

WAYLAND MIDDLE SCHOOL

Program of Studies

Revised August 2013



Dear Parents:

The purpose of this handbook is to state clearly to all students and their parents the academic program for this school year.

We have tried to create a balanced program that takes into account the intellectual, emotional, and physical needs of all pupils. The prime task of the school is to help students develop solid academic skills as well as a positive attitude toward learning. Further, we hope that the "arts" courses, health and wellness program, and the extracurricular opportunities at our middle school provide a wonderful chance for students to explore and develop a variety of interests.

In this handbook we describe each subject area briefly. I am excited about the programs that our families will experience at the middle school and hope that the year will be both challenging and productive for all of our students.

Sincerely,

Betsy Gavron

Betsy Gavron, Principal

Grade 6: Henry David Thoreau House

All sixth graders are placed in the Henry David Thoreau House, which acts as home base for the year. Several aspects of Thoreau's life and works are important as themes for the sixth grade year.

Thoreau was a prominent American hero who lived and wrote less than ten miles from our school. Walden Pond, where he lived in solitude, is a part of our school's "neighborhood". Thoreau was known for his willingness to stand up for his own beliefs no matter what the cost. We think that is an important lesson for sixth graders. The tension between peer pressure and following one's own conscience is a constant struggle for students in middle school. Finally, Thoreau understood the beauty of our natural surroundings and teaches each of us to listen to and treasure this beauty. During the year, we enrich our learning with several field trips connected to our house theme. Most of our students regard the annual bike trek to Walden Pond as a highlight of the sixth grade year. This trip, as well as other experiences in sixth grade, encourages our students to take time to appreciate nature and the changing New England seasons, as Thoreau did.

All students are placed in a balanced clusters referred to as the Henry or David Cluster. Teachers in each cluster, along with the guidance counselor, meet twice per week to plan curriculum activities and to monitor the progress of each of the students in their cluster.

Grade 7: Rachel Louise Carson House

The seventh grade house is named for Rachel Louise Carson, a pioneer in the area of environmental awareness. The primary focus of the Rachel Louise Carson House is the world around us. During the year, we learn about our fragile environment and the need to protect the earth today for future generations. Rachel Louise Carson studied to be a writer and a marine biologist. She combined her love of writing and her interest in marine biology to introduce us to the wonders of nature and to inform us about the dangers that threaten our environment.

Throughout the year, we work hard to follow Rachel Louise Carson's belief that one person can make a difference. Members of the Rachel Louise Carson House participate in a variety of community-based projects, including a number of extra-curricular opportunities to make a positive difference in the lives of others. In addition, all seventh graders are challenged to investigate an environmental issue that interests them. Students learn about the problem itself, as well as what is being done to alleviate or overcome the problem. As a culminating activity, students and staff share a three-day adventure at Cape Cod exploring firsthand the fragile coastal environment and the abundant marine life of the area.

The Rachel Louise Carson House staff works together to provide a rewarding learning experience for all seventh graders. The Rachel Louise Carson House teachers and counselor meet regularly to address the academic and emotional needs of all seventh grade students and to ensure all of our young people experience an educational, safe, and nurturing environment in which to learn.

GRADE 8: Martin Luther King, Jr.

The eighth grade is called the Martin Luther King, Jr. House in recognition of the achievements and ideals of the great civil rights leader. Students study the beliefs and work of Dr. King in both their social studies and English classes, and are encouraged to apply his teachings to their behavior throughout the year. We incorporate themes of justice, non-violence, inclusion of all, fairness, and active participation in democracy into our regular eighth grade curriculum.

Eighth graders are challenged to reach out to other students, participate in school and community projects, and lead by example. We also expect that students will become more organized and independent learners during the course of their eighth grade year.

King House teachers meet together two to three times each week to plan house activities and to monitor the progress of each eighth grade student.

English

Grade 6

Students read in a number of contexts to scaffold the development of comprehension and literary interpretation skills. These contexts include supported read-alouds, whole class study of single texts, collaborative literature circle groups, and independent reading. Explicit instruction focuses on a number of reading strategies which include recalling and identifying important details, questioning a text, drawing inferences, making connections, and synthesizing information in the service of developing larger theories. All reading instruction is intended to lead students to read with purpose and for meaning.

Shared readings may include *Granny Torrelli Makes Soup*, *The Giver*, and *The Watsons Go to Birmingham*, among others. Students also engage in an author study of Sharon Creech that focuses on character development, narrative structure, and close reading. In addition, students engage in a genre study of mystery where they investigate text structure and literary *tip-offs*.

Students write regularly using the writing process, which includes prewriting, planning, drafting, revising, and editing. Students work on creative and descriptive pieces based on personal experience as well as analytical writing based on the literature they study. The major focus for the development of analytical writing skills is the use of evidence within an argument. Students spend considerable time learning to identify, include, and explain evidence to support their literary interpretations. Writing instruction is intended to lead students to write meaningfully with clear intent.

As members of the Henry David Thoreau House, students make connections to Thoreau's life and works through journal writing, reading selected quotations, and reflecting about their bicycle trip to Walden Pond.

Grade 6 Literacy Boost is offered to learners who would benefit from small group direct instruction in order to maintain/accelerate their literacy learning. Teacher recommendations and students' literacy performance is considered in selecting deserving candidates. The goal of the program is to help students gain independence in reading deeply and carefully.

The program will offer additional opportunities for learners to explore a wide variety of print materials. Students will learn strategies for making sense of unfamiliar content and vocabulary. These experiences help learners acquire problem-solving strategies they can use to approach literacy challenges in their classrooms with increased confidence.

Students meet with the Literacy Specialist three times a week during a study or FLEX time.

Grade 7

Students read a variety of genre as they develop comprehension and literary interpretation skills. Throughout the year, students experience interactive read-alouds, whole class study of single texts, collaborative literature circle groups, and independent reading. Explicit instruction focuses on practicing reading strategies, which include retellings, questioning, drawing inferences, making connections, and synthesizing information in the service of developing larger theories. All instruction is intended to lead students into independent application of the skills they learn.

Shared readings may include *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, *Seedfolks*; and "Twelve Angry Men," among others. Students are engaged in an author study of Paul Fleischman that focuses on character development, narrative structure, voice/point of view, and close reading.

Students write regularly using a writing process, which includes prewriting, planning, drafting, revising, and editing. Students work on creative and personal experience pieces as well as analytical writing based on the literature they study. Several short writing pieces are completed each week, and students can expect to write about four longer compositions over the course of their seventh grade year.

English

The major focus for the development of their analytical writing skills is the use of evidence within a literary response. Students practice how to identify, include, and explain evidence to support their literary interpretations.

As members of the Rachel Louise Carson House, we ask students to make connections to Carson's life and works through journal writing, reading selected passages, and reflecting about their trip to the Natick Community Organic Farm, Cape Cod and other events related to our study of Carson.

Grade 7 Literacy Workshop is offered to a subset of our students who would benefit from additional support in maintaining/accelerating their literacy learning. Teacher recommendations and students' literacy performance are considered in selecting deserving candidates. The goal of this program is to help students to gain confidence and independence in reading deeply and in composing with purpose.

In Literacy Workshop, students increase their time spent reading a level appropriate text which promotes fluency and enhances reading comprehension. Explicit comprehension instruction and guided practice supports students as they discover both literal and inferential meaning in text. Interaction with fiction and nonfiction (setting a purpose, making connections, questioning, and determining importance) ensures engagement and builds reading stamina. Examination of the structure of written text promotes students' ability to compose (write) in a wide variety of genre.

This course is designed to explicitly teach reading and writing strategies and provide additional practice so that students develop more proficient ways to read, write, problem solve, and construct meaning.

Grade 8

Students read across a variety of genre as they develop comprehension and literary interpretation skills. Throughout the year, students experience interactive read-alouds, whole class study of single texts, collaborative literature circle groups, and independent reading. Explicit instruction focuses on applying reading strategies which include questioning, drawing inferences, making connections, and synthesizing information in the service of developing larger theories as they move from concrete to abstract and analytical thinking. All instruction is intended to lead students into independent application of the skills they learn. All reading instruction is intended to lead students to read with purpose and for meaning.

Readings may include *True North*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *I Am the Cheese*, *House of the Scorpions*, and *Locomotion*, among others. Students are engaged in an author study of Walter Dean Myers or Jacqueline Woodson that focuses on character development and perspective, literary style, and thematic interpretation. In addition, students engage in a genre study of novels in verse where they investigate text structure and literary *tip-offs*.

Students write regularly using the writing process which includes prewriting, planning, drafting, revising, and editing. Students work on creative and descriptive pieces based on personal experience as well as analytical writing based on the literature they study. The major focus for the development of their analytical writing skills is the continued use of evidence within a literary response. Students spend considerable time identifying, explaining, and synthesizing evidence to support their literary interpretations. Writing instruction is intended to lead students to write meaningfully with clear intent.

As members of the Martin Luther King, Jr. House, students make connections to King's life and works through journal writing, reading selected passages, and reflecting about current events through the lens of "understanding differences."

Grade 8 Literacy Workshop II is offered to students who would benefit from accelerating their literacy learning. Teacher recommendations and students' literacy performance are considered in selecting deserving candidates. The goal of this program is to help students to gain confidence and independence in reading deeply and in composing with purpose.

English

In this course, students grow as writers by exploring ways to find and develop their ideas as they discover how genre influences message. Focus lessons are designed to develop authorial purpose and intent. By becoming more sophisticated in the use of the conventions of the English Language, students come to understand how those conventions give writing its power. This exploration and practice promotes students' ability to compose in a wide variety of genres.

This course is designed to explicitly teach reading and writing strategies and provide additional practice so that students develop more proficient ways of reading, writing, problem solving, and constructing meaning.

MATHEMATICS

Grade 6

Level III Accelerated Sixth Grade Mathematics

This rigorous course is designed to challenge students who enter the sixth grade with very strong mathematical skills and to begin the transition from arithmetic to algebra and geometry. Building number sense is emphasized, including whole number computation and work with decimals, fractions, and percents. Students are introduced to the language of algebra and begin solving equations and developing rules to describe patterns. Two-dimensional geometry and measurement are also explored in depth. Proportional reasoning is stressed through applications of ratios, rates, and proportions. An investigation into data, statistics, and probability rounds out the curriculum. Problem solving is interwoven with all course content, enabling students to develop strong mathematical reasoning abilities as well as written and oral communication skills. In addition, students become more proficient with estimation, mental math, and calculator use through various projects and activities during the course.

Level II Sixth Grade Mathematics

This course provides a strong beginning for students' middle school mathematics studies. Number sense is emphasized through varied activities requiring whole number computation and practice manipulating decimals, fractions, and percents. Relationships between number theory and fraction concepts are also developed.

Students learn to describe patterns and understand the use of variables. Two-dimensional geometry and measurement also make up an important unit. Data, statistics, and probability complete the curriculum.

Problem solving is practiced throughout the year, enabling students to develop their mathematical thinking as well as written and oral communication skills. In addition, estimation, mental math, and calculator use are addressed through projects and activities during the year.

Level I Modified Sixth Grade Mathematics

Designed for students who need extra support around math content, this course moves students toward meeting grade level expectations. Students address each standard from the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks, either in grade-level or modified form, depending on the particular student's needs. Topics span whole numbers, decimals, percents, data, probability, geometry, measurement, and some beginning algebra concepts. These sessions provide individualized attention in their areas of difficulty with understanding and retaining previously taught skills. Students who excel in this program will be prepared to move into Pre Algebra for 7th grade, while others who are still working below grade level will continue in the Level I program the following year.

Grade 7

Level III Accelerated Pre Algebra

This course is designed to quickly move students from concrete mathematical applications to an abstract understanding of algebra. Students engage in contextualized problem solving and critical thinking as they study integers and expressions and solve multi-step equations. As the year progresses, the program addresses number theory, proportional thinking, and graphing on the coordinate plane. Three-dimensional geometry with a focus on the algebraic formulas for surface area, and volume is a critical component of the course. In addition, students continue to develop facility in estimation, mental math, writing, and calculator use through activities throughout the course.

Level II Pre Algebra

The content of this course has been carefully sequenced to provide a smooth transition to algebra. Real world problems and a focus on solving them set the tone for the year. Students build upon their number sense reviewing fractions, decimals, and percents as well as studying integers and their operations. They study three-dimensional geometry and the algebraic formulas that govern surface area and volume. Also, students explore algebra through one-step, two-step, and multi-step equations. Students continue to engage in activities involving estimation, mental math, writing, projects, and calculator use throughout the year.

MATHEMATICS

Level II Pre Algebra with Math Boost

Students who are identified by their sixth grade teachers as needing additional support to succeed in the Pre Algebra course in seventh grade take Math Boost along with their regular Pre Algebra class. They attend a small group tutoring session twice per week when most might otherwise be in study hall. These sessions provide individualized attention in their areas of difficulty with understanding and retaining previously taught skills. They also help move students toward dealing with the increasingly abstract nature of the 8th grade Algebra I course.

Level I Modified Pre Algebra I

Designed for students who need extra support around math content, this course moves students toward meeting grade level expectations. Students will address each standard from the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks, either in grade-level or modified form, depending on the particular student's needs. Topics span whole numbers, decimals, percents, data, probability, geometry, measurement, and some beginning algebra concepts. Students who excel in this program will be prepared to move into Algebra for 8th grade, while others who are still working below grade level will continue in the eighth grade modified program the following year.

Grade 8

Level III Accelerated Algebra I

This course provides a rigorous exploration of the abstract mathematical subject of algebra. The foundation of the course includes a review of the basic language of algebra and solving linear equations with one variable.

Students then study inequalities, systems, polynomials, and rational expressions. Finally, functions and graphs, irrational numbers and quadratics, radicals, and statistics are addressed. Algebraic problem solving and mathematical reasoning will be applied to real world problems throughout the course. As in previous grades, mathematical writing, project work, estimation, mental math, and technology remain important components of the course. Students who master the content of Accelerated Algebra I are prepared to succeed in Honors Geometry as freshmen.

Level II Algebra I

This course is designed to ease students into the abstract mathematical topic of algebra. Real-life situations motivate the major ideas and provide the settings for the practice of algebraic skills. In this course, students explore linear relationships through writing, solving, and operating with equations, inequalities and systems of equations. Examples of other strands of mathematics such as geometry, statistics, probability, and number and operations are revisited through an algebraic lens. As in previous grades, mathematical writing, projects, estimation, mental math, and the use of technology remain important components of this course. Students who successfully learn the content of Algebra I are generally ready to enroll in College Geometry during their freshman year of high school.

Level I Modified Algebra

Designed for students who need extra support around math content, this course moves students toward meeting grade level expectations. Students will address each standard from the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks, either in grade-level or modified form, depending on the particular student's needs. Topics span whole numbers, decimals, percents, data, probability, geometry, measurement, and some beginning algebra concepts. Students who excel in Modified Algebra will be prepared to move into Intro Geometry as freshmen. This course is offered depending on enrollment.

Science

Grade 6

The sixth grade science curriculum is a rich and lively program, focusing on the study of matter and basic physics. The program is designed to appeal to curious young scientists. Through frequent labs and demonstrations, students directly study the content and participate in the process of science. Themes for the year include matter, energy, forces and inquiry.

The course opens with an investigation that introduces students to the content and process of physical science through a simple question about balloons. Through this light topic, students are caught up in the methodology and matter of scientists in a fun, engaging experience. It also challenges students to address common misconceptions about their physical world. We continue to explore the methods of science throughout the fall as students learn and develop laboratory skills. They observe, gather data about the physical properties of matter, recognize patterns, and simultaneously develop lab techniques, data collection methods, data analysis and reporting skills.

In winter we apply laboratory skills and develop modeling skills as we study atomic theory and chemical reactions. While taking advantage of flashy demonstrations and unexpected outcomes, students are engaged in the exciting field of chemistry. We capitalize on playful opportunities to demonstrate their learning through the annual element fashion show in which students dress in costume to represent the properties or uses of the many different types of atoms that make up our world.

By spring we focus on energy and forces. After an overview of the many types of energy, we explore electricity and its transformations in particular detail. Students are encouraged to use their creative talents to build circuit boards to demonstrate patterns of electron flow, and race cars that apply concepts of magnetism or solar energy.

We use state of the art technology in presentations and data collection as well as on-line collaboration and data sharing. Literacy skills are developed as students are trained to read a science text and report on their laboratory work. Science and study skills are practiced throughout the year as students record notes that document their key learning in a detailed science notebook.

Through sequential introduction of skills and content, students construct their understanding of complex concepts such as the molecular structure of matter, density, transformations of energy, current electricity, and solar power. The sixth grade curriculum builds a solid foundation for future science courses and life-long scientific literacy.

Grade 7

The seventh grade life science curriculum connects all students to the life around and within them. Students collect, examine, compare, sketch, discuss, and delight in the natural world. Guided exploration in the fall, including project work, is gradually replaced by more independent learning, both in and out of the classroom, over the course of the year.

Using the rich New England fall season, students are regularly outdoors observing and studying organisms' similarities, habits, adaptations, and patterns. We explore relationships and interdependence between organisms. Then we build an understanding of complexity and balance within ecosystems. Our focus on ecosystems includes an investigation into agricultural practices and their impact on the environment. Students experience an alternative to conventional farming through our trip to Drumlin Farm. Pond animals, trees, leaves, and the forest floor are examined in great detail while students learn about maintaining live specimens, and the systematic sampling of diversity in an area.

As students move indoors for the winter, the program focuses on unifying themes of life including cellular structure, human body systems, genetics and evolution. We build on this common foundation by studying unicellular

Science

organisms of protists, then expand to see how some microorganisms are pathogens. A simulation of an outbreak of respiratory illnesses frames the unit on disease, which surveys characteristics of the microorganisms, scientific inquiry and human body systems.

With the advent of spring, students begin a study of the "edge of the sea," thus affirming the values of the Rachel Louise Carson House, including respect for the environment and the fragility and interdependence of organisms. A hands-on marine wet-lab with students moving from station to station examining, sketching and observing living creatures is the highlight of marine studies. Students become familiar with most of the marine organisms likely to be found on a typical New England beach, like the ones we will visit during the Cape Cod experience. We culminate the year with a return to field study as we investigate the growth, structures and development of plants through planting seedlings started in the classroom into our organic garden outside. This provides opportunities for understanding plant development, as well as returning to the house theme of stewardship for the environment.

Looking outside themselves with appreciation for diversity and respect for adaptations and relationships, students truly see the natural world for the first time. Looking within themselves, students encounter organization and complexity of form. Life begins to take on new meaning.

Grade 8

The 8th Grade Earth Science course focuses on a more conceptual approach to the application and understanding of scientific models, evidence, and experimental data. Students are asked to use the evidence and content they learn to formulate scientific theories about the Earth's system. The enduring understanding of the course focuses on how the Earth and Earth system changes over time. This includes long-term changes of over millions of years and short-term changes over hours, days, and years. The course content includes three main units of study: Astronomy, Geology, and the Atmosphere.

Students explore the stars at star watches where they view constellations, planets, galaxies, nebulae, clusters, binaries, and other galactic phenomena. Class discussions focus on the causes of seasons, moon phases, tides and eclipses. In the spring, we revisit astronomy focusing on the origin of the solar system, comparative planetology, and a brief discussion about the size and origin of the universe. Other topics explored briefly include: galaxies, black holes, nebulae and stellar evolution.

From October to February we focus on the processes and results of plate tectonics. Students begin by trying to understand the geologic changes which have occurred in New York and New England over the past 500 million years. This includes a look at fossils, igneous, metamorphic and sedimentary rocks, stream processes and the movement of continents over time. This part of the unit culminates with a field trip to central Massachusetts and upstate Eastern New York including exploration of a wild cave. After the trip students complete projects demonstrating their understanding of the changes which have occurred. We continue with an extensive look at the forces inside the Earth which shape the surface of the Earth and how they change over time. This leads us to plate tectonics and the rock cycle including earthquakes, volcanoes and glaciers.

In the spring students take on the role of climatologists and meteorologists as they learn about how Earth's atmosphere, along with energy from the Sun, generate Earth's Greenhouse Effect and drive local and global weather patterns. Current topics, such as acid rain, the depletion of the ozone layer, and climate change are explored within this unit. The factors that drive weather patterns both locally and globally are explored - including wind patterns, precipitation, cloud formation, changes in air pressure, and weather fronts. Included in this unit is the collection and analysis of authentic weather data and daily weather patterns at the middle school in order to better understand daily and seasonal changes in local weather patterns.

Our accelerated program is designed for students ready to apply the concepts taught in our regular classes. Movement between levels is easy as all classes examine the same topics at the same time. The difference lies in the level of application of concepts expected and the amount of direct instruction given. For example when thinking about moon phases the middle level is expected to understand and explain how the moon phases occur. In the accelerated level, students are assessed on how they can apply their understanding of moon phases to the question of what phases of Jupiter might be visible from Earth. In our study of seasons, accelerated students are asked to use their math skills and reasoning skills to determine the latitude the sun would be shining directly

Science

overhead on a given day of the year. So the focus of this course is using the material learned in class to solve and understand novel situations in addition to demonstrating mastery of the material. Thought Questions and test questions are the tool used to assess these skills and are available to all students upon request. Movement between levels during the year is based on successful completion of both middle level assessments, daily homework and class work and Thought Questions.

Social Studies

Grade 6

Sixth grade social studies is the first of a two year sequence in World Geography and Ancient Civilizations. In addition to introducing students to the study of geography, the curriculum includes African and Asian Studies. Students learn basic geographic skills and concepts and explore the physical and human geography of Africa and Asia.

Introduction to Geography embraces a broad range of concepts: land and water forms, latitude and longitude, and special purpose maps. Additionally, students develop a number of skills essential to becoming independent and critical thinkers. The tools we use to develop these skills include texts, globes, atlases, news articles, periodicals, and documentary films.

The study of early cultures begins with an investigation of early humans. Students learn how civilization developed by studying Mesopotamia and ancient Egypt. By exploring the question “what is a civilization?” students identify the essential components of a civilization.

Our studies of Africa and Asia revolve around another essential question: “How does where you live affect how you live?” Africa’s diverse geographic landscape provides the backdrop to the study of the interplay between physical and human geography. Our Asia unit starts with the geography, geopolitics, and religions of the Middle East. Then, we examine trade in Asia. We study the Silk Road, OPEC and petroleum, and modern trade with India, China, and Japan.

Grade 7

In seventh grade, social studies students complete the second of the two-year sequence in World Geography and Ancient Civilizations. The curriculum strengthens geographic and critical thinking skills. The core goals of grade 7 social studies are the rooting of the students in the Five Themes of Geography (Location, Place, Human-Environment Interaction and Movement) and the pursuit of essential questions in geography and ancient civilizations. For example, students are asked to consider the following:

- What is geography?
- How does geography shape a culture?
- How does geography impact the development of a country/region?
- What is civilization?

During the first quarter, students expand skills from the 6th grade curriculum. Over the course of subsequent quarters, students will focus on the following units of study:

- Europe, understanding its physical and political characteristics. Topics to be explored include the international significance of the European Union, the unique regions, such as Mediterranean, Alpine, Western and Eastern Europe.
- Ancient Greece and Ancient Rome, centering on their governments, belief systems, arts/architecture and daily life. Students also study the lasting influence of the Greco-Roman world in our lives today.
- Latin America, including the continent South America, the nations of Central America, as well as the island nations of the Caribbean. Topics may include environmental issues and the impact of European colonization of Latin America.

Grade 8

The eighth grade social studies program focuses on two essential questions:

1. Why does injustice occur?
2. How can we create just communities?

Social Studies

We explore these questions through three major units.

Unit One: Foundations of Justice

In this unit we explore the important roles governments play in establishing just communities. We discuss the idea of "unalienable rights" through a careful examination of the Declaration of Independence. Then, we study the layout of our national government. Finally, we learn about the Bill of Rights, paying close attention to the First Amendment. In this unit, we will debate a number of Supreme Court cases involving the rights of adolescents.

Unit Two: Fighting for Justice

In this unit we explore the ways activists have worked to create just communities. We begin the unit by learning about the struggle for women's rights. Then, we will examine the legacy of the Civil War and explore how young and old activists fought against racial discrimination. We will pay close attention to the history of school integration, including a comparison of the crises in Little Rock in 1957 and Boston in 1974. In this unit, we read the novel *The Rock and the River* about a young man in Chicago, who must choose between using non-violence and following a more extreme path towards justice.

Unit Three: Justice Denied

In this unit we explore the role of ordinary people in fighting injustice and building just communities. Our primary focus is the Holocaust, the systematic murder of six million Jews by the Nazi government and its collaborators. Our goal is to wrestle with the complex moral questions surrounding this tragedy. We study the origins of anti-Semitism, the rise of Hitler and the use of propaganda. Together, we try to understand why many Germans supported the Nazi party. Through reading a work of historical fiction called *The Boy Who Dared*, we also examine the ways in which some men and women resisted the Nazi party. Finally, we compare the Holocaust with other genocides and ask who bears responsibility for the Holocaust.

World Languages

French, Latin, Spanish and Mandarin are offered at the middle school in grades 7 and 8. Our Level 1 language programs span over two years. Level 1A is completed at the end of seventh grade, while Level 1B finishes at the end of eighth grade. Students are prepared to enter Level 2 at the high school level. We give our students the tools to begin communicating in and understanding French, Latin, Spanish and Mandarin. Our curriculum reflects that communication is a mixture of the spoken, the written, the auditory and a familiarity of the cultural context of the language used.

GRADE 7

French

The seventh grade French program is a standards-based program, which focuses on communication through the five basic language skills of listening, speaking, reading, writing and culture. The program highlights the speaking and listening of French through expressions and vocabulary that relate to everyday experiences. Students work on thematic units that enable them to speak about their likes and dislikes, school supplies and what they need for school, what courses they take, and how they feel about their classes. They learn to talk about their interests and pastimes and they begin learning how to interact in a restaurant or café and order food.

Latin

The seventh grade Latin program introduces students to ancient Roman culture. The learning of Latin vocabulary is augmented by the study of English derivatives with their Latin roots and prefixes and by using the words in context. The learning of Latin structure teaches logical thought, deciphering skills, and perseverance. Students learn to read, write, speak, think and act like a Roman by working collaboratively in a variety of situated environments.

Spanish

The seventh grade Spanish program uses a standards-based approach with meaningful communication in Spanish as the primary goal. The five basic skills in language learning -- listening, speaking, reading, writing and culture -- are taught to achieve this goal. In class, paired and group role-playing situations, written and oral exercises, question and answer activities, games, and songs all provide opportunities for practice. Audio and video activities challenge the student to improve listening comprehension.

Mandarin Chinese

The Chinese program introduces students to the tonal language. The five basic skills in language learning are emphasized -- listening, speaking, reading, writing and culture. Students explore the Chinese culture through games and cultural readings. In class, paired and group role-playing situations, written and oral exercises, question and answer activities, games, and songs all provide opportunities for practice. Audio and video activities challenge the student to improve listening comprehension.

GRADE 8

French

The eighth grade course is a continuation of the program begun in the seventh grade. The five basic facets of language learning -- listening, speaking, reading, writing and culture -- are stressed and reinforced. The course continues to follow thematic topics as a basis for the vocabulary and grammatical material presented. In addition to the present tense of regular verbs, students are introduced to the immediate future and the passé composé. Student interaction in French is emphasized, with effective and accurate communication being the major goal. Students use vocabulary pertaining to the family, food, clothing and making plans.

World Languages

Latin

The eighth grade Latin program continues the study of the Roman Culture, with emphasis on the Roman Provinces rather than on Italy. The complexity of the language increases to include such aspects as synopses of verbs, declensions of nouns, and comparison of adjectives. In a collaborative environment, students explore language puzzles, stories, and cultural differences together to master the language skills.

Spanish

The eighth grade course is a continuation of the program begun in the seventh grade. The five basic aspects of language learning -- listening, speaking, reading, writing, and culture -- are stressed and reinforced. The course continues to follow thematic topics as a basis for the vocabulary and grammatical material presented. Student interaction in Spanish is emphasized, with the major goal being the ability to communicate effectively and accurately, both orally and in writing. Students learn to share their experiences about topics such as families and family celebrations, eating in restaurants, where they live and the chores they do, shopping, vacation plans, community and ways to be involved, movies and TV.

Mandarin

The eighth grade course is a continuation of the program begun in the seventh grade. The five basic skills in language learning are emphasized -- listening, speaking, reading, writing and culture. Students continue their exploration of Chinese culture through games and cultural readings. In class, paired and group role-playing situations, written and oral exercises, question and answer activities, games, and songs all provide opportunities for further practice. Audio and video activities challenge the student to improve listening comprehension in this tonal language.

Art

One Term

Art is part of the Combined Arts rotation.

The Wayland Middle School art program builds strong art skills by offering exciting projects that are challenging and personally meaningful.

During each 9-week term, art students meet twice a week for roughly one hour to explore self-expression using both 2 and 3 dimensional art mediums. Observational, critical and creative thinking and problem solving skills are exercised and strengthened during the process of making every project a reality. Artists create a plan of what they are visualizing, and then work out how to make that "vision"- reality.

Middle School art students consciously integrate knowledge of the "elements and principals" of design in their observations and process of creating. They are inspired by other artists, often from other times and cultures, as well as what they observe in the world around them. Art projects are also often created to further enrich and support themes they are working on in other facets of their middle school curriculum. Examples are the detailed and exciting sock puppet characters the 7th graders created to give presentations in classes such as Math, English, Social Studies, Science and various languages.

Wayland Middle School Art is a dynamic program and the projects we work on at any given time are open to being "re-born" given the environment, desires, needs and inspirations of the time. Currently all students begin their term working in the 2-dimensional mediums studying values, first in charcoal and graphite and later with color using pastels and paints. They then move into working on a 3-dimensional project. The 6th graders are learning to create realistic animal face forms using paper mache', the 7th graders are creating dynamic wire sculptures and the 8th graders are using ceramic clay to "express" what they love- often creating a "dream home lantern" or "character vessel".

During all projects art students are encouraged to carefully note the physical and visual properties of the various art mediums so that they can make informed choices in the future as to which to use for a particular visual effect. When time permits the final project involves creating our art "en plein air" studying the natural world around the school. Artists learn to carefully observe one plant at a time, noting and appreciating all of the intricacies of its design- its shape, texture, growth pattern, branchings, origin, source of nourishment and environment. The artists endeavor to render what they observe first in pencil and then, using various pen and ink techniques adding more value and texture.

The finished drawings are then given more "life" using various water coloring techniques and endeavoring to capture the "beauty of the season" with strokes and "shimmerings" of color. The possibilities of creating beauty and impressive works in art are endless!

Classroom Music

One Term

Classroom Music is part of the Combined Arts rotation and is offered to every student in the school. Each class is a hands-on music learning lab in which students play instruments as they study melody, harmony, rhythm, and form. Classes may also include reading and writing traditional musical notation, reading dulcimer tablature, practicing a solo or duet, playing by ear, improvising, or composing.

Grade 6

In the Appalachian Mountain Dulcimer unit, students read and play traditional American folk songs and Appalachian dance tunes.

The drum-sticking unit for beginners includes the study of basic rhythms in duple meter. Each student will compose his/her own 16-measure rhythm piece. Students will have the opportunity to expand their pieces by adding melody, combining with others to create duets, trios, and small ensembles, or notating using computer software.

Each class will have some students who have had little or no experience playing an instrument, some students who have had music training, and other students who are very experienced in the playing, reading, and writing of music. All students will be able to choose tasks that are challenging without being overwhelming. The class is letter graded and grades are based on effort and the completion of performance tasks.

Grade 7

Students continue the study of the Appalachian Mountain Dulcimer introduced to them in Sixth Grade. They then move on to electric keyboard and acoustic guitar. The centerpiece of the class is the Finale of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, 'Ode to Joy'. Each student will play this melody on all three instruments.

Each class will have some students who have had little or no experience playing an instrument, some students who have had music training, and other students who are very experienced in the playing, reading, and writing of music. All students will be able to choose tasks that are challenging without being overwhelming. The class is letter graded and grades are based on effort and the completion of performance tasks.

Grade 8

Students continue their study of Appalachian Mountain Dulcimer, Electric Keyboard, and Acoustic Guitar. Students play two required pieces on each instrument. Then they work on songs of their choice. Some students may choose to work on composing and arranging original music. Students with a high level of proficiency on an instrument will have the opportunity to use music sequencing and notation software in the classroom.

The centerpiece of the class is the American song "When the Saints Go Marching In". The term will conclude with a performance by the class for a student audience. Each student plays the piece on the instrument of his/her choice.

Applied Science

One Term

Applied Science is part of the Combined Arts Rotation.

Grade 6

This course introduces the students to design and engineering, while reemphasizing concepts that they learn in their physical science classes. We apply concepts of Newtonian physics, aerodynamics, and the Universal Systems Model (the design loop) as the students design, construct, and test CO₂ racecars.

Students work in large groups, small groups and individually as they create and develop their own basswood racecars, while meeting specific limitations. Through a series of refinements drawn on paper, students produce a final working drawing. Next they build, using both hand and some power tools, and test them on a small track. Although students compete against each other with their final finished products, evaluation is based on design and craftsmanship (according to the individual student's own abilities), creativity, and an understanding of the principles of design and science involved.

Grade 7

This course builds upon the concepts covered in the previous year while introducing some higher-level design concepts.

In this course, students work in large and small groups, as well as individually, to explore the design process. Over the course of 9 weeks, they design, develop and construct their own birdhouses that meet a limited number of specific requirements. Students refine their designs through a series of paper drawings before actually constructing the wooden birdhouse. In evaluating students' work, we consider the creativity and quality of design and an understanding of central principles of design and craftsmanship, while taking into account students' previous experience with woodworking.

The second part of the course is an introduction to plastics. Students learn several methods of manufacturing. We discuss some of the unique properties and uses of plastics, while delving lightly into the organic chemistry of this important material.

The term concludes with a design/build project. Teams of students are presented with a problem to solve using a specific set of materials. Students develop and employ problem-solving and communication skills while engineering solutions to the design problem.

Grade 8

In grade 8, Applied Science in Technology students develop and practice skills in problem solving, creative design, functional design and design testing.

Using model bridges, students study the forces on a structure, what keeps them up and what makes them fail. They study existing structures for their historical significance, their use of materials and their application of physics.

Students work in teams of two or three. Given a problem, students must design solutions, build a model, and revise and test it to see how well they solve the problem. Teams compete with each other to determine the best design, but emphasis is on creative design, engineering concepts, use of materials, originality, quality of construction, and, as always, effort.

The second topic of study in grade 8 is flight. Students investigate the many means of flying, concentrating on winged aircraft. They build a simple model aircraft, and explore and apply the laws of physics that answer the question "How does this work?" We end the term with a non-competitive fly-off.

Theater Arts

Theater Arts is part of the Combined Arts rotation.

Theater Arts brings together a variety of skills and talents. In Theater Arts classes, student class work will concentrate on these four areas.

1. **Public Speaking Skills:** Students will continue to develop the fundamental skills essential to any type of public performance.
2. **Reading Skills:** Students will experience the intensive reading that is required to interpret a script and prepare a role.
3. **Theater Appreciation:** Students will experience the planning and preparation that is invested in the staging of a theatrical performance.
4. **Theater Literacy:** Students will work on and watch scenes from a variety of classical and contemporary plays.

Grade 6

One-Half Term

The sixth grade class meets for approximately nine class sessions and introduces such fundamental performance skills as projection, articulation, pace, stance, eye contact, vocal and physical expression, and the usefulness of appropriate props and costuming using monologues and dialogue scenes from a variety of plays. Additionally, students sometimes watch scenes from Broadway productions as part of a discussion of the wide variety of backstage skills and talents that are required to create a theatrical production.

Grade 7

One Term

The seventh grade classes meet for a full quarter, approximately twenty class sessions. We work to further develop the performance skills introduced in the sixth grade year by producing a forty-minute version of a play by William Shakespeare that is presented to other seventh grade students at the end of the quarter. Additionally, this initial exposure to Shakespeare's comedies and tragedies will prepare students to read the Shakespeare plays included in the eighth grade and senior high school English curricula.

Grade 8

One Term

The eighth grade classes meet for a full quarter, approximately twenty class sessions. We rehearse and perform scenes and monologues drawn from American dramatic literature, including works by Arthur Miller, Tennessee Williams, and Neil Simon. This initial exposure to American drama will prepare students to read the plays included in the senior high school English curricula.

In addition, rehearsals commence in November for a school musical, open to all middle school students, which is performed in late March.

Parents who would enjoy assisting with set building, painting, costumes, props, make-up, artwork, ticket sales, or refreshments are always welcome. Theater is a cross-generational community activity. We hope to see you.

TECHNOLOGY & LIBRARY PROGRAMS

Grade 6

One term in the sixth grade Combined Arts Rotation is divided between computer technology and theatre arts. For half of this term, students meet in the Library. During these 4 weeks, students are immersed in being “Information Investigators.”

The focus is on having students increase their facility with information and addressing the essential question: “How can I be an effective, ethical, efficient, evaluative consumer and producer of information?” Students gain skills in locating, searching, and evaluating information sources.

During the course of the unit, students produce a pathfinder of recommended resources on a topic of their choice. This process is grounded in discussion of the role of keywords, developing a dynamic list of keywords and accessing the variety of grade-appropriate library resources in both print and electronic form that can be queried using keywords. These resources include: online encyclopedia, periodical databases, the library catalog (including Webpath Express, a collection of pre-selected curricular websites), books, search engine results, and Creative Commons images. Throughout the unit, the need to be an active, critical consumer of information is stressed. Students are asked to evaluate sources and to give specific details in support of their recommendations.

Grades 6, 7, And 8

Technology Program:

The computer technology program at Wayland Middle School is designed to support instruction and learning in all areas of the curriculum. Our network allows students to save their work so that it can be accessed on all computers in the building, as well as to their online Google App account. All computer use is intended for school-related work only.

Students may transport work to and from school using a variety of methods; on a USB flash drive, emailed as an attachment, or shared via their Wayland Google App account. All computers have MS Office installed which allows students to open Microsoft documents from a Mac or Windows computer.

Students and teachers have access to computers throughout the school:

- Nine carts of laptops for teachers to reserve with classes; six MacBooks, one Dell laptop, and two netbook carts.
- Two Mac computer labs with 25 workstations that teachers may reserve for classes.
- Ten iMac desktops in the Library for drop-in use, as well as a cart of computers in the study halls.

Library Program:

Mission

The mission of the Wayland Middle School Library is to provide current, highly reviewed, curriculum-related materials and a variety of free reading options for its students. The library also contributes resources which support information in new, growing areas of knowledge. The library strives to open up avenues of research to all of its students by providing opportunities for instruction in research skills, information literacy, and media competency, while offering flexible scheduling for full class, small group, or individual instruction.

Hours

The library is typically open from 7:15 AM to 2:30 PM. On Wednesdays, the library often closes at 1:15 PM. Students may stay later only with explicit permission from a supervising faculty member. Any changes to the schedule are posted. Faculty can find a full up-to-date schedule of reservations on a shared calendar. To assist in their planning, students coming in small groups or as individuals are notified of class reservations as applicable.

TECHNOLOGY & LIBRARY PROGRAMS

Circulation Policy

Books are circulated for a two week period and may then be renewed. We encourage students to return books as soon as they are finished reading them so that others can enjoy them! Overdue notices are generated on a regular basis and distributed via homeroom teachers. Students are obligated to fulfill their library obligations in June in order to receive end-of-the-year privileges. Students or their families are invited to approach the library media specialist for help resolving outstanding issues. Lost or damaged materials must be replaced by a method decided upon by the student and the library media specialist.

Donations

Book donations are welcomed to the Library Media Center through a program called Leave a Legacy. Parents may wish to honor a child's birthday or a teacher with a book to be selected by the library media specialist and the parent. A book plate will be placed in the selected title and the honoree will receive an acknowledgment. Please contact the library media specialist for further information.

Volunteer!

The Library encourages volunteerism from students, parents and community members. Volunteers are invaluable to the smooth running of the library. Parent and community volunteers are solicited in the school newsletter as well as at Back to School Night in the fall. Opportunities may include data entry, inventory, circulation, preparing book carts, correspondence, laminating, filing, and construction of displays.

Students who wish to volunteer donate one study a week. Special needs students who need opportunities to learn social and job skills for future employment may also volunteer at other times during the week.

Affiliations

Our Library is a part of the Massachusetts Library System, funded by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners. Among the benefits of membership is access to databases containing historical and current materials. These materials include periodicals as well as full-text ebooks and can be accessed both at home and in school. For a full list, click [here](#).

Music Electives: Chorus

Chorus performs in two major concerts each school year, a Winter Concert in December and the Spring Concert in June. Additional performances may be scheduled for in-school assemblies, multi-school concerts (Wayland Sings!), or community events.

Grade 6

The Sixth Grade Chorus meets twice weekly during flex period. All sixth Grade students are eligible to join.

Each rehearsal includes the study of vocal technique: breath support, tone placement, intonation, phrasing, and diction. Students sing two and three part music in a variety of styles and languages.

Grades 7 And 8

Students in Grades 7 and 8 meet together as one chorus. All seventh and eighth Grade students are eligible to join. The ensemble meets twice a week during flex period.

In our rehearsals, we teach a range of vocal technique including breath support, tone placement, intonation, phrasing, and diction. The ensemble begins as a mixed 3-part chorus with girls split into soprano and alto sections and boys together exploring their new emerging lower voices as a baritone section. Repertoire is selected from a variety of styles, cultures, languages, and themes.

Students receive a grade in Chorus. The grade is based on attendance, effort, and responsibility.

Music Electives: Select Chorus

Grades 6, 7, and 8

Select chorus is made up of students in grades 6, 7, and 8 who wish to sing challenging music including the Junior District audition pieces. Students are selected for this ensemble by audition at the beginning of the school year. Select Chorus also offers the opportunity for students who attend band and orchestra during the flex period to participate in a choral ensemble. We rehearse before school on Wednesday mornings at 6:45 a.m. and after school on Thursday until 3:30.

Select chorus takes part in several concerts each year: the Winter Concert in December, the field trip to the elementary schools in February, the Spring Concert in June, and additional performances at community events, music festivals, and charitable fundraisers.

Grades 7 and 8

EASTERN JUNIOR DISTRICT MIXED CHORUS and TREBLE CHORUS

Auditions are held in late January for honors choruses sponsored by the Massachusetts Music Educators Association, Eastern District. Students are given ample time to work on the prepared audition selection. Singers in 7th and 8th grade are eligible to audition. There is a pre-audition tryout for interested WMS students in November. Students who are accepted in January will participate in rehearsals and a concert in early March.

Music Electives: Band and Orchestra

Instrumental music at the middle school consists of large-group ensembles and small-group lessons and workshops. Large groups (band and orchestra) rehearse twice a week during flex period with emphasis on preparation of music for concerts, sight reading, musicianship training, increasing listening ability and ensemble skills, developing appropriate rehearsal techniques, and understanding the importance of teamwork and responsibility in the overall effectiveness of the band or orchestra. Playing in a performing group is an enriching experience now and one that can be continued in high school, college, and beyond. Small-group lessons and workshops concentrate on instruction to enhance the student's ability on his/her instrument, and on music history and theory to broaden the individual's musical background as a listener and a performer, thus increasing potential enjoyment.

Instruction for beginners and students who wish to transfer to another instrument is sometimes available. Call and speak to the Music Department.

The following instrumental performance groups are offered:

- Band, for all wind and percussion instrumentalists.
- Orchestra, for all string players and selected wind and percussion players from the band.
- Wind Ensemble, an invitational group for advanced band members during part of the year.
- Jazz Band and Stage Band, open to grades 6, 7, and 8 by audition.
- Honors Chamber Orchestra, open to advanced string players by audition.
- Eastern Massachusetts Junior District Band and Orchestra, open to seventh and eighth grade band and orchestra members by audition.

For more information on the bands, see the website <<http://www.bandnotes.info>>

For more information on the orchestras, see <http://TeacherWeb.com/MA/WaylandMiddleSchool/Tandon/>

Wellness

WELLNESS IN THE CLASSROOM

The Wellness program in the classroom is designed to provide students with the information necessary to function in a complex and ever-changing society. The goal in all areas of the health curriculum is to provide facts that take into account the increasing cognitive and social/emotional maturity of the student. Each exercise includes learning accurate factual information and then making decisions and practicing behaviors contributing to a healthy life. We follow the Massachusetts Comprehensive Health Curriculum Frameworks and the National Health Education Standards.

Grade 6

Topics include decision-making, self-image and self-improvement, alcohol and drug education, smoking myths and realities, marijuana: myths and realities, advertising, human sexuality, mental health and stress management. The instructor uses the Life Skills training workbook to help take them through the health curriculum. The Life Skills Program provides a classroom experience that will help the student make responsible decisions concerning personal health. The focus of the Life Skills Program in the 6th grade is improving self-esteem and learning to make good healthy decisions.

Grade 7

Topics include nutrition with label reading. Within the nutrition unit, specific emphasis on the Life Skills topics of decision making, Media Influences & marketing, and assertiveness skills are covered. The body image unit covers disordered eating and how hurtful comments on a person's appearance can lead to unhealthy decisions. Specific emphasis on the Life Skills topics of communication skills and social skills are covered. Role playing is used as a learning tool to allow students to practice their assertive, communication, and social skills. The bullying unit is used to teach the Life Skills topics of resolving conflicts and resisting peer pressure. Finally the stress management unit covers the Life Skills topic of coping with anxiety.

There is a dietary analysis assignment that all students complete. Using the website www.choosemyplate.gov.

Grade 8

Topics include drug abuse, making decision, media influence, coping with anxiety, coping with anger, social skills, assertiveness, resolving conflicts, resisting peer pressure, human sexuality, and healthy relationships. The instructor uses the Life Skills training workbook to help take them through the health curriculum.

The Life Skills Training program is different than other prevention programs in several important ways. First, it is based on science. It was carefully designed to target the primary causes of substance use after an extensive review of existing research literature. Many prevention programs are based on guesses and hunches about what might work. The Life Skills Training program is based on what the latest research tells us about the causes of substance abuse. Second, it is comprehensive. It doesn't just focus on one aspect of the problem of substance abuse. It addresses all of the most important factors leading adolescents to use one or more drugs by teaching a combination of health information, general life skills, and drug resistance skills.

WELLNESS IN THE GYMNASIUM

The Wellness Program in the gymnasium at Wayland Middle School is designed to enhance the students' value and appreciation for achieving a healthy lifestyle and maintaining a personal level of fitness. As promoted in the National Healthy Physical Education Framework, the core concepts include motor skill development, fitness, personal and social competency, and wellness. We are also guided by the Massachusetts Comprehensive Health Curriculum Frameworks.

Each grade level is exposed to a variety of activities that are designed in a sequential order of learning involving skills and strategies. We offer a variety of activities with an emphasis on developing personal fitness, social

Wellness

interaction and growth, sportsmanship and self-confidence. All these promote and contribute to the development of a healthy lifestyle that includes physical activity.

The means of achieving a healthy lifestyle is addressed through our program's offerings, following the seven dimensions of Wellness. You will find a variety of team and individual sports along with lifelong individual activities. We also offer unique and innovative activities that are reflective of the continuing effort on the part of the program to be a leader in the field of wellness.

The Wellness Center in the middle school helps us expand our ability to offer quality physical education and health services to our students. The Wellness Center will service all of our students. The importance will be placed on personal physical fitness and making healthy lifestyle decisions that will last throughout a lifetime. Students will be able to use fitness equipment in order to have a better understanding of personal wellness.

Activities offered in Wellness in the Gymnasium:

Advanced Fitness (8 th)	Floor hockey	Soccer
Archery	Gaelic Football	Softball
Beginner Fitness (6 th)	Global Games	Square Dance
Badminton	Hiking	Team Handball
Basketball	Jump rope	Tennis
Cross-country Skiing	Lacrosse	Touch Football
CPR safety training	Orienteering Project Adventure	Touch Rugby
Intermediate Fitness (7 th)	--Cooperation & communication	Track and Field
Fencing	--Cooperation & teamwork	Traverse Climbing Wall
Field Hockey	--Creative games	Ultimate Frisbee
Fitnessgram Assessment	Pilates	Volleyball
		Yoga

Counseling Department

The student's experience at the middle school goes beyond classroom learning. The developmental period of early adolescence is a time of rapid growth and change, physically, cognitively, socially, and emotionally. There is great variability among children of the same chronological age. Physically, the growth spurt is accelerated with the onset of puberty. This growth makes both boys and girls self-conscious about their bodies and their appearance. Along with physical changes, new cognitive abilities begin to develop. These allow the early adolescent to move from concrete toward abstract reasoning, to consider alternatives, and to organize and remember an increasingly larger, and more complex, amount of information.

In addition, middle school adolescents begin to change their relationships with other students, adults, and family members. Paradoxically, just as they gain the cognitive capacity to take other people's perspectives, emotionally they become more self-centered. Socially the peer group becomes increasingly significant.

The school environment facilitates the cognitive, social, and emotional growth of the preadolescent and early adolescent by providing a program and structure that allows for the great variability among students within this developmental process, and at the same time it aims to develop increased responsibility and maturity. The counseling program focuses on these developmental issues with which students are struggling and helps them learn to adapt and cope with these changes. The counselor in grade 8 also has a key role in preparing students for the transition to high school. The counseling program involves four main areas:

- Short-Term Counseling – individual and group
- Parent Consultation
- Consultation to Teachers
- Special education team participation, including assessment

Short-Term Counseling

Counselors are available to help students with the developmental issues of the middle school years. They try to help students to adapt and cope with the many changes taking place, particularly in the areas of increasing academic expectations and friendship issues. In addition, counselors provide individual and group support for the many students who are dealing with mental health issues and life stresses in such areas as anxiety and depression, chemical dependency, parental separation, divorce or remarriage, adoption, illness or death in the family, learning problems, or sexuality concerns.

Parent Consultation

Parents remain key figures in facilitating their child's development. Counselors consult with parents to discuss concerns regarding the student's personal, academic, and social development. By working together, the school and home can provide a healthy, consistent environment in which the child may grow. Counselors invite parents to discuss educational and developmental issues at any time. Sometimes counselors meet with groups of parents at morning or evening discussions. Counselors also work with parents who need referrals to an outside therapist or a medication consultation for their child.

Consultation to Teachers

Wayland Middle School is organized in a House system with designated teams of teachers, counselors, and house leaders meeting together on a regular basis to plan joint activities, communicate about students, and formulate plans to facilitate student progress.

In addition to house meetings, counselors consult frequently with teachers and administrators on an individual basis to support the successful academic and social/emotional development of their students. Counselors may facilitate conversation between teachers and students, and may provide psychoeducation to the team of teachers on relevant topics.

Special Education Team Participation

Counselors work closely with the special education staff to help in the evaluation of student needs through testing, observation, or consultation. They attend team evaluation meetings and help to formulate individualized educational plans appropriate to the needs of the individual student. They assist in the implementation of individualized educational plans as needed. Counselors are also the primary liaison for 504 federal plans.

Language Alternative Program

In order to enroll in small-group skills classes offered through the Resource Room, students need to be on an Individual Education Plan (IEP), as decided through the formal special education evaluation process of Massachusetts state law, Chapter 766.

Courses included here are:

- Reading Skills
- Writing Skills
- Wilson Language Training
- Lexia Reading Program
- Math
- Organization Skills

Reading Skills

All of the students in this course are two or more years below grade level in skills development. Classes are conducted in small groups and are individualized (when possible) to meet the requirements of each student's educational plan. A variety of strategies are provided to assist students to become successful readers. Specific reading comprehension skills are worked on utilizing formal reading programs, supplemented by readings from English, social studies, and science classes. Students are asked to discuss themes and the sequence of events, as well as make inferences and draw conclusions based on their reading. Materials for reading classes include specially designed texts and workbooks, teacher-created lessons and games, commercial paperbacks, short stories and materials and assignments from the student's regular classes. Emphasis is placed on vocabulary development, comprehension strategies and fluency practice.

Writing Skills

This course is designed for students needing further development of their written language skills. The five-step writing process is utilized with greater emphasis on prewriting strategies before writing as well as specific instruction in skills needed for the final editing stage: spelling, punctuation, and proofreading skills. Whenever possible, classroom writing assignments in English, social studies, and science will be utilized to teach writing skills within the context of the curriculum.

Use of the computer for completion of major writing assignments is strongly encouraged. Study and organizational skills are continuously addressed. Students are given time to ask questions and seek help in understanding and following direction of difficult assignments.

Wilson Language Training

A small number of students with significant word attack and spelling difficulties require intensive teaching using The Wilson Reading Program, a sequential, multi-sensory reading system. Students meet in groups of 2 to 4 students to receive intensive, small group instruction in decoding, word analysis, syllabification and spelling skills. Students are recommended for this course who are two or more years below grade level in reading skills and who need a specialized, multi-sensory approach to reading.

Math

Students with learning disabilities in areas affecting math work on individualized plans in the Resource Room. Areas may include basic drills, basic skills, computation and word problems (simple and multi-step). We also spend time reviewing concepts learned in the regular education curriculum.

Organization Skills

Within the Resource Center we also teach important organizational skills to students who are having difficulty with school, as described in their individualized educational plan. This assistance can range from individual skills work, to support work with regular classroom assignments. Additionally we provide emotional support as delineated by a child's I.E.P.

Students come to the Resource Center between one and four periods per week to work in small groups with a Resource Center teacher. Resource Room teachers work with other teachers to clarify classroom expectations and to help modify work for individual pupils if modification is necessary.

Language Alternative Program

Students in the Language Alternative Program are functioning academically two to four years below grade level. They have primary difficulties with language skills, especially reading, comprehension, and writing. Most of the students have problems with receptive and expressive language, demonstrated by limited vocabulary knowledge and below average communication skills. Some receive speech and language therapy services.

Students in the Language Alternative Program often have social/emotional needs and goals which result from their language issues. Some may miss cues for social communication and are challenged by expressing themselves within their peer group. Some struggle with low self-esteem as they work to understand their learning needs and develop coping strategies for academic and social success. We use a supportive, cognitive behavioral approach to help students work toward goals in these socio-emotional areas.

Language Alternative Program students are usually mainstreamed into homerooms, science, social studies, combined arts, wellness, and sometimes math and English. Students sometimes take either science or social studies so that they can more capably manage the academic load. The program staff provides support in the regular classroom when necessary. This may take the form of pre-teaching or reinforcing classroom lessons, modifying class work or tests as appropriate, or serving as an assistant within the regular education classroom to help refocus the student, clarify directions, or help with work completion. Study periods, called Organization Skills, are used to work on homework for students' mainstream classes.

We generally teach reading comprehension and/or writing skills, as well as math, in small groups in the Language Alternative Program, using topics and themes similar to the grade level curriculum when possible. We adapt reading and writing assignments to meet the individualized goals for each student. We read paperbacks, poems, magazine articles, and plays and complete corresponding comprehension skill work. Word processing on the computer is used for writing assignments whenever possible. The Language Alternative Program is flexible, and some students have taken more classes than others. The team decides this on an individual basis. Students entering seventh grade do not usually take a world language. They use that time for separate reading and writing classes, or an extra organization skills period.

The Language Alternative Program staff coordinates the students' daily schedules, keeping in close contact with regular classroom teachers and parents regarding homework, class assignments, social emotional issues, and school difficulties. Close contact is also maintained with the school counselors who sometimes help in planning behavioral contracts to address social and emotional goals. There is frequent communication between home and LAP staff.

The Alternative Resource Center (ARC)

The Alternative Resource Center program provides a setting for about six to ten students in the middle school with primarily emotional and secondarily social and behavioral needs who have found it difficult to adapt successfully to the mainstream program. Typically, students in ARC have usually struggled with emotional issues that are expressed as behavioral or interpersonal problems within the family as well as at school. Most of the students are performing academically at a level substantially below their ability. Many have significant learning problems, which contribute to their difficulties with academics and relationships with peers and adults. All students in the ARC program are recommended to receive regular counseling services at school and/or outside the school setting.

The ARC program tries to do three things. First, we attempt to establish a strong sense of community among students, staff and parents - a sense of caring and belonging. Second, we try to enable students to gain a sense of their own competencies and discover that they have the responsibility, inherent power and capacity to make positive change. Third, we attempt to provide academic challenges and high expectations for students. We support each student in setting appropriate individual goals and making steady progress toward these goals.

The core of the Alternative Resource Center is to provide a home base to strengthen the emotional and adaptive resources of students who are drawn off course. Building emotional resilience enhances students' capacity to connect with others and belong. These skills allow them to function in a productive community and to work toward goals beyond the immediate moment. Resiliency develops when a student has a balance of external protective factors such as caring relationships and internal assets such as good problem solving skills and a sense of competence. A key aspect of this program is to help students develop a capacity to regulate their emotion, which enhances and supports all areas of learning and relating. By strengthening these skills, ARC intends to boost students' resilience and to prepare them to reintegrate into the mainstream program.

Specific social-emotional, academic and behavioral goals are individualized for each student, though a number of students may be working toward very similar goals that are central to academic and interpersonal success. Peer socialization and social support is advanced through activity, experiential and discussion groups, which may include members within the program and peers in the general school community. The special education teacher who heads the program works in concert with school counselors and psychologists, who assess the relevant history, perform necessary interviews, develop a formulation and an understanding of each student's problems and recommend a treatment plan. This treatment plan, which is anchored in the plain language of the resilience model (see attached), guides the program's practices and goals in working with a student and informs teachers and parents as well, so a coordinated approach is developed and implemented. Parent and family participation in the implementation and follow-through of the program will be discussed throughout the process. The plan and goals are also shared with the student in order to clarify the rationale for the program, promote motivation and set expectations for success.

Each student in the program meets weekly with the special education liaison for feedback on his or her progress toward goals for that week and over time. A variety of rewards and privileges can be earned by attaining certain levels of success toward their goals. These may include participation in special activities, treats, etc. They serve as incentives for students to strive for continued improvement. This cognitive-behavioral model helps students find out how they are doing through a structured system of feedback, encourages them to practice and develop new skills and provides an opportunity to reflect on their emotions and behavior.

Each student comes to the ARC classroom daily; often more than once, based on their treatment plan and schedule. Here, they prepare and get organized for the day, receive assistance with homework, work on long-term assignments, or discuss and get support for social-emotional or behavioral issues. Individual counseling, group discussion or experiential play and adventure activities may also take place during the student's time in ARC depending on his/her treatment plan. In addition, those who need further academic support may at selected times, get instruction in a subject or receive assistance developing necessary skills for their curriculum. Thus, a flexible and integrated approach to meeting the academic and emotional needs of the students in the Alternative Resource Center allows for individualization for each student.

The ARC teacher keeps in close contact with the regular classroom teachers and administrators, parents and counselor/therapists regarding students' progress toward academic, social-emotional and behavioral goals. The small number of students in the program allows for frequent communication by telephone, communication log

The Alternative Resource Center (ARC)

book, and email or parent conferences. Close communication between home and school helps to maximize support and plan effectively on behalf of each student.