

North Shore Middle School

Grade Seven Academic Program Guide

E³



2017-2018

Growing, exploring, learning!

Dear Parents,

We believe that a robust academic program challenges students to think deeply about what they are learning, inspires students to seek out new ideas, and prepares students for the challenges the outside world offers. In talking to parents, teachers, and students in our community, our values about education become abundantly clear. We want our children to excel as:

- **Communicators**
- **Collaborators**
- **Thinkers**
- **Problem solvers**
- **Innovators**
- **Individuals committed to themselves and others**

With that in mind, our teacher's work throughout the school year and over the summer to carefully design curriculum and units of study aligned with the New York State Common Core Learning Standards and the specific abovementioned values held by our unique North Shore community. All of this work occurs under the leadership and direction of our administrative team, with an eye towards enriching and enhancing the quality of student learning throughout our school.

If you have questions about any of our programs, please feel free to contact any member of our administrative curriculum team at **277-7301** as follows:

Principal Curriculum Leader: Robert Dennis
Humanities Teacher Leader: Seth Gordon
STEM Teacher Leader: Amy DiMeola
Director of World Languages and ENL: Ana Aguiar-Mady
Director of Fine & Performing Arts: Dalia Rodriguez
Curriculum Leader for Family & Consumer Science: Rachel Green
Asst. Director Special Education: Joseph Kisting
Director of Health & Physical Education: Don Lang

*STEM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering, & Mathematics

We are proud of the academic program our school offers your children. We want North Shore Middle School to be a place where learning is challenging, joyful, and inspiring for our students. At the same time, we always strive to improve the quality of our work with your children and we are eager for your feedback and comments. As you continue your journey with us, please do not hesitate to reach out to me directly if you are experiencing anything less than what is described within the pages of this academic program guide.

Sincerely,

Mr. Robert Dennis
Principal

Everyone Matters, Everyone Cares, Everyone Learns!

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Grade Seven Program Overview



“Growing, exploring, learning!”

Students entering seventh grade are experiencing tremendous physical, emotional, and mental growth and development. At this time in their lives, it is essential that we push them hard academically while also providing them with a caring, sensitive, and supportive school environment. As students enter grade seven, we continue to focus on essential questions that help all of us to make connections across disciplines and with the world around them. However, our questions in grade seven change from year to year based on the interests of our students. The focus in each class continues to be on promoting curriculum that inspires students to develop skills as **communicators, collaborators, thinkers, problem solvers, innovators, and individuals committed to themselves and others.**

In addition, we place Art teachers on teams in 7th grade, enhancing our ability to provide interdisciplinary opportunities for students throughout the school year. We also take more time in grade seven for Math and English Language Arts, focusing students more intensely with their reading & writing skills as well as preparing all of our students for Common Core Algebra when they enter grade eight. All in all, seventh grade is about students growing as individuals, exploring the world around them, and mastering the art of becoming high impact learners in and out of the classroom. That is why our theme for the year is simple, yet meaningful, *“Growing, exploring, learning!”*

THE ACADEMIC CORE



ELA 7: ELA 7: Students continue their life long journey as readers and writers in our grade seven ELA program, continuing on with our Teachers College Reading and Writing program. Our goal is to continue to push students to read and write as much as possible while in school and more at home with our teachers serving as coaches and mentors. This allows us to differentiate our approach for all students, providing a varied levels of enrichment and support where needed. Our continued goal is to inspire our students to love reading and writing while preparing them to use their skills as writers to disseminate important information, share their viewpoints, and make arguments for causes they believe strongly in. Students readers will engage in Historical Fiction book clubs, argument reading, poetry, complex nonfiction texts and book clubs of their own choosing. We are also committed to teaching writing and research skills through realistic fiction, argument research paper, informational writing, poetry and selected pieces of their own choosing. It is our belief that the more students are given a voice to research, read, and write about things they care about in middle school, the better prepared they will be for a life of reading, writing, communicating, and success! All students receive 41 minute or 62 minute periods of ELA daily (alternating) so that students have more time for reading and writing.

Pre-Algebra 7: Students continue learning in Math as they prepare for the Common Core Algebra Regents program in eighth grade. The Pre-Algebra curriculum follows New York State Common Core Grade 7 and includes Common Core Grade 8 Math topics. In our Pre-Algebra 7 classes, we use a workshop approach with mini lessons that model math concepts and then allow for student exploration in small group, individual, or partner work. The course is designed to include continuous spiral review of all units of study throughout the year on homework and assessments. Common assessments and quarterly exams help us to monitor student success and provide students with individualized support or enrichment. Students in Pre-Algebra 7 meet for a 41-minute learning period on one day and a 62-minute learning period on the opposite day.

Science 7: Science 7 is about teaching our students to think and behave like true scientists. We want our students to engage in hands on science labs while using a constructivist approach to learning science. By the end of the year, we expect our 7th graders to be experts in making scientific observations, developing hypotheses, and testing those hypotheses through sound scientific experimentation. We also expect our students to research science

topics and use their writing skills to demonstrate strong conceptual understandings about the world we live in.

We incorporate Next Generation Science Standards as students learn aspects of physics, chemistry, and general science topics. Because all of our students will take the Living Environment High School Regents Exam in 8th grade, it is essential that our grade 7 science program lay sound content foundations found in grade 7 & 8 curriculum while also providing students with the tools and skills to run successful scientific experiments. Science 7 meets every day for 41-minute learning periods.

Social Studies 7: Social Studies 7: In the History of Early America through the Civil War course students learn what it means to be an American. Students explore how our nation came to be what it is today by examining America's origins including: native people, European explorers, English colonists and African slaves in the first half of the year. Next, students will learn about revolutionary ideas that transformed the political, social and economic fabric of American society culminating in the turmoil of a bloody Civil War that threatened to divide our nation. By incorporating the New York State Common Core shifts for Social Studies, it is our goal to engage in student centered learning practices where reading, writing, and research skills are fostered and American history is "uncovered" through student inquiry and the interpretation primary and secondary sources. Social Studies 7 meets every day in 41-minute learning periods.

Art 7: We believe that Art is the glue that ties all of our other subject areas together. As such, students receive Art every other day for 41 minutes. In addition, we place Art teachers on 7th grade teams so that they can work together with the academic subject teachers. Art students in grade seven focus on a wide array of art skills, explore the works of other artists and examine the role art and artists play in their lives, as well as in our world.

World Language 7: Students continue to take French, Italian, Latin, Mandarin and Spanish. It is our goal to provide students with a rich and meaningful language experience in grade seven, focused on acquiring the novice intermediate level of proficiency in all three modes of communication : interpretive, interpersonal and presentational. We believe our students can do this because of the quality FLES program provided at the K-6 level. Language classes in grade seven meet every day for 41 minute learning periods.

MUSIC, & PHYSICAL EDUCATION



Physical Education 6-8: Students participate in PE every other day for 41 minute periods in grade 7. Units of study are congruent with the NYS Physical education program and focus on a variety of team sports as well as individual sports. In addition, our PE staff focuses students on learning about living healthy lifestyles and provide students with a wide range of fitness activities throughout the school year.

Music 6-8: Students have the opportunity to take music every other day for 41 minutes in one of four areas: *Band, Orchestra, Chorus, or Digital Music*. Each course is unique and focused on the National Music Standards, promoting musicianship, music appreciation, and creativity in the arts. This continues throughout your child's middle school experience with a focus on public ensemble performances. In addition, we provide small group lessons as a pull out program one time per week for students in Orchestra, Chorus, and Band. These pullouts only occur during non-academic classes throughout the school year. In other words, we do not pull students out of Math, Science, Social Studies, English, Art or World Language for small group lessons.

Cycle Courses



Are provided in 36-day, 41-minute sessions throughout the school year. Cycle courses are mandated by NYS in middle school and provide students with a wider range of learning activities connected to our larger academic program. We offer four Cycle course and one enrichment class opportunity for all students at the middle school as follows:

Health Cycle 7: As students begin their journey through puberty, it is important for them to better understand what is happening to their bodies and how they can deal with it appropriately. Health 7 focuses students on the human body, healthy living, and the dangers and risks of teenage sex, drugs, and alcohol usage. Our goal is to keep our students informed so they can make good decisions throughout their adolescent years.

Technology Cycle 7: This course incorporates aspects of Project Lead the Way and is part of our school wide STEM initiative to get students more engaged in Science and Technology. Students plan, design, and implement a wide range of projects that require the use of computers, hand tools, and light power tools. Additionally, students use Math and Science concepts to understand architectural design and to solve common problems faced in the field of engineering.

Family & Consumer Science Cycle 7: This course picks up where Family & Consumer Science 6 leaves off. It continues to cover the state curriculum for Family & Consumer Science through the lens of service learning. Everything students make or create in this course is used in some way to help others or to make a difference in our local community. Activities in this course include but are not limited to cooking, baking, sewing, and other essential home living skills. In addition, students focus on career fields of interest as well as how to manage money and other home banking skills.

GRADE SEVEN ENRICHMENT ELECTIVE OPPORTUNITIES



Grade seven elective courses are offered to students as a form of enrichment in an area that students are interested in. We strongly believe that when students are provided with a sense of autonomy in choosing coursework, their academic engagement soars!

Grade seven elective courses meet for 36 days in a row, 41 minutes per day. All of these courses were designed to incorporate research, technology use, and the following district values that promote students as: **Communicators, collaborators, thinkers, problem solvers, innovators, and individuals committed to themselves and others.**

In addition, we ask teachers of these courses to provide some type of performance based or project based end of course assessment that promotes the abovementioned values. Students get to choose two of the following courses in grade seven:

Humanities Electives

Creative Writing: Find Freedom in Your Words! Do you love the writing workshop in English class and wish you had more time to write? In this course students will work with other young writers as they explore poetry, short stories, fantasy writing, and/or playwriting. This course will finish with several pieces to publish and share with the world.

Criminal Minds: Are you interested in why criminals, police officers, lawyers and judges think what they think and act the way they act? Criminal minds will have students step into the shoes and minds of criminals and law enforcement agents in order to analyze the decisions they have made and actions they have taken. Students will engage in Socratic seminars, mock trials and debate surrounding important actors in criminal court cases and question their motives, mindset and decisions.

Entrepreneurship: Do you have what it takes to be an entrepreneur? In this course, you will learn about famous entrepreneurs throughout history, how they started their businesses, and what made them so successful. You will learn how to solve problems, collaborate with business partners, develop a business plan for your own business idea, and come up with marketing and production strategies to sell your products. In the end, you will present your business plan to real life entrepreneurs (Think Shark Tank) to determine if your ideas have what it takes to make you the next North Shore Business Tycoon!

Guitar Workshop 7: The guitar has been one of the most influential musical instruments of the modern age. Since the invention of the electric guitar in 1931, musicians everywhere have begun picking and strumming with the volume turned up and dreams of rock stardom. The guitar is an incredibly versatile instrument that is important for any musician to have a handle on. Whether you have been taking lessons for years, or this will be your first time picking one up, Guitar Workshop 6 is for you. In this cycle class you will find a variety of personalized lessons to take your guitar playing to the next level. This class will culminate in a recital night! **Guitar ownership not required.**

Make a Magazine! Is this any good? We ask it all the time, but we have no idea what it truly means. This course will hope to give you some clarity. We will create, edit, critique, and publish online our own Middle School Literary Magazine. If you are interested in art, writing, advertising, computer design or editing then this class is for you! Students will learn the process from how to write our own creative pieces to how to judge and critique others' work like a professional. Students can learn basic layout techniques, including how to publish our very own work online. Every step of the process—the very control of what the magazine will look like (from cover design to actual content)—is completely up to you. Because that's what art's about: the ability to make our own meaning. So if you love art, writing, computers, or creativity in general, then this is the course for you!

Media & Fake News: Have you ever had the feeling that no one knows what's going on anymore? That no one believes information--or even knows what information to believe? We, as a society, are no longer able to tell what is real and what is fake; what is true and what is a lie; what is correct and what is incorrect. How do we engage in this new world? We will explore the concept of "fake news" and learn ways to tell what is real and what is not. We will dive deep into how the media, and our news, has been altered and changed, so that we no longer have one set of facts and information, but a series of alternate realities. Take the course, so that you are no longer just listening to what people tell you, but instead, understanding what they tell you.

National History Day Project: Do you love history? Do you want to create a project that can win a local, state or national award? Well, this course is for you. In this course students will explore a major theme in history by conducting research and designing a final project that will compete in a school-wide competition. Winning entries will be showcased and entered into the Long Island History Day competition at Hofstra. Students will choose their own research topics, read related books, write a research paper and may create either a documentary, tri-fold exhibit, website or create a group acting/ singing performance to

showcase their learning and research. Students will meet with a National History Day advisor at different times throughout the year to refine research and prepare the final project. To learn more about this course check out the National History Day Website: <http://nhd.org>.

Public Speaking & Debate: When you speak, do people listen? After taking Public Speaking and Debate, they certainly will! This course aims to develop students' skills and confidence in the areas of public speaking, debate, research, and creative performance through exposure to in-class debates, performances, and other public speaking activities in a low pressure, joyful environment. Students will develop their own speeches, arguments, and presentations for the purpose of practicing and enhancing their ability to use their voices to inform, teach, inspire, and call others to action!

Theatre Workshop: Storytelling has existed at the heart of all cultures since the beginning of our species, and now you will have a chance to be part of that tradition. The theatre workshop is a crash course in all aspects of designing theatre. Students will write, perform, direct, design, and publicize scenes for a public performance. If you have ever wondered about what it takes to create the magic of the theatre, now is your chance to find out.

Viking Voice Newspaper: Would you like to write for a newspaper as a political writer, sports reporter or have your own editorial? Would you like to create your own comics, crosswords, cartoons, blogs or write for social media? Did you ever wonder what it takes to be a journalist? In this class you will learn the art of journalism and develop your voice and interests by contributing articles and editorials for our online student newspaper, the *NSMS Viking Voice!*

STEM Electives

Coding & Electronics: Have you ever thought about how something works like your phone, radio, computer, or TV? In this course we will explore the different electrical components that go into these devices. We'll use the open source Arduino software and learn the C coding language to design and test circuits and control the functions of LED lights, servos, and motors...and find out what makes these electronics work the way they do. This hands-on experience with code and electrical circuits will give you the tools to create your own computer or mini robot of your own!!

Food Science: Through human history, the way we eat has evolved from a matter of life or death into a source of pleasure, a reason for war, and a symbol of hospitality, social status, and religious significance. What we choose to eat, how we prepare it, serve it, and even how we eat it are all factors influenced by our individual cultural inheritance. Additionally, in modern times it has become a multi-trillion dollar industry and a highly developed science.

In this course, we will attempt to uncover the cultural, social, and scientific significance behind humans and food. We will try preserved foods and make our own, grow edible plants, explore how senses affect our eating experience, cook food without heat, grow edible crystals, use old and new techniques to prepare and eat foods that will thrill and challenge the taste buds.

Forensic Science: Ever wonder about how forensic scientists are involved in solving crimes? Are you curious to find out more about how scientists collect and use evidence that helps tell the story of what happened? It's time to get a closer look at how scientists analyze fingerprints, hair, and even blood. We'll learn the techniques used in crime labs and then apply our thinking and problem solving skills to conduct a lab investigation of evidence found at a North Shore crime scene!

Renewable Revolution: Do you enjoy working with your hands, recycling, and creating useful items out of trash? Then this is the course for you! Renewable Revolution will open students' minds to creating "green" structures and objects. A "green" structure can be anything that does not harm or impact the environment, and in this course you'll find that this can include furniture made of recycled materials, natural powered electrical sources, and homegrown food instead of purchased from a store. This class promotes environmental stewardship and mindfulness about reducing our carbon footprint.

The Math Behind the Winning Move: Do you enjoy exploring unique mathematical problems, puzzles, and games? Have you ever wondered how math is used in winning such a simple game as "Tic-Tac-Toe" or a game more complex as the game of "SET"? Students will explore a variety of strategy-based games utilizing mathematical skills and knowledge. Come see how math can unlock the secret to the winning move, and then use what you've learned to create an original game with math.

STEM Investigations:

In the words of Albert Einstein, "Failure is success in progress." Throughout this hands-on course, serious math and science students will incorporate mathematical understandings with scientific investigations as they experiment and challenge what we believe about natural phenomena. Through what material does sound travel most effectively? Do pavement cracks follow a specific pattern? These are a few questions STEM Investigation students have tested and deliberated – join this course and find out what we will test out next! Students will be required to utilize technology, public speaking skills, and data analysis to share and argue the outcomes of each investigation. We will keep the mindset of being a STEM thinker as we "*Build, Create, Destroy, Explore, Design, and Solve.*"

Wonders of Math

This course stimulates inquiry, sparks curiosity, and reveals the wonders of mathematics. Students select a specific area of interest for exploration. While exploring, students conduct research, write a mathematical paper, and develop a presentation while

utilizing various technology skills. Upon completion of this course, students will decide whether they wish to continue their investigation to then participate in the Long Island Math Fair.

Wow...You Made What? If you can imagine it...you can make it! Would you like to see a creative idea come to life? Do you want to solve a problem by inventing something? Join the "maker movement" and spend some time tinkering, designing, building, and learning about how things work. See if you can challenge yourself to build something using a variety of interesting materials from duct tape, cardboard, fabrics, wood, and Washi Tape to Legos, hand tools, LED lights, and 3D printers...and everything in between. Build structures to see science come to life, and invent things to bring out your inner craftsman. In this course, you can explore creative approaches to open ended problems and let your curiosity guide your learning!

Music of the Globe: Are you an "air drummer" or a "table tapper"? Do you find yourself wondering what *other* instruments are out there with which to make music? In this performance ensemble class we will harness the power of your internal rhythm machine to explore the music of various cultures from around the world including Ghana, Mali, India, and the Caribbean. You'll learn to play more than 6 different instruments in the first week of class, and from there, the sky is the limit! This class will include a group performance at one of either the Winter or Spring concerts. You'll begin to hear the influence of traditional music from around the world in today's pop, and create your own original music as well.

Electronic Music Production: Have you ever wondered what's going on behind the DJ table? What are all of those lights and switches? What are they using those computers for? How do they make those crazy sounds? The computer age has opened up a new frontier in the music world. Today, a single person can create a recording that makes millions start dancing, while live sound production has created hundreds of specific jobs at every concert you attend. In this class we will use Multitrack Recording Software, iPads, MIDI keyboards, as well as live sound equipment like mixing boards, microphones, amps and speakers to complete projects that inspire your own creativity, while learning about the hardware and software of music composition and sound production as well as the important people and events which have paved the way for the music that we hear today. Expect to publicly perform a class electronic composition, and have the experience of working live sound during concert season!

Health and Physical Education Electives

Insane Fitness is a course designed for all students looking to increase their physical fitness, improve their athletic ability and learn the cutting edge techniques of the exercise community today. Utilizing a mix of Insanity, CrossFit, yoga, P90X and tried and true ways to increase muscle, this course will work for all levels of physical conditioning and help the students develop lifelong habits of physical fitness.

Basketball Training: In this course students of all basketball abilities would be given the opportunity to enhance and develop their basketball skills.

ADDITIONAL PROGRAMMING & STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES



Enrichment Services: While our middle school does not have dedicated Enrichment specialists, as is the case in our elementary school system, we do provide a wide range of enrichment opportunities for our students. We strongly believe that the best approach to enriching a student's learning experience at the middle level is by differentiating instruction within the context of a given classroom. In English, teachers will push students to read the most challenging books and will also provide individualized coaching to push students as writers. In Social Studies, our teachers will provide a wide range of choices and opportunities as students complete a variety of challenging research projects throughout the school year. In Science, student lab experiments and projects are open-ended experiences that allow students to take their work to any level. In math, students are pushed to explore problems with “low floors and high ceilings,” in other words problems that have entry points for all learners and can be taken to complex levels of thought. If students are willing to take on enrichment challenges, our teachers are eager to provide and support them.

If you feel your child would benefit from additional enrichment opportunities or services, please contact your child's guidance counselor to discuss available opportunities in the appropriate subject area (277-7303).

Academic Support Services: We want all of our students to be successful learners within our school. At different times, students may need additional support. We offer academic support services for struggling students on an as needed basis. We use NYS assessment scores as well as teacher feedback and academic grades to determine which students need support in certain subject areas. If you feel your child needs

support but is not getting the support they need, please contact your child's guidance counselor immediately (277-7303) so we can set up a meeting to discuss the wide range of support options that your child may need.

Homework Center: For students that need additional help with homework, we offer a homework center after school on Monday through Thursday from 3-4pm. This center is staffed by one teacher and two teaching assistants and provides students with a level of support that allows students to be successful in completing their homework.

Lunch & Learn: For students not doing homework or completing assignments, we have a lunch and learn program. Students falling behind are "invited" to bring their lunch to a classroom staffed with a teaching aide. They can complete assignments on their own or with guidance from the teaching aide.

Additional Lunch 7 Opportunities: Students participate in lunch for one period (41 minutes daily). Students are able to do many things during their lunch period unique to our school, including but not limited to the following activities: outdoor recess, library time to study, read, or participate in book talks, tech lab to work on a technology projects, art room to work on an art projects, music room to participate in the "Jam Club", or the lunch and learn room to catch up on work with the support of a teacher. We also run student government and class board meetings during lunch and all students are encouraged to participate.

EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES: In addition to our after school athletics program, grade seven students are encouraged to participate in a wide array of after school clubs and activities. A club fair is held after school during the second week of school for the purpose of sharing with students the variety of activities available to them. Below is a list of most activities that will be available to our seventh grade students:

StagE3 (Drama Club)	Viking Voice (Newspaper)	Yearbook
French Club	Spanish Club	Italian Club
Mathletes	Science Olympiads	Math Olympiads
Rocketry Club	Chess Club	Mock Trial Club
Student Government	Art Club	Builders Club
Chamber Choir	Chess Club	Gay Straight Alliance
Morning Chorus	Jazz Band	Jam (rock & roll) Club
Chamber Orchestra	Organic Gardening	Robotics
School Store Club	Ski Club	Technology Club
Science Research Club		