop:

- Content area concepts, skills, and knowledge
- Pro-social, collaborative, and citizenship skills
- Creative, curious, and critical thinking

To help us do this, our middle schools embrace the team concept: a small group of teachers instructing English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies who work with a shared group of students. Each team is heterogeneously grouped, and all teams are committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for each student to learn. Team placement is based on a variety of criteria including:

- A student's special education needs
- Gender balance
- Family history
- Social groupings to promote cooperation and collaboration
- History of academic progress
- Feedback from a child's previous teacher and administrators
- Mathematics and reading skills

We very much value parental input. The personal information you share helps us to better know your child and to create more balanced teams. However, please note that in all situations, the principal will be the final arbiter of team compositions and team placement.

Our ultimate desire is to help students master essential skills, while fostering creativity, collaboration, and citizenship. With this in mind, we work to provide students the support they need when they need it. This program of studies outlines the breadth of offerings designed to nurture and support the intellectual, social, physical, and emotional growth of our students. All students take a carefully planned sequence of courses in English language arts, social studies, science technology and engineering, mathematics, world language, physical education and health. Students also have the opportunity to take courses in the visual and performing arts and may supplement their learning with general education intervention courses and/or special education services designed to improve their academic or social emotional skills.

Our curriculum is enhanced by the opportunity to participate in strong co-curricular offerings including sports, student government, math team, yearbook, vocal ensembles, drama and musical productions, and community service projects.

*Anna Monaco*

Anna Monaco  
Principal  
Jonas Clarke Middle Schools

*Jennifer Turner*

Jennifer Turner  
Principal  
William Diamond Middle School

## Contents

<i>A Message to Parents</i> .....	1
Team Subjects.....	3
English Language Arts.....	3
Mathematics.....	6
Science.....	10
Social Studies.....	12
Other Major Subjects.....	14
World Languages.....	14
French.....	14
Mandarin.....	15
Spanish.....	16
Visual and Performing Arts.....	18
Drama.....	18
Music.....	19
Visual Arts.....	22
Physical Education, Health, and Wellness.....	24
Health Education.....	25
Physical Education.....	26
Additional Courses.....	27
Technology Applications.....	27
Economics.....	28
Journalism.....	28
Reading.....	29
Speech and Debate.....	29
Academic Supports.....	30
English Language Learning.....	30
Guided Learning Supports.....	30
Special Education.....	30
Library and Information Technology Program.....	31
Student Community Development and Support.....	32
Counseling.....	32
The Family Education and Privacy Act (FERPA).....	33
Policy of Non-Discrimination.....	35

## **Team Subjects**

**English Language Arts**

**Mathematics**

**Science**

**Social Studies**

## **English Language Arts**

The purpose of the English Language Arts program is to provide students with rich and varied experiences that will inform and cultivate their abilities to think, read, write and speak with excellence.

Each course prepares and challenges our students to meet the four core objectives of the Lexington Public Schools English Language Arts curriculum:

1. Demonstrate comprehension of literary and informational texts using textual evidence.
2. Articulate ideas individually and adapt these ideas collectively for diverse media and audiences; attend to and respond to others' ideas.
3. Produce various text types for a specific purpose and audience in order to engage, narrate, inform, and argue.
4. Intentionally revise and edit writing to create pieces publishable for specific audiences.

Our curriculum is based on the 2017 Massachusetts State Framework for English Language Arts, which is aligned with the Common Core State Standards. Students experience the full range of literary genres: fiction, nonfiction, poetry and drama. Teachers select books, materials and methodologies to meet students' learning needs in the achievement of grade-level standards. Teachers make conscious efforts to integrate literary selections with the themes and issues studied in other core subjects. Vocabulary instruction is integrated with the study of literature.

The English Language Arts curriculum engages students in narrative, informational, and opinion writing, with an increasing emphasis on the expository writing forms in grades seven and eight. The writing process—pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing, publishing—underpins the writing curriculum and instruction. Writing topics are often student selected and drawn from personal experience.

Oral expression and listening skills are developed through class discussions, classroom presentations, interactive writing groups, and/or drama activities so that students have an opportunity to develop all of the requisite language skills, achieving increased precision, economy and sophistication in both speech and writing.

Lexington Public Schools' comprehensive English Language Arts curriculum reflects the interests and experiences of the community, adheres to state and national standards, and provides adequate time for students to develop strategies and skills on a continuum. We are committed to helping the children of Lexington grow to be effective readers, sound thinkers, and articulate communicators of their thoughts, feelings and concerns.

## Grade Six English

### **Course #060**

In this transitional year, students extend the reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language skills taught in the elementary school. Students are introduced to many new skills and concepts that will be studied with greater complexity in seventh grade and eighth grade. The program includes spelling, vocabulary, paragraph structure, punctuation and grammar, all of which are often integrated into writing and reading activities.

In composition, two major writing types are taught: narrative, and argumentative. Students engage in process writing, which includes pre-writing activities, rough drafts, final drafts, and peer and teacher conferences. Composition models help students understand and meet expectations. Editing involves checking for accuracy in grammar, spelling, and punctuation. The revision aims to clarify expression, develop cohesion, and resolve structure and logic issues in student writing. Expository paragraph structure receives particular attention.

Students work with short stories, short novels, poetry, and literary nonfiction assigned by teachers and individually chosen by students. In close reading of literature, students make and support inferences, tracking the development of characters and conflicts. They also explore how specific word choices imply meaning and tone. Students respond to and analyze their reading through various writing formats, such as journals, study guides, quizzes, short essays and book reports. Discussion groups help students learn to express and share their ideas, explore meaning in literature, and relate what they read to their lives. Historical fiction and traditional literature receive particular focus.

Teachers use a variety of activities to ensure that students are acquiring skills in speaking and listening. Oral presentations and discussions are common features and allow class members the opportunity to ask questions and practice using language as a tool for learning.

## Grade Seven English

### **Course #070**

Reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language skills continue to be the major areas of concentration for students in the seventh grade, focusing on foundational critical and inferential thinking skills. Through the reading of short stories and novels, students focus on the elements of characterization, setting, conflict, and theme. Particularly, students are challenged to determine and track the development of theme. Informational reading skills are developed during a nonfiction reading unit.

Students work on developing their argumentative writing skills by composing a number of pieces. In this work with writing, students express their opinions and insights, organize their thoughts, and support their claims with valid reasoning.

## Grade Eight English

### **Course #080**

Grade Eight English continues to develop students' reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language skills. Eighth-grade students develop their reading skills in a literature program that includes short stories, novels, plays, poetry, and nonfiction with texts such as *Of Mice and Men*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Students study how authors, playwrights, and poets manipulate structure, language, literary devices, and the elements of literature to affect readers and develop themes. The course also explores the art of argumentation through close analysis and evaluation of opinion texts such as essays, speeches, and editorials.

Students compose in varied forms to express their ideas about their reading. Such compositions require analysis supported with textual evidence, and so reflect and nurture students' emerging inferential reasoning skills. When writing, students manipulate their phrasing, diction, and sentence structure to convey precise ideas fluidly, applying transitional devices to cohesively organize their thoughts. Peer editing is frequently used to assist in the revision of drafts, providing yet another opportunity for students to apply their conceptual knowledge and reasoning skills.

## Mathematics

### Program Overview

During the middle school years, students will experience significant changes in their ability to reason mathematically and think abstractly. Our goal is to enable all students to reach high standards and their full potential in a supportive environment. We seek to engage all students in meaningful mathematics that stimulates curiosity and enjoyment, while providing a balance between conceptual understanding, procedural skill and fluency, and application of skills in problem solving situations. Throughout our curriculum, we emphasize these eight Mathematical Practices identified in the *Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for Mathematics* Incorporating the *Common Core State Standards*:

1. Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them
2. Reason abstractly and quantitatively
3. Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others
4. Model with mathematics
5. Use appropriate tools strategically
6. Attend to precision
7. Look for and make use of structure
8. Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning

All middle school mathematics courses are aligned with the 2017 Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for Mathematics. Each course is integrated in that there is a blend of topics from algebra, geometry, and data analysis. The aim of this integrated approach is to present mathematics with focus, coherence and rigor, while emphasizing key mathematical practices such as reasoning, problem solving, and modeling. This structure also provides continuity from the elementary schools to the high school program.

### Placement Determinations

Placement in mathematics courses receives a great deal of attention throughout middle school. The intent of the mathematics department is to ensure that all parents and students are informed of the criteria used to determine appropriate student placement. Teachers, students, and parents should be aware that there is movement across levels in mathematics courses. Throughout the year, students take several grade-wide common assessments which, along with teacher recommendations, are used to determine placement for the following year.

## **Sixth Grade**

### **Grade 6 Mathematics**

#### **Course #262**

All 6th-grade students will enroll in Grade 6 Mathematics. In this course, students will examine rational numbers and equivalence in order to solve problems involving ratios. Students will build upon their elementary school experience with fractions and decimals, by exploring the meaning underlying the algorithms, and by applying skills to solve real-world problems. Students will also solve problems involving percents and their applications. Students will write and evaluate algebraic expressions, and solve word problems related to these algebraic concepts. Students will also solidify their skills with operations with integers. In geometry, students will examine properties of polygons in two dimensions and solids in three dimensions. They will solve problems involving various measurements, and extrapolate these measurements on the coordinate plane. In data, students will examine numerical spreads, analyze measures of central tendency, and create graphical representations and plots.

Students who complete this course will enroll in either Grade 7 Mathematics (#271), or Grade 7 Mathematics Honors (#272).

## **Seventh Grade**

### **Grade 7 Mathematics**

#### **Course # 271**

Students in this course will solidify skills and apply concepts related to percents, percent change, ratio, and proportion. Students will manipulate algebraic expressions and solve multi-step equations, inequalities, and word problems. Students will also simplify expressions using properties of exponents. Students will be introduced to rate of change and linear functions. In geometry, students will identify and describe relationships among figures in two and three dimensions, solve real-world problems involving measurement, and examine similarity as it relates to figures. Additionally, students will solve problems involving probability and statistics, including examining samples, populations, and their effect on data collection.

Students who complete this course will enroll in either, Grade 8 Mathematics (#281), Mathematics 1 (#282), or Mathematics 1 Honors (#283).

### **Grade 7 Mathematics Honors**

#### **Course # 272**

This course is designed to meet the needs of learners who have thoroughly mastered all the concepts and skills from 6th grade and who thrive in a collaborative student-led environment with less direct instruction. Students in this course will engage in the same curriculum as that of the Grade 7 Mathematics I course in addition to other topics based on students' readiness. Such supplemental topics may include bases, and selected lessons in number theory. Students are expected to solve non-routine problems and will progress at a faster pace.

Students who complete this course will enroll in either Mathematics I (#282), or Mathematics I Honors (#283).

## **Eighth Grade**

### **Grade 8 Mathematics**

#### **Course # 281**

Students in this course will learn the foundations of algebra, including algebraic language, concepts, structure, and skills. Students will solve equations, inequalities, and systems of equations. They will also solve related word problems. Students will graph, write, and analyze functions. In particular, students will examine linear functions using algebraic and graphical approaches, and use these functions for modeling and problem solving. In geometry, students will perform transformations and use those principles to determine congruence or similarity. Students will also prove and apply the Pythagorean Theorem. In data, students will examine histograms, interpret distributions with outliers, and analyze two-way tables. Throughout the year, students will use tools including graphing calculators and geometry software.

Students fully meeting the goals of this course will enroll in CP1 Math 1, or CP2 Math 1 (Algebra/Geometry/Statistics) at the High School.

### **Grade 8 Mathematics I**

#### **Course # 282**

**This is an accelerated grade 8 and grade 9 course.**

Students in this course will learn the foundations of algebra, including algebraic language, concepts, structure, skills, properties, and proof. Students will solve equations, inequalities (including compound and absolute value), and systems of equations and inequalities. They will also solve related word problems. Students will graph, write, and analyze functions, including function transformations. In particular, students will examine both linear and exponential functions using algebraic and graphical approaches, and use these functions for modeling and problem solving. Direct variation and coordinate geometry concepts such as the midpoint formula will be addressed as well. In geometry, students will perform transformations and use those principles to determine congruence or similarity. Students will also perform constructions. Additionally, students will connect transformations to the coordinate plane. Students will prove triangle congruence, as well as various principles of coordinate geometry. Students will also prove and apply the Pythagorean Theorem. In data, students will examine histograms, interpret distributions with outliers, and apply measures of dispersion to solve problems. Students will also create and analyze lines of best fit as well as work with two-way tables. Throughout the year, students will use tools including graphing calculators and geometry software.

Students fully meeting goals of this course will enroll in either CP1 Math 2 (Algebra2/Geometry/Statistics), or Honors Math 2 at the High School.

### **Grade 8 Mathematics I Honors**

#### **Course # 283**

**This is an accelerated grade 8 and grade 9 course.**

This course is designed to meet the needs of learners who have thoroughly mastered all the concepts and skills from prior courses and who thrive in a collaborative, student-led environment with less direct instruction. Students in this course will engage in the same curriculum as that of the Mathematics 1 course in addition to other topics based on students' readiness. Students are expected to solve unfamiliar problems, and progress at a faster pace with a greater emphasis on problem solving, exploration, and higher order thinking skills. Throughout the year, students will use tools including graphing calculators and geometry software.

Students fully meeting the goals of this course will enroll in either CP1 Math 2 (Algebra2/Geometry/Statistics), or Honors Math 2 at the High School.

## **Math Intervention**

### **Grades 6, 7, 8**

This course is for students who need support to solidify their conceptual understanding and procedural skills in mathematics. Placement into this course is determined by a combination of teacher recommendation and student performance on common standards-based assessments. Please note that while enrolled in these courses all students continue with their regular mathematics course and instruction. The course is focused on meeting the individual needs of students through analysis of multiple sources of data (progress monitoring) to identify areas of need. This support will be strengthened through additional motivational strategies, and explicit and systematic instruction.

## Science

The middle school science program emphasizes instruction in basic science principles and skills. Students explore scientific concepts by conducting laboratory and field studies, reading pertinent material, and participating in project based learning activities.

All students study science each year during their middle school experience. Science topics are selected from earth, life and physical science along with integrated topics in technology and engineering.

The following practices are introduced and used in science and engineering courses throughout middle school:

- Asking questions and defining problems
- Developing and using models
- Planning and carrying out investigations
- Analyzing and interpreting data
- Using mathematics and computational thinking
- Constructing explanations and developing solutions
- Engaging in argument from evidence
- Obtaining, evaluating and communicating information

The science program also includes components of the engineering design process. Engineering skills are introduced in sixth grade and continue through the eighth grade. Students make connections on how science knowledge informs the engineering and design of products in the man-made world.

### Sixth-Grade Science

#### **Course# 360**

In addition to science practices and inquiry skills, the sixth grade program emphasizes earth science topics that include Earth's structure; geologic changes of Earth's surface; heat transfer; local weather; global climate; the sun, Earth, moon systems including seasons; and the solar system. Science concepts are developed with laboratory and inquiry activities grounded in students' experiences.

### Seventh-Grade Science

#### **Course # 370**

The focus of seventh grade is life science. The program includes the study of life processes, cells, the diversity of life, evolution, genetics, ecology and human body systems. Among the laboratory experiences are instruction in microscope use, selected dissections, and collection of data and/or specimens representative of a local group of organisms.

### Eighth-Grade Science

#### **Course # 380**

The course of study in the eighth grade is physical science. Topics are composed of chemistry and physics concepts. The course includes the study of matter, interactions among forms of matter, forces, motion, energy and conservation of matter and energy. Students acquire skills in science and technology that prepare them for high school. In the spring, grade 8 students participate in the Science/Technology and Engineering MCAS test.

## **Engineering and Design**

The Engineering and Design courses have a strong interdisciplinary tie to the middle school science program. The courses promote technological literacy and introduce students to the engineering and design process. The Massachusetts Science, Technology and Engineering frameworks drive the course curriculum.

### **Sixth-Grade Engineering and Design**

#### **Course # 361**

Semester Course (meets twice per week)

Students are introduced to the engineering design process as a method for solving real-world problems. Students use the design process to engineer solutions to particular problems. Throughout the course, students identify the problem, design possible solutions, construct prototypes, test and evaluate their designs, redesign the prototype, and communicate their solutions.

### **Eighth-Grade Engineering and Design**

#### **Course # 381**

Semester Course (meets twice per week)

The second year of the course continues to address the MA state frameworks. The challenges presented to students require them to solve problems by researching various scientific concepts, drawing blueprints, using tools to build prototypes, testing the prototypes and redesigning or rebuilding to improve their product. Students have the opportunity to use software programs to model real-life objects and create electronic design diagrams. The topics in the class prepare students for taking the Massachusetts Science, Technology and Engineering MCAS test.

## **Social Studies**

### **Mission Statement**

The primary purpose of the Lexington Public Schools' Social Studies Department is to foster curiosity and help to create life-long learners who make informed decisions as they actively engage as citizens in their local, national and global communities.

- Understand the major events and trends in these domains that have shaped the modern world
- Connect the past with the present and gain insights
- Use a wide variety of technologies and emphasize the importance of gathering, analyzing and evaluating evidence and information
- Discover their own authentic voice, learn to think independently, work collaboratively, and communicate their ideas effectively

The middle school social studies program is designed to meet the needs of students who are in transition developmentally from childhood to early adolescence. It affords an opportunity for the student to explore in some depth the social studies subject areas. In addition, the introduction, development and refinement of specific social studies skills form the foundation of social studies education. These skills are coupled with the various social studies disciplines to form a rigorous course of study. The program also expands the knowledge students have gained at the K-5 level in the areas of history, geography, government and other social sciences.

### **Sixth Grade – Ancient Civilization**

#### **Course # 160**

The content of the course is the study of archaeology, early humans and selected ancient civilizations, including Mesopotamia, Egypt and Greece. The course begins with archaeology and examines the basis for historical, cultural and archaeological reconstruction. It also allows students to consider and understand technology, social structures, ideologies and cultures of the past. Sixth graders continue their studies by examining early humans and societies, early river civilizations, and classical civilizations. The varied techniques in this course of study provide students with more sophisticated practice in reading, listening, writing and oral communication. Students also use proper research and bibliographic techniques as they evaluate a variety of sources to gather relevant information.

### **Seventh Grade – World Geography**

#### **Course # 170**

Geography in grade seven will review and reinforce the geographical concepts and suggested learning outcomes outlined for grades K-6. As such, the course will help students discern the global patterns of physical and cultural characteristics such as landforms, climate, population, transportation and communication, economic linkages, and cultural diffusion.

The primary focus of study is cultural geography which deals with how the activities of different culture groups affect the use and form of the landscape. It explores a variety of themes including the human use of the habitat and its resources, the human impact on the ecology of the earth, the origin and spread of cultures, environmental perception or the geography of settlement forms. Regions selected for study will vary, but should include case studies from geographic areas such as Latin America, Europe, Asia and Africa. These studies are set in their regional context and exemplify important geographic concepts or problems. Students build upon the research skills developed in grade 6, as they create discipline-specific writing that includes topic sentence/evidence in support of a claim and state a conclusion.

## **Eighth Grade – U.S. History**

### **Course # 180**

Our chronological study of U.S. History will begin with 1754 (French and Indian War) and continue through the Civil War. Teachers may provide historical context by reviewing European discovery, settlement and colonization of North America. Emphasis is placed on the American Revolution, Articles of Confederation, the Constitution, Civics and Governance, Westward Expansion, Reform Movements, and the Civil War Era. Skills in research and reporting, cartography, non-fiction literacy, historical thinking, formulating and supporting a thesis, and drawing conclusions are developed throughout the course.

## **Other Major Subjects**

### **World Languages**

### **Visual and Performing Arts**

### **Physical Education and Wellness**

## **World Languages**

The Lexington Public Schools World Language Program prepares students for meaningful interactions with people around the world, helping them to understand the inextricable link between language and culture as they work to understand and communicate with respect in the language they are learning, and at the same time deepening their understanding of their own language and culture; while inspiring them to be curious, to be open to sharing new experiences and new ideas, ultimately with the goal of creating networks of collaboration to address the challenges facing today's world.

## **French**

### **French - Grade Six**

#### **Course #460**

By engaging in learning French, students in grade six will build 21<sup>st</sup> century literacy skills essential for their future. Reading, writing, listening, speaking and viewing are integral to the world language learning process. Students will build proficiency in three modes of communication: interpersonal (person-to-person speaking or writing), interpretive (listening and reading) and presentational (one-way speaking and writing). They will learn to understand the structure and patterns of language, ask and answer questions, identify words, describe; retell stories, interpret text, and apply the conventions of language. They will investigate the products, practices and perspectives of French-speaking cultures.

Students in grade six will advance from **Novice Low to the Novice Mid** Level by the end of the course [these are the levels described in the ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) proficiency guidelines].

### **French (Continuing) - Grade Seven**

#### **Course #470**

By engaging in learning French, students in grade seven will continue to build 21<sup>st</sup> century literacy skills essential for their future. Reading, writing, listening, speaking and viewing are integral to the world language learning process. Students will build proficiency in three modes of communication: interpersonal (person-to-person speaking or writing), interpretive (listening and reading) and presentational (one-way speaking and writing). They will learn to understand the structure and patterns of language, ask and answer questions, identify words, describe; retell stories, interpret text, and apply the conventions of language. They will investigate the products, practices and perspectives of French-speaking cultures.

Students in grade seven will advance from **Novice Mid to the Novice High** Level by the end of the course [these are the levels described in the ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) proficiency guidelines].

## French (Continuing) - Grade Eight

### Course #480

By engaging in learning French, students in grade eight will continue to build 21<sup>st</sup> century literacy skills essential for their future. Reading, writing, listening, speaking and viewing are integral to the world language learning process. Students will build proficiency in three modes of communication: interpersonal (person-to-person speaking or writing), interpretive (listening and reading) and presentational (one-way speaking and writing). They will learn to understand the structure and patterns of language, ask and answer questions, identify words, describe; retell stories, interpret text, and apply the conventions of language. They will investigate the products, practices and perspectives of French-speaking cultures.

Students in grade eight will advance from **Novice High to the Intermediate Low** Level by the end of the course [these are the levels described in the ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) proficiency guidelines].

## French (Advanced) - Grade Eight

### Course #481

By engaging in learning French at the advanced level, students who demonstrate excellence in the three modes of communication: interpersonal (person-to-person speaking or writing), interpretive (listening and reading) and presentational (one-way speaking and writing), independent learning and who have been recommended for this class, continue to increase proficiency at a rapid pace. In grade eight students will continue to build 21<sup>st</sup> century literacy skills essential for their future. Reading, writing, listening, speaking and viewing are integral to the world language learning process. They will learn to understand the structure and patterns of language, ask and answer questions, identify words, describe; retell stories, interpret text, and apply the conventions of language. They will investigate the products, practices and perspectives of French-speaking cultures.

Students in grade eight will advance from **Intermediate Low to the Intermediate Mid** Level by the end of the course [these are the levels described in the ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) proficiency guidelines].

## Mandarin

### Mandarin - Grade Six

#### Course #461

By engaging in learning Mandarin, students in grade six will build 21<sup>st</sup> century literacy skills essential for their future. Reading, writing, listening, speaking and viewing are integral to the world language learning process. This beginning course introduces the pinyin system of pronunciation of Chinese sounds and tones, and the radicals and stroke order of characters. Students will build proficiency in three modes of communication: interpersonal (person-to-person speaking or writing), interpretive (listening and reading) and presentational (one-way speaking and writing). They will learn to understand the structure and patterns of language, ask and answer questions, identify words, describe; retell stories, interpret text, and apply the conventions of language. They will investigate the products, practices and perspectives of Chinese cultures.

Students in grade six will advance from **Novice Low to the Novice Mid** Level by the end of the course [these are the levels described in the ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) proficiency guidelines].

## Mandarin (Continuing) - Grade Seven

### Course #471

By engaging in learning Mandarin, students in grade seven will continue to build 21<sup>st</sup> century literacy skills essential for their future. Reading, writing, listening, speaking and viewing are integral to the world language learning process. Students will build proficiency in three modes of communication: interpersonal (person-to-person speaking or writing), interpretive (listening and reading) and presentational (one-way speaking and writing). They will learn to understand the structure and patterns of language, ask and answer questions, identify words, describe; retell stories, interpret text, and apply the conventions of language. They will investigate the products, practices and perspectives of Mandarin-speaking cultures.

Students in grade seven will advance from **Novice Mid to the Novice High** Level by the end of the course [these are the levels described in the ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) proficiency guidelines].

## Mandarin (Continuing) - Grade Eight

### Course #482

By engaging in learning Mandarin, students in grade eight will continue to build 21<sup>st</sup> century literacy skills essential for their future. Reading, writing, listening, speaking and viewing are integral to the world language learning process. Students will build proficiency in three modes of communication: interpersonal (person-to-person speaking or writing), interpretive (listening and reading) and presentational (one-way speaking and writing). They will learn to understand the structure and patterns of language, ask and answer questions, identify words, describe; retell stories, interpret text, and apply the conventions of language. They will investigate the products, practices and perspectives of Mandarin-speaking cultures.

Students in grade eight will advance from **Novice High to the Intermediate Low** Level by the end of the course [these are the levels described in the ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) proficiency guidelines].

## Spanish

### Spanish - Grade Six

#### Course #466

By engaging in learning Spanish, students in grade six will build 21<sup>st</sup> century literacy skills essential for their future. Reading, writing, listening, speaking and viewing are integral to the world language learning process. Students will build proficiency in three modes of communication: interpersonal (person-to-person speaking or writing), interpretive (listening and reading) and presentational (one-way speaking and writing). They will learn to understand the structure and patterns of language, ask and answer questions, identify words, describe; retell stories, interpret text, and apply the conventions of language. They will investigate the products, practices and perspectives of Spanish-speaking cultures.

Students in grade six will advance from **Novice Low to the Novice Mid** Level by the end of the course [these are the levels described in the ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) proficiency guidelines].

## Spanish (Continuing) - Grade Seven

### Course #475

By engaging in learning Spanish, students in grade seven will continue to build 21<sup>st</sup> century literacy skills essential for their future. Reading, writing, listening, speaking and viewing are integral to the world language learning process. Students will build proficiency in three modes of communication: interpersonal (person-to-person speaking or writing), interpretive (listening and reading) and presentational (one-way speaking and writing). They will learn to understand the structure and patterns of language, ask and answer questions, identify words, describe; retell stories, interpret text, and apply the conventions of language. They will investigate the products, practices and perspectives of Spanish-speaking cultures.

Students in grade seven will advance from **Novice Mid to the Novice High** Level by the end of the course [these are the levels described in the ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) proficiency guidelines].

## Spanish (Continuing) - Grade Eight

### Course #485

By engaging in learning Spanish, students in grade eight will continue to build 21<sup>st</sup> century literacy skills essential for their future. Reading, writing, listening, speaking and viewing are integral to the world language learning process. Students will build proficiency in three modes of communication: interpersonal (person-to-person speaking or writing), interpretive (listening and reading) and presentational (one-way speaking and writing). They will learn to understand the structure and patterns of language, ask and answer questions, identify words, describe; retell stories, interpret text, and apply the conventions of language. They will investigate the products, practices and perspectives of Spanish-speaking cultures.

Students in grade eight will advance from **Novice High to the Intermediate Low** Level by the end of the course [these are the levels described in the ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) proficiency guidelines].

## Spanish (Advanced) - Grade Eight

### Course #486

By engaging in learning Spanish at the advanced level, students who demonstrate excellence in the three modes of communication: interpersonal (person-to-person speaking or writing), interpretive (listening and reading) and presentational (one-way speaking and writing), independent learning and who have been recommended for this class, continue to increase proficiency at a rapid pace. In grade eight students will continue to build 21<sup>st</sup> century literacy skills essential for their future. Reading, writing, listening, speaking and viewing are integral to the world language learning process. They will learn to understand the structure and patterns of language, ask and answer questions, identify words, describe; retell stories, interpret text, and apply the conventions of language. They will investigate the products, practices and perspectives of Spanish-speaking cultures.

Students in grade eight will advance from **Intermediate Low to the Intermediate Mid** Level by the end of the course [these are the levels described in the ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) proficiency guidelines].

## **Performing Arts**

### **Drama**

A primary goal of the middle school drama curriculum is to provide students a variety of authentic experiences that respond to the National Standards for the Arts and the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks.

The program services sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-grade students with a combination of required and elective courses. Each course meets two hours per week for a semester. Drama classes emphasize the genre as an active and social process. Through the use of role play, improvisation and character development, students explore and express ideas with different approaches. They bring their own experience to the situation developing listening, speaking, concentration, problem solving, self-esteem, critical thinking skills and understanding and reflection of universal human experience.

#### **Drama 6**

##### **Course # 866**

The sixth-grade drama curriculum is designed to introduce students to many forms of theatrical expression. Students will build their physical and vocal awareness, collaborate with others to tell stories through the performance of scenes and increase their “behind the scenes” theatrical knowledge. Puppetry is introduced.

#### **Drama 7**

##### **Course # 876**

The seventh-grade drama curriculum is designed to develop self-awareness, collaborative skills, and an appreciation of the diversity in our community and beyond. Students will use improvisation and collaborative playwriting to explore social dynamics and character development. Genre, theatrical design and script analysis are introduced.

#### **Drama 8**

##### **Course # 886**

The eighth-grade drama curriculum is designed to strengthen performance skills, increase theatrical knowledge and build physical and social awareness. Students are challenged to create scenes using playwriting, character development and other scene building skills. They work collaboratively to perform scripted material using scene and character analysis during the rehearsal process. The exploration of different genres and theatrical techniques, improvisation and theatrical design are introduced.

## **Music – General Music**

### **Sixth Grade**

#### **Course # 860 – Fundamentals**

Students will learn the fundamentals of musical notation and write compositions of their own. Then, through listening, research, and discussion learn about elements of Western music. Students are enrolled in either a general Music class or a performing group.

### **Seventh Grade**

#### **Course # 870 – Guitar**

Students will learn to play the acoustic guitar (supplied by the school). They will learn strumming techniques, how to tune, and will also play and sing folk and popular songs.

### **Eighth Grade**

#### **Course # 889 – Students as Composers**

Students will explore the techniques and practices composers have used and continue to use today through class discussion, extensive listening and composition. Study of tonality, harmonic progression and musical form prepare students for writing original compositions.

## **Music – Performing Ensembles**

Chorus, Band, and Orchestra are the three primary performing organizations open to all middle school students. These performing ensembles may be taken as an elective or to fulfill a music requirement. Students are expected to participate in all concerts, clinics and festivals as part of the course requirements toward their grade. All students who participate in performing ensembles are expected to participate for the entire year.

### **Chorus**

**Grade 6 Chorus, Grade 7 Chorus, and Grade 8 Chorus** are full-year courses which meet twice a week. These courses **should** be selected by those students who have a strong desire to sing. Students will develop singing posture, breathing techniques, and an understanding of phrasing principles and word-stress concepts. Emphasis will be placed on both reading the octavo and developing the ear. Choral literature studies will be in a variety of styles and in a number of languages. Along with the required participation in each public concert, students will have occasional in-class individual and/or small group performance assessments (singing repertoire, sight singing, etc.).

### **Women’s Choir**

#### **Course # 855**

Women’s Choir for eighth-grade girls provides the opportunity for students to sing in small vocal ensembles. Students will experience performing different styles such as a cappella, ’50s Doo Wop, vocal jazz, madrigals and traditional choral pieces written for treble voices.

### **Men’s Choir**

#### **Course # 857**

Men’s Choir, an elective for eighth-grade boys, provides the opportunity for students to sing in small vocal ensembles. Students will experience performing different styles such as a cappella, ’50s Doo Wop, vocal jazz, madrigals and traditional choral pieces written for treble voices.

### **Band**

There are three band offerings—Sixth-grade band and Seventh-grade band, and Eighth-Grade Band. Participation in grade six band requires that the student has completed at least one year of private or school lessons on their woodwind, brass or percussion instrument. Band students in grade seven and grade eight selected to play with the orchestra will rehearse with both ensembles, playing one period per week with each group. It is expected that members are to practice their parts between rehearsals.

### **Orchestra**

All three levels of Middle School Orchestras are graded, full-year courses that meet twice per week. The orchestras perform three to four times per year and often participate in either a festival or outreach concert. Members are expected to practice their parts between rehearsals and perform in all concerts.

Grade 6 Orchestra: is a string orchestra open to all string players who have completed at least two years of school lessons on a string instrument (or the equivalent in private instruction). The orchestra class is designed to be a bridge between school lessons and ensemble rehearsals. Students will have quarterly playing and written assignments in addition to preparing their concert music.

Grade 7 Orchestra: is open to students who have participated in Grade 6 Orchestra, or who have the equivalent of three years’ playing experience. In the first semester, the ensemble meets twice a week as a string orchestra. In the second semester, wind, brass, and percussion players are added to the group for

one of the two rehearsals each week. Repertoire includes baroque and classical arrangements, as well as modern and popular works.

Grade 8 Orchestra: is open to students who have participated in Grade 7 Orchestra, or who have the equivalent of four years' playing experience. This ensemble rehearses as a full orchestra once a week with string, winds, brass and percussion, and one rehearsal a week with strings only. Repertoire includes baroque and classical arrangements, as well as modern and popular works.

Grade 6 Chorus.....Course # 861

Grade 6 Band.....Course # 862

Grade 6 Orchestra.....Course # 863

Grade 7 Chorus.....Course # 871

Grade 7 Band.....Course # 872

Grade 7 Orchestra.....Course # 873

Grade 8 Chorus.....Course # 881

Grade 8 Band.....Course # 882

Grade 8 Orchestra.....Course # 883

## **Visual Arts**

The Middle School Visual Arts curriculum is a sequential program based on the National Standards for the Visual Arts and the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. Students are challenged to develop their technical, critical and creative thinking skills by solving visual problems using a variety of two- and three-dimensional media. They will develop a foundation of knowledge by learning about art, by making judgments, and by making art from formal, experiential, cultural and historical contexts.

### **Sixth Grade**

#### **Course # 560**

Semester Course (meets twice per week)

The basics of design and technique are taught using a variety of art materials. Students will develop their skills in observational drawing, painting and hand-building techniques in clay. Students begin to analyze their own work and the work of others. They are taught that their own artistic expression is at the same time unique and also part of a greater multicultural artistic heritage.

### **Seventh Grade**

#### **Course # 570**

Semester Course (meets twice per week)

Students will continue to develop their skills in drawing, painting and sculpture. However, there will be more emphasis on applying the elements of art (line, shape, form, space, texture value and color) and the principles of design (scale, proportion, unity, balance, direction and emphasis) expressively.

## **Eighth-Grade Additional Courses\***

\*Enrollment dependent

Semester Course

In the eighth grade, students may choose a Visual Arts course. Each course meets twice a week.

### **2D Art Forms**

#### **Course # 588**

Semester Course (meets twice per week)

In this course, students will explore two dimensional art forms such as: drawing, painting, printmaking and mixed-media. The three major themes are human figure, still life, and landscape. Students will be encouraged to take risks, critically problem solve, develop techniques, and become more autonomous as artists.

### **3D Art Forms**

#### **Course # 589**

Semester Course (meets twice per week)

Students will use 3-D media to make sculptural pieces in clay, wire, paper, and found materials. Students will acquire knowledge, refine skills, and think critically in response to design challenges. Students will look at artists who work in 3-D to gain a better understanding of the art making process and to learn about art produced at different times and cultures.

### **Art of Asia**

#### **Course # 590**

Semester Course (meets twice per week)

In this studio course students will have the opportunity to explore Asia through the lens of visual art and design. The class will dive into different two-dimensional and three-dimensional techniques and make work inspired by Asian artists and innovators spanning from the ancient to the contemporary.

### **Digital Art & Design**

#### **Course # 591**

Semester Course (meets twice per week)

Through new media and software, students will demonstrate their understanding of the traditional Elements of Arts and Principles of Design. Students will be exposed to Photoshop, animated GIFs, conceptual illustration, and design.

## **Physical Education, Health, and Wellness**

The Physical Education and Wellness program is aligned with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Massachusetts Comprehensive Health Framework and national (NASPE) standards. This includes topics of:

- Growth and Development
- Physical Activity and Fitness
- Nutrition
- Reproduction and Sexuality
- Mental Health
- Family Life, Interpersonal Relationships
- Disease Prevention and Control
- Safety and Injury Prevention
- Tobacco, Alcohol, and Other Substance Use/Abuse Prevention
- Violence Prevention
- Consumer Health and Resource Management
- Ecological Health, and
- Community and Public Health

The Wellness Model seeks to educate and support practice in the balance of its six dimensions. Physical Wellness prepares students for an active life that prevents diseases of sedentary living. Emotional Wellness includes physical activity and mental health resources that support a positive attitude and reduce stress. Intellectual learning is a foundation for knowing how to live well. Spiritual Wellness assures time for reflections, rest, and calm. Environmental Wellness includes having balance and health in careers and workplaces. Social Wellness supports interpersonal relationships and connections. A collaborative, coordinated school health model infuses the concept of wellness into the daily life of schools. Our goal is to provide and support a positive, proactive, dynamic wellness model that supports physical activity and health. A copy of the Physical Education and Wellness curriculum is available at the LPS Curriculum Office or from the Coordinator of Physical Education and Wellness.

## **Health Education**

Health/Wellness Education offers a comprehensive K-12 curriculum grounded in active learning that is designed to positively influence the health knowledge, attitudes and behaviors of students by increasing their abilities to make informed decisions. The goal of the program is to promote healthy choices by teaching skills that students need to help them address the social, physical and emotional challenges they will face throughout their lives.

### **Seventh-Grade Wellness Education (Required)**

#### **Course # 671**

In grade seven students participate in a curriculum that was designed and developed by Lexington's Health Education staff. The curriculum incorporates the special issues and concerns of adolescents and builds upon health education concepts developed in previous grades.

The seventh-grade curriculum focuses on the following areas:

Module 1 – Circle of Wellness

Module 2 – Healthy Relationships

Module 3 – Threats to Health and Wellness

### **Eighth-Grade Wellness Education: Safe, Smart and Secure (Required)**

#### **Course # 681**

In grade eight students participate in a Wellness curriculum that was designed and developed by Lexington's Health and Physical Education teachers. The curriculum incorporates CPR and First Aid safety, promotes smart decision making and refusal skills relating to current adolescent challenges, and addresses a variety of security perspectives, including: self-confidence, secure and healthy relationships, and internet safety.

The eighth grade curriculum focuses on the following areas:

Module 1 – Safe/Standard First Aid and CPR

Module 2 – Smart/Adolescent Challenges

Module 3 – Secure/Personal Safety

## Physical Education

The physical education program provides the child with an educational experience which uses movement as a medium of learning and expression. A correlation exists between the development of a sound body, which is one product of the physical education process, and the ability to experience a fuller, more satisfying life in the school, home, and community environment.

This program emphasizes the importance of physical activity and wellness. A child who has a proper foundation in physical education is more likely to maintain an active and healthy lifestyle.

The goals of the program are:

- Students will be encouraged to obtain a level of fitness appropriate to their own capabilities.
- Students will be provided opportunities to show mental, social and emotional growth through physical activities.
- Students will attain a basic workable knowledge and understanding of various sports and activities.
- Students will be encouraged to participate in carry-over activities as well as to appreciate sports activities from a spectator's point of view.
- Students will participate in a safe and healthful environment which supports the philosophy of the Lexington Public Schools.

### Program Description

All students are assigned two periods of physical education a week according to grade level. Classes are co-educational and consist of instruction and participation in the following activities:

#### Team Sports

Basketball  
Hockey  
Flag Football  
Floor Hockey  
Soccer  
Speedball  
Volleyball

#### Individual Activities

Physical Fitness/Strength Training  
Rhythms  
Obstacle Course  
Individual/Group Challenge Activities  
Racket Skills  
Track and Field  
Project Adventure  
Cooperative Games  
Fitness Testing

Students are provided with opportunities to learn basic skills and to understand concepts of the activities. This introduction will provide a sound basis for selection of activities offered in the selective physical education program at the high school level.

Grade 6 – Course # 660

Grade 7 – Course # 670

Grade 8 – Course # 680

## **Additional Courses**

Technology Applications  
Economics  
Journalism  
Reading  
Speech and Debate

## **Technology Applications**

### **Technology Applications – Grade Six Course # 961**

Semester Course (meets twice per week)

This course begins with correct, efficient techniques and basic operations of 21st century technology skills. The students will apply these skills and learn formatting tools to create school reports, correspondence, spreadsheets, presentations and desktop publishing. Students will be introduced to Internet safety, digital citizenship, and responsibility.

### **Technology Applications – Grade Seven Course # 971**

Semester Course (meets twice per week)

This course will reinforce and enrich the students' technology skills, using the more advanced features of Microsoft Word, Excel, Desktop Publishing, and PowerPoint and related Web 2.0 applications. Searching the Web more efficiently and computer organizational skills will also be covered. Students will delve more deeply into learning about digital citizenship and responsibility.

### **Technology Applications – Grade Eight (Clarke only) Course # 918**

Semester Course (meets twice per week)

Students will expand on their technology skills and be able to demonstrate how to use digital media to effectively communicate information and ideas to multiple audiences and use critical thinking skills to develop innovative products using technology. Continued emphasis will be placed on issues related to technology and digital citizenship and responsibility.

## **Economics**

### **Eighth-Grade Economics (Diamond only)**

#### **Course # 186**

Semester Course (meets twice per week)

Everyone is an ECONOMIST. In fact, throughout one's entire life he or she will be dealing with economics. The basic topics of scarcity of resources, specialization, production and flow of goods and services, wages, credit and banking are part of everyday life.

This course will introduce basic economic terms. Case studies are used to explore a variety of economic situations. Students will learn about choices that affect our environment, about our banking system and how to be a careful and safe consumer. Students will also use The Boston Globe's Stock Market Simulation to demonstrate how our economy functions. Technology is used to enhance the course, using various economic websites and programs.

## **Journalism**

### **Journalism – Grade 7**

#### **Course # 075**

Semester Course (meets twice per week)

In journalism, students will regularly read, discuss, and analyze complex informational articles about current events and topics of interest, selected from newspapers and periodicals. By reading and studying the various types of writing styles that journalists use, students will create their own informational writing and videos, developing their writing and research skills in the process. A major goal of the course is to help students revise and edit their work so it is clear, concise, and compelling for readers. Students are also introduced to online resources that support growth in vocabulary, written expression, and content knowledge.

## **Reading**

In the middle school years, students increasingly “read to learn.” Their subject teachers expect reading to play a greater role in the mastery of skills and knowledge. One goal of the middle school reading program is that students use reading effectively to learn math, literature, science, and social studies, as well as other areas. The strategies needed to draw meaning from text are emphasized, not only in specific reading classes, but also with the assistance of the reading specialist, within the subject classes themselves.

The other goal, which continues from the elementary school and follows through twelfth grade, is to have the students develop a lifelong habit of reading for pleasure.

### **Sixth Grade Course # 962**

Semester Course (meets twice per week)

As the complexity of both narrative and expository text increases as students enter the middle school, it is imperative to equip these readers with effective strategies that enable them to become competent, independent learners.

This course is designed to teach self-monitoring strategies for reading a variety of texts using content area and supplemental materials. Students will learn such skills as: relating prior knowledge and experience to text, previewing, finding information (both stated and unstated) to answer questions, note-taking, paraphrasing, summarizing and building vocabulary through structure and context. Students will also practice finding the basic elements of fiction such as setting, plot, characterization, conflict and theme. In addition, this course will expand students’ opportunity to read books and informative articles for pleasure.

Visits to the Library Media Center help support the goal of enjoying reading and building its pleasures into lifelong habits.

## **Speech and Debate**

### **Speech and Debate – Grade 8 (Clarke Only) Course # 086**

Do oral presentations give you sweaty palms or knots in your stomach?

This introductory course is designed to demonstrate a variety of oral presentation techniques which are intended to help the student feel comfortable and secure when speaking in front of a group. Students will gain experience in both formal speaking, such as oratory and expository, as well as informal impromptu and extemporaneous speaking. Dramatic interpretation of plays and short stories will also be included.

Communication skills will be further enhanced through the preparation and presentation of a policy debate.

Overall, the students should learn to view public speaking as a positive experience.

## **Academic Supports**

### **English Language Learning**

This program is open to all students who qualify as English learners according to a language assessment that measures academic English proficiency, which is vital to classroom achievement. The program is designed to help students succeed in their content classes, even as they are learning the language.

In this course, students of all English proficiency levels learn content-based vocabulary, grammatical structures, comprehension skills and multiple genres of writing through the use of academic texts, using both fiction (literature, a novel excerpt, short story, poetry) and non-fiction (science articles, history, and biography) text. Classroom discussions allow students to practice using academic language, which is necessary for academic success.

Once students demonstrate native-like proficiency on standards-based assessments (ACCESS, MCAS) and academic performance in class, they are ready to exit the program.

### **Guided Learning Supports**

Education support services are designed to ensure that students will develop the skills and disposition to be successful in every class. These supports provide an enriching environment to meet the developmental needs of students who are not on Individual Education Plans, but could benefit from individualized or small-group instruction in organizational and study skills.

These supports provide an opportunity for students to review, refine and build the skills necessary to “unpack the curriculum” in the major content areas.

### **Special Education**

Special Education and related services (speech, OT, PT, etc.) are provided for students on Individual Education Programs (IEP) at the middle schools. These services are provided for students who have been found eligible for special education services and have an IEP that is reviewed at least annually. Requests for an eligibility determination for special education services can be made through the Evaluation Team Supervisor in each middle school.

## **Library and Information Technology Program**

The mission of the Library and Information Technology Program is to prepare our students to be informed, productive and concerned citizens in an information-driven society. We encourage students to continue learning throughout their lives, to become ethical users of information and supporters of intellectual freedom, to develop an appreciation for literature and a love of reading, to appreciate diversity, and to develop a tolerance for differing points of view. We help them acquire the necessary critical thinking strategies and evaluative skills to do so.

Our middle school libraries are learning centers where students and teachers gather for a variety of purposes including classroom assignments, small group projects, individual work, extracurricular clubs, and professional development activities. Our school librarian is an integral part of the middle school curriculum, collaborating with classroom teachers, supporting student research and learning by teaching information literacy skills (strategies for selecting, retrieving, analyzing, and evaluating information in multiple formats using a wide variety of resources), and providing individual instruction as needed. In addition, our school librarian consults with faculty about instructional strategies, curriculum, and the information needs of students, and recommends instructional and professional materials designed to enhance the curriculum. Our school librarian promotes the love of reading and recommends appropriate reading materials from a well-developed collection of fiction and nonfiction. The library and its staff support students and teachers as both consumers and producers of information.

## **Student Community Development and Support**

It is essential to provide for and address numerous development and adjustment issues that are important in the world of a pre-adolescent. Each school maintains a program within a format designed to allow teachers and students to build trusting and supportive relationships around non-academic concerns. Such programs offer activities that promote a stronger sense of student community with each other, the staff, and the school as a whole. These activities may be executed on the level of the individual, class, team, or grade.

Further, these programs are flexible in nature and maintain the capacity to respond to emerging issues as necessary. The strength of these programs is derived primarily from the structured, academic team setting, which also has the latitude to accommodate the social and emotional concerns of the students. This union of structure and responsiveness provided by such programs enables the middle school student to more successfully navigate the passage between the elementary years and high school.

## **Counseling**

During the middle school years, students are assigned to a counselor to help them to navigate challenges and to utilize the opportunities at the middle school in order to feel more competent and successful.

With the counselor they may

- discuss concerns about life either in or out of school
- explore strengths, challenges, and interests
- reflect about current responsibilities and future goals
- develop strategies to become effective personally and socially
- plan educational programs
- and/or deal with other pertinent issues

These interactions may take place in a variety of ways:

Individually, in small groups, during class visits, and/or in other settings. Also, designated programs may be used to explore counseling-related issues.

In addition to working with students, counselors interact with other significant adults who affect students' lives. Counselors meet with school staff members, parents, administrators, and professionals from outside the school in order to evaluate student functioning, consult about them and coordinate helping efforts on their behalf.

Parents should call or email and make an appointment with the counselor whenever they have any questions or concerns about their children. Parents are encouraged to contact the counselor whenever there is an illness, death, separation, divorce, or other family crisis. The Counseling Department periodically collaborates with middle school PTOs to present workshops designed to give parents some additional understanding of child and adolescent development, school success strategies, and other relevant topics. Additionally, counselors are an important resource for families in need of referral resources or information.

## **Lexington Public Schools Annual Notice The Family Education and Privacy Act (FERPA) Massachusetts Student Records Regulations**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Massachusetts Student Records Regulations (“Regulations”) together provide parents and eligible students (those who have reached that age of 14 or who have entered ninth grade) certain rights with respect to the student's education records. A general overview of those rights is provided below. Parents and students may obtain a complete copy of their rights under the Massachusetts Student Record Regulations by contacting the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Learning at (781) 861-2580.

(a) **The right to access the student's education records.** Parents or eligible students should submit their request for access to the school principal. Access is generally provided within ten days of a request. However, Massachusetts General Laws c. 71, §34H (“Section 34H”) law provides specific procedures that must be followed prior to release of records to a parent who does not have physical custody of a child. Information about these procedures can be obtained from the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Learning at (781) 861-2580.

(b) **The right to request amendment of the student's education records.** Parents or eligible students should direct their request to the principal, clearly identifying the part of the record they wish to have amended, and why.

(c) **The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA and the Massachusetts regulations authorize disclosure without consent.** One exception that permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests in the records. Such school officials include professional, administrative and clerical staff who are employed by or under agreement with the Lexington Public Schools and who need access to a record in order to fulfill their duties. Such school officials may also include a volunteer or contractor outside of the school who performs an institutional service or function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with regard to the use and maintenance of education records. The Lexington Public Schools also discloses student records without parent/eligible student consent to officials of other elementary or secondary schools in which a student enrolls, or seeks, intends, or is instructed to enroll upon receipt of a request from such school officials, so long as the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer.

In addition, the Lexington Public Schools has a practice of releasing directory information without consent. Directory information consists of the following: the student's name, address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, major field of study, dates of attendance, weight and height of athletic teams, class, participation in recognized activities and sports, honors and awards, and post-high school plans. In the event a parent or eligible student objects to the release of any of the above information, the parent/eligible student may state that objection in writing to the school principal. Absent receipt of a written objection within the first two school weeks of the school year or student's start date, the directory information will be released without further notice or consent.

As required by law, the Lexington Public Schools routinely releases the name, address and telephone listing of secondary school students to military recruiters and to institutions of higher learning upon request. In the event a parent or eligible student objects to the release of any of the above information, the parent/eligible student may state that objection in writing to the school principal. Absent receipt of a written objection for the parent or eligible student within the first two school weeks of the school year or student's start date, this information will be released without further notice or consent.

(d) The **right to file a complaint** concerning alleged failures by the Lexington Public Schools to comply with the regulations and laws governing student records. Complaints may be filed at the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 75 Pleasant Street Malden, MA 02148. In addition, complaints relative to federal statutes and regulations governing student records may be filed with the Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue SW, Washington DC.

## **Policy of Non-Discrimination**

Lexington Public Schools does not discriminate in admission to, access to, treatment in, or employment in its services, programs and activities, on the basis of race, color or national origin, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI); on the basis of sex, in accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; on the basis of disability, in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA); or on the basis of age, in accordance with the Age Discrimination Act of 1974 (Age Discrimination Act). Nor does it discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, in accordance with Chapter 622 of the Acts of 1971 (M.G.L.c.76,§5) and Chapter 151B of the General Laws.

To file a complaint alleging discrimination or harassment by Lexington Public Schools on the basis of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or to make inquiry concerning the application of Title VI, Title IX, section 504, the ADA, the Age Discrimination Act or applicable state laws and their respective implementing regulations, please contact:

Director for Human Resources  
146 Maple Street  
Lexington, MA 02420  
781.861.2580, ext. 68046

*Grateful acknowledgement is made to Jane McLaughlin, for editing; and to the Lexington Public Schools Print Center, for production.*

