This Program of Studies is designed to inform students and parents of the courses offered in the Middle School and to help you select those courses, where appropriate, that fit your needs and interests. Please carefully review all of the courses listed on the following pages.

Your teacher or guidance counselor will discuss the Program of Studies and the course selection procedure with you. After listening to this presentation and discussing the courses with teachers, fill out the attached Course Selection Sheet. Be sure that you fill out the sheet accurately and that the sheet is signed by parents and teachers where indicated.

All students are required to enroll in certain courses or programs as noted. In a few cases, you may select from more than one course to satisfy the requirements.
ENGLISH

**English - Grade 7**  
**Full Year—6 periods per cycle**  
Seventh Grade English is a course emphasizing reading and literature, written composition, grammar and usage, spelling and vocabulary, and speaking and listening skills. **The curriculum focuses on the essential question: “How can one person make a difference?”**  
With a focus on reading comprehension, students study selections from a variety of literary types: fiction, non-fiction, and poetry. Students write expository, descriptive, narrative and persuasive compositions. In grammar, emphasis is placed on the eight parts of speech, sentence structure, correct usage and mechanics. In addition, library orientation classes are provided through English classes.

**English - Grade 8**  
**Full Year—6 periods per cycle**  
The goal of the eighth grade English program is to enhance the growth of communication skills in an environment that encourages students to read, write, listen, and speak. **The essential question around which the curriculum is built is: “What is power?”** Structured literature lessons encourage students to expand their reading experiences by exposing them to a wide variety of genres. Teachers work with students to help them understand that reading and writing are connected. To this end, a wide range of activities and techniques are designed to provide enrichment and reinforce language skills in the classroom.

**Literacy Workshop - Grade 8**  
**Full Year—3 periods per cycle**  
Literacy Workshop is an elective available to students scoring “proficient” (240) or higher on the seventh-grade ELA MCAS. This class will extend student reading, writing, and critical thinking skills through book clubs, creative writing, drama, and/or special projects.

**Targeted Literacy - Grade 8**  
**Full Year—3 periods per cycle**  
Targeted Literacy is a mandatory course for students scoring below “proficient” (240) on the seventh-grade ELA MCAS. The teacher will target each student’s area of need using individualized and full-class instruction, with a focus on close reading techniques and analytical writing skills. Once a student has demonstrated proficiency in these areas, he or she can move out of this class and into one of the other grade 8 electives.
Every student needs to have a scientific calculator for use in class and at home. It is recommended that the calculator be solar-powered and equipped with a hard plastic cover. Texas Instrument Models TI-30, TI-30SLR, TI-30SLR+ are not satisfactory because of design limitations with some functions.

**Math - Grade 7**

**Grade 7 Pre-Algebra**

This course offers a standards-based, integrated curriculum that incorporates topics described in the learning standards for students in grade 7 found in the [Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks in Mathematics](https://www.doe.mass.edu/curriculum/masscurricframe/) (©2011). The central content of this course focuses on: Ratios and Proportional Reasoning; The Number System; Expressions and Equations and Statistics and Probability. Students will analyze proportional relationships and apply them to problem solving situations. They will apply and extend previous understandings of operations with fractions to operations with rational numbers. Students will use the properties of operations to generate equivalent expressions and solve problems using numerical and algebraic expressions and equations. Students will extend their understanding of statistical measures using random sampling to draw inferences about a population and draw informal comparative inferences about two populations. They will investigate chance processes and develop, use, and evaluate probability models.

**Accelerated Pre-Algebra**

Accelerated Pre-Algebra is the first of two middle school math courses during which students will complete the seventh and eighth grade curricula as described in the [Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks in Mathematics](https://www.doe.mass.edu/curriculum/masscurricframe/) (©2011) as well as the algebra 1 curriculum described in the same document. To accomplish this, in addition to the content listed above for Grade 7 Pre-Algebra students in accelerated pre-algebra will also study the following content standards included in the eighth grade curriculum: know that there are numbers that are not rational and approximate them as rational numbers; work with radicals and integer exponents; understand the connections between proportional relationships, lines and linear equations, and analyze and solve linear equations and systems of two linear equations in two variables. Since three years of content will be covered in two academic years, the pace of this course will be significantly faster than for Grade 7 Pre-Algebra.

Students who want to be considered for the accelerated program must complete a two part assessment process. This will take place outside of the normal school day and be administered at Masconomet Regional Middle School. Details about this program – including dates and times for testing – are included with the materials accompanying this document.

**Geometry Lab**

This course will provide students with an opportunity to investigate the concepts and skills related to Geometry as delineated in the revised Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks in Mathematics (© 2011). Students will analyze the relationship between the number of sides and the sums of interior and exterior angles in polygons. They will learn to classify figures in terms of congruency and similarity and apply these relationships to problem
solving situations. They will use ratio/proportion to solve problems about similar figures as well as indirect measurement. Students will learn about parallel lines, the Pythagorean Theorem, and transformations in both unmarked planes and the coordinate plane. By the end of the course, students will be able to identify and classify two- and three-dimensional figures by physical appearance and distinguishing attributes. Students will be able to select and apply the appropriate formula to find perimeter/circumference, area, surface area and volume. Students are responsible for this content on both the grade 7 and grade 8 MCAS tests.

**Math - Grade 8**

Student’s math selection for Grade 8 must be approved by his/her seventh grade math teacher. When a student enters Grade 8 without attending seventh grade at Masconomet, the Department Chair will recommend appropriate placement. This recommendation will be based on consideration of records from the feeder school and, when appropriate, performance on a placement test and/or brief interview.

**NOTE:**
Beginning with the Class of 2020, only students who successfully complete Algebra 1 Honors will have taken a formal, full-year algebra 1 course. The end of year grade in Algebra 1 Honors will be included on the student’s high school transcript.

**Grade 8 – Introduction to Algebra**

This course offers a standards-based, integrated curriculum that incorporates topics described in the learning standards for students in grade 8 found in the *Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks in Mathematics* (©2011). The central content of this course focuses on: The Number System; Expressions and Equations; Functions and Statistics and Probability. Students will formulate expressions and equations and reason about their meaning. This will include using linear equations to model bivariate data and solving linear equations and systems of linear equations. Students will investigate the concept of functions and use functions to describe quantitative relationships. Students will be able to use multiple representations of quantitative relationships including equations, tables of values, graphs and verbal descriptions to solve problems. Students use linear equations, systems of linear equations and functions to express relationships between two quantities and to interpret their components in the context of the problem.

**Algebra I (H)**

Algebra I Honors is an in-depth study of Algebra to prepare students to study advanced mathematics courses in the high school leading up to advanced placement calculus. The aim is to better prepare students to move toward more independence in learning. As an algorithm is introduced, the process is stressed more than its memorization. Often more than one solution is shown, and students are encouraged to discover different strategies and methods to solve problems. The use of cooperative groups to solve challenging varieties of word problems is stressed throughout the year.

The content is structured around families of functions, focusing on linear and quadratic functions. Students learn to represent a family of functions in multiple ways – as verbal descriptions, equations, tables, and graphs. They also learn to model real-world situations using functions in order to solve problems. Equations and inequalities, graphing, informal geometry, formulas and functions, systems of equations, exponents and radicals, quadratics, proportion and rational equations are the main concepts.
Students who are currently in Accelerated Pre-Algebra must have an average of C- or higher and be recommended by their current teacher to continue in this program. Students currently in Standard Pre-Algebra must receive a minimum grade of A- each trimester, and be recommended by their current teacher in order to be scheduled for this course.

Students who are moving from the standard program in grade 7 to the honors program in grade 8 must demonstrate proficiency with respect to the additional content covered in Accelerated Pre – Algebra. The topics include: knowing that there are numbers that are not rational and approximating them as rational numbers; working with radicals and integer exponents; understanding the connections between proportional relationships, lines and linear equations, and analyzing and solving linear equations and systems of two linear equations in two variables. Proficiency will be determined by performance on a comprehensive test that must be taken in the summer. Students will receive materials related to this and information about how to schedule the test from their current math teacher on the last day of school. Failure to take the test by the deadline indicated in these materials means the student cannot take Algebra I (H) in grade 8.

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND ENGINEERING

The Science, Technology and Engineering (STE) Department promotes students’ curiosity about the natural world and promotes critical thinking skills as students learn through inquiry-based projects and lab activities. STE courses are aligned to the current Massachusetts STE Middle School Frameworks, with emphasis on science process skills as well as science content. All STE curricula incorporate study skills, reading for information, and scientific writing protocols. Additionally, the middle school science fair provides opportunities for students to explore a topic of interest in greater depth.

Science - Grade 7 Full Year-6 periods per cycle
The Grade 7 program focuses on life science. Units of study include: classification; structure and function of cells; systems in living things; reproduction and heredity; evolution and biodiversity; living things and their environment; energy in living things; and changes in ecosystems over time. Students in Grade 7 engage in library research projects and learn how to write formal laboratory reports.

Science - Grade 8 Full Year-6 periods per cycle
The Grade 8 program focuses on Earth, Space and Physical Science. Units of study include: Mapping the Earth; Earth’s history and structure; Earth in the solar system; properties of matter; elements, compounds and mixtures; motion of objects; forms of energy; and heat transfer. Students in Grade 8 write more detailed lab reports, and they take the Middle School STE MCAS Exam in June.

STEM - Grade 8 Trimester-6 periods per cycle

STEM is an interdisciplinary trimester course, which promotes deeper understanding of concepts in science, technology, engineering and mathematics through applications that integrate these related disciplines. The course emphasizes learning standards from the Grade 6-8 Technology/Engineering Framework and the Grade 7 and 8 Mathematics Frameworks.
SOCIAL STUDIES

The Social Studies Department is committed to exposing students to the local, national and global world around them and to promote active citizenship by meeting the Massachusetts History and Social Science Frameworks. The Grade Seven and Eight curriculum places a focus on global awareness and life-long learning.

Grade 7 - Ancient Cultures
The Middle School World History program begins with Grade 7 Ancient Cultures and will focus on world historical events and issues from the dawn of human civilization to the fall of Rome. Historically, students will explore early, developing civilizations including Mesopotamia, Egypt, Greece and Rome and make connections between the past and present. Historical events and the political, social and economic developments of these early civilizations will be studied and explored in preparation for the Grade Eight curriculum.

Grade 8 - World History 800-1815
As directed by the Massachusetts History and Social Science Framework, the eighth grade Social Studies program involves the study of the development of world civilizations after the fall of the Roman Empire. Students study the history of the major empires and political entities of this period: the Ottoman Empire, the Moghul Empire, the Chinese dynasties, the Byzantine Empire, and the major pre-Columbian civilizations that existed in Central and South America. Students examine the important political, economic and religious developments of this period, including the development of Christianity and Islam, the conflicts between them in different parts of the world, and the beginnings of European influence on the Western Hemisphere. Students will also be introduced to the development of democratic, scientific, and secular thought in the major events and developments of European history.

FOREIGN LANGUAGES

The Foreign Language Department is committed to meeting the Massachusetts and National standards of communication, culture, connections, comparisons and communities. Studying a foreign language, like other subject areas, prepares students for lifelong learning. The goal of all foreign language classes at Masconomet is to achieve 90% target language use per ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) recommendation.

Students entering grade 7 should select their first and second choice for language. We will make every effort to honor first choice selections. It is not possible to switch languages between grades 7 and 8. Your child may switch when entering high school depending on which language he/she chooses and when he/she wants to switch. At the high school level, Spanish is offered at level I CP, CP-2; Chinese I is offered only as an honors level and French I CP/H is offered when there is sufficient enrollment.

Grade 7 – French or Spanish
In this course students will begin to learn the fundamentals of the target language. They will acquire a practical vocabulary and the basic structure needed to ask/answer questions,
express opinions/wants/needs and narrate in present tense. Students will gain proficiency in the four language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. During the seventh grade there is special emphasis placed on listening and speaking. Students will explore the culture of countries where the target language is spoken and will do cultural projects, as well. The curriculum covered is the first half of the first year of a high school curriculum. Students are expected to complete daily homework assignments conscientiously, to study every evening and to participate actively in class in the target language.

**Grade 7- Chinese**

Full Year-6 periods per cycle

Students will begin to learn the fundamentals of the Chinese language and character writing. The skills of listening and speaking will be emphasized with stress on the 4 tones of Mandarin used to clarify the meanings of words. Students will explore the ancient culture of China and will do cultural projects. Learning Chinese is considered to be challenging because of the 3,000 common characters there are in the language. Therefore, students selecting this course must be dedicated to studying and transcribing characters everyday and be committed to continue their study of the language well into high school. By ACTFL language difficulty rankings, Chinese is considered a level IV. **Only one section of Grade 7 Chinese will be offered for the 2015-2016 school year.**

**Grade 8- Chinese**

Full Year-6 periods per cycle

Students will continue to learn the fundamentals of the Chinese language and character writing. By the end of the 8th grade, students will have completed the equivalent of a high school level I program. Students will learn 100 characters and 250 words. Along with the fundamentals of Chinese, students will become more acquainted with the culture and customs of the Chinese. Daily studying and transcribing of characters is necessary to be successful in this course.

**Grade 8 – French or Spanish**

Full Year-6 periods per cycle

This course is a continuation of the seventh grade program. Therefore, students may not begin a new language in Grade 8. Students must continue with the language studied in Grade 7. Students will increase their vocabulary and knowledge of structure while further exploring the culture of countries where the target language is spoken. Students will continue to develop proficiency in the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. As they continue to develop their listening and speaking skills, students will begin to read and to write in the target language. By the end of the 8th grade, students will have completed the equivalent of a high school level I program. French or Spanish is the language of instruction and students are expected to speak it daily. Students are required to complete daily homework assignments and special projects, to study every evening and to participate actively in class in the target language. Grade 8 teachers will recommend students for the appropriate high school level, honors or college preparatory, based on their success in learning the target language in Grade 8 and their work ethic.
ART

Grade 7  One Trimester-6 periods per cycle
Grade 7 Art is a comprehensive art program. It is designed to allow for discovery by presenting creative challenges involving both technical skill and reflective experience. Units covered include Drawing, Color, 2-D Design, 3-D Design and/or Printmaking. Art appreciation is woven into the fabric of each unit. Students will be asked to observe, think creatively, and make critical decisions while developing stronger problem solving skills. Students may spend some of their art time each trimester working on interdisciplinary units with their academic subjects.

Grade 8  One Trimester-6 periods per cycle
Grade 8 Art is a continuation of the comprehensive art program introduced in Grade 7. Units covered include Drawing, 3-D Design and/or Printmaking, Color Relationships, and Design. At least one project will utilize an Adobe Photoshop component. By the end of two middle school trimesters of art, the students will have experienced the important elements of art and principles of design necessary to complete their own work. They will have also begun to analyze and talk about the work of others. Students will be asked to observe, think creatively, and make critical decisions while developing stronger problem solving skills in this hands-on course.

MUSIC

Music Performance Groups

Any student electing to participate in a performing group is expected to remain with the group all year.

Chorus - Grade 7  Full Year-3 periods per cycle
This course is designed to provide students with the experience of performance through singing. Students are introduced to the fundamentals of choral singing through a curriculum of tonal and rhythmic solfege as well as some movement activities. The majority of the music sung would be unison with some easier two-part music introduced later. The chorus rehearses throughout the school year and performs in selected assemblies and concerts. Performance attendance is mandatory. This class is one of three music electives at the seventh grade level.

Chorus – Grade 8  Full Year-3 periods per cycle
This course is designed to provide all students with the experience of performance through singing. The fundamentals of choral singing, introduced in seventh grade chorus, are reinforced through a curriculum of tonal and rhythmic solfege as well as some movement activities. Students will also have exposure to various performing arts such as acting, mime and dance and field trips to major performing venues featuring musical theater will be offered. Attention will be given to the development of adolescent voices. The music will consist of two and three part choral literature. The group rehearses throughout the school year and performs in selected assemblies and concerts. Performance attendance is mandatory. This class is one of three music electives at the eighth grade level. Enrollment preference will be given to students who were members of chorus during their seventh grade year.
Band - Grade 7
Full Year-3 periods per cycle
The Seventh Grade Band program is comprised of students who have been members of their elementary school band programs and wish to continue in a school based band program. All students who wish to participate in the program must have a minimum of 2 years of experience playing a woodwind, brass, or mallet percussion instrument. Students who plan to enroll in the seventh grade band are required to demonstrate an ability to perform on a band instrument at an appropriate proficiency level. To assure a minimum level of proficiency, all students interested in enrolling in the seventh grade band are required to perform a music reading assessment for the Middle School Band Director. The music reading assessments will take place during the spring semester of the sixth grade year and will be done by the Middle School Band Director at each elementary school. The materials for the assessments will be chosen by the Middle School Band Director from THE STANDARD OF EXCELLENCE, BOOK I. The Middle School Band Director will notify each Elementary Band Director as to the specific exercises the students will be required to perform for the assessment. It should be noted that seventh grade band is considered an intermediate level ensemble, not a beginning level ensemble. Therefore, it is not an appropriate class for students with minimal or no experience playing a band instrument or experience reading standard musical notation. Pianos, guitars and drum sets are NOT used in this group. The Seventh Grade Band emphasizes correct tonal production, proper articulation, breathing, accurate performance of rhythmic patterns and melodic phrases in a variety of musical styles. The Seventh Grade Band rehearses three periods per cycle during the school day. Enrollment in the after-school private lesson program is strongly recommended for all students enrolled in the band. Such participation is not required but it has been proven that students who do participate achieve greater success than those who elect not to participate. Performance attendance for the Seventh Grade Band is required at all formal school concerts, including the Holiday Concert in December and the Spring Concert in May. Enrollment in the Seventh Grade Band is a one year commitment. All students who are interested in Band 7 are required to demonstrate an ability to read standard melodic notation prior to enrolling in the class.

Band - Grade 8
Full Year-3 periods per cycle
The Eighth Grade Band is comprised of students who participated in the Seventh Grade Band program or are able to demonstrate to the Middle School Band Conductor that they possess the skills required for success in the Eighth Grade Band. This program reinforces the basics of embouchure, tone, articulation, breathing, ensemble playing, and musical nomenclature. A variety of musical styles are performed. The Eighth Grade Band rehearses during the school day throughout the entire school year and performs in school assemblies and formal concerts. In order to be successful in the Eighth Grade Band, it is recommended that the student enroll in the after-school private lesson program. Performance attendance is mandatory at all school concerts including the Holiday Concert in December, the Spring Concert in May, the Memorial Day Assembly, and the Eighth Grade “Moving On” Ceremony. Enrollment in the Eighth Grade Band is a one year commitment. All students who are interested in Band 8 are required to demonstrate an ability to read standard melodic notation prior to enrolling in the class. Enrollment in the after-school private lesson program is strongly recommended for all students enrolled in the band. Such participation is not required but it has been proven that students who do participate achieve greater success than those who elect not to participate.
21st Century Technology in Music - Grade 7 and 8  Full Year-3 periods per cycle
This music elective is a non-performance based class. The course is divided into three separate and distinct segments. During the first segment, students will learn how to create and develop their own ideas into musical compositions and then notate those compositions on the computer using the music notation software Finale. During the second segment of the course students will be introduce to the basics of how to play the guitar with the goal of learning how to play the compositions created and notated in the first segment of the course. The third and final segment of the course will focus on digitally recording each composition using the program Audacity, editing those recordings and producing an edited CD recording of each student’s composition.

Private Music Lessons
All members of the Bands and the Choruses are encouraged to take private music lessons to improve their music skills. Lessons may be taken at Masconomet or with other private teachers of their choice. Lessons are available for all the band instruments, voice and piano. Space is limited so early enrollment is recommended.

School-Owned Instruments
A limited number of the larger instruments are available on a lease basis. For information, contact the Music Department at 978-887-2323 x6129.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Grades 7 and 8  Full Year-3 periods per cycle
The Middle School Physical Education Curriculum provides a background in the basic skills necessary to participate in most physical education activities. The course provides an opportunity to participate in cooperative games, team sports, and develop an awareness of physical fitness. Yoga, self defense, Project Adventure and weight training will be introduced at both grade levels. All students in Grades 7 and 8 participate in Physical Education three times per cycle for a full year.

HEALTH

Grade 7  One Trimester-6 periods per cycle
Health 7 is the first level of our health education program for middle-school aged students. The course focuses on building knowledge and skills related to safety, non-violence and injury prevention. Content areas covered include tobacco use and other substance use prevention, media literacy, bullying prevention and first aid. The R.A.I.S.E. curriculum is utilized to promote respect, achievement, inclusion, service and empathy through a community-centered approach that stresses social skills and cooperation using movement. Through cooperative learning, students also have an opportunity to build refusal skills related to tobacco use and other substance use and critical thinking skills related to situations that address accidents and medical
emergencies. Health 7 is a required course based on the Safety and Prevention Strand of the Massachusetts Comprehensive Health Curriculum frameworks.

**Health - Grade 8**

Health 8 is the second level of our comprehensive health education program for middle-school aged students. This course focuses on promoting wellness in the areas of physical, social, and mental health. Students develop critical thinking skills related to disease prevention, nutrition, drug and alcohol abuse, dating violence prevention, sexuality and growth and development. Students will be introduced to Blackboard, a learning management system which utilizes web-based resources from reliable health sources. Resources utilized in this course include the DECIDE model of decision making, Choose to Refuse: Heroin/Oxycontin Education Program, the ACT SOS Suicide Prevention Program, Study Island, TeensHealth.org, Supertracker for dietary analysis and LoveIsRespect.org for dating violence prevention. Health 8 is a required course based on the standards 1, 3-8 and sections of 10-14 of the Massachusetts Comprehensive Health Curriculum frameworks.