



NORTHERN HILLS Middle School

2017-2018

Course Description Guide

Northern Hills Middle School

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David Simpson, Principal

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Forest Hills Public Schools

All learners achieving individual potential

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR FOREST HILLS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Vision

Forest Hills Public Schools...all learners achieving individual potential.

Mission

In partnership with our community, Forest Hills Public Schools will provide all learners with opportunities to acquire the knowledge, skills, and experience necessary to build meaningful and productive lives.

Guiding Principles

We believe Forest Hills Public Schools is a learning organization, built upon integrity, and to this end:

We are committed to the principle of **Caring**.

We believe in:

- maintaining a family atmosphere
- supporting each other
- being warm, sincere and genuine
- accepting and including everyone
- confronting the tough issues
- keeping each other safe and secure

We are committed to the principle of **Collaboration**.

We believe in:

- solving problems together
- working toward win/win
- building partnerships
- sharing best practices
- volunteering
- being generous
- engaging parents as full partners

We are committed to the principle of **Open Communication**.

We believe in:

- listening
- sharing
- promoting trust
- building community through dialogue
- encouraging participation from all

We are committed to the principle of **Diversity and Inclusiveness**.

We believe in:

- helping students value their unique talents and gifts
- knowing, understanding and appreciating each other
- valuing individual differences
- celebrating our heritage
- healing racism
- embracing differences to enrich, strengthen, and connect our community
- striving for equity
- considering all viewpoints to arrive at better decisions

We are committed to the principle of **High Expectations**.

We believe in:

- expecting all children to learn
- requiring all to give their best
- providing opportunities for all to contribute
- assuming parents want what's best for their child
- maintaining high academic standards
- offering challenging opportunities
- helping students make healthy choices
- contributing to the development of good character

We are committed to the principle of **Learning**.

We believe in:

- learning for its own sake
- offering a range of educational opportunities
- providing diverse experiences
- individualizing learning programs
- accommodating multiple intelligences and learning styles
- preparing students for lifelong learning
- providing quality resources
- accessing the world beyond our classrooms

We are committed to the principle of **Respect**.

We believe in:

- fostering high regard for self and others
- modeling civility
- appreciating differences
- adhering to our code of conduct
- having zero tolerance for inappropriate behaviors

We are committed to the principle of **Trust**.

We believe in:

- being honest
- being consistent
- being loyal
- assuming others' intentions are good
- keeping promises
- demonstrating good stewardship

Forest Hills Public Schools

Dear Middle School Families:

We believe that middle school is more than just a building. It is a philosophy that recognizes the unique physical, social, emotional, and intellectual qualities of students in this age group. In order to help students grow, a middle school curriculum must be intellectually challenging while reinforcing previously learned skills. The school atmosphere must allow students to verbalize their opinions, experience success, develop trust, have input into educational processes, gain adult acceptance, have some freedom of movement, and make decisions without fear.

Forest Hills middle school students benefit from a rigorous core curriculum aligned with state standards and benchmarks in language arts, math, science, and social studies combined with an interesting variety of exploratory opportunities.

Learning continues even when the school day is finished. Students may choose from a wide variety of programs including enrichment classes, clubs, volunteer opportunities, inter-scholastic athletics, Odyssey of the Mind, Math Counts, National Geography Bee, Science Olympiad, National Spelling Bee, school plays, and book clubs.

Results of the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP now M-Step) show that Forest Hills Public Schools consistently ranks among the highest-scoring districts in the state of Michigan. When measuring our success however, we do not simply look at the statistics. We also examine the quality of relationships and interactions. We model respect and understanding for each other. One of the most important factors in every student's success is the involvement of parents/guardians. We are proud of the active participation of our parents/guardians. Our students' accomplishments and success reflect their parents'/guardians' interest and support.

In 2006, the Michigan legislature passed requirements for the high school Michigan Merit Curriculum and a state endorsed diploma. The new laws also require seventh and eighth grade students and parents to develop an Educational Development Plan (EDP) related to their future career and training goals after high school. In order to help you better understand the Michigan Merit Curriculum and FHPS graduation requirements, we have provided an additional section in our course description guide on page 19.

We look forward to working with you and your child as we plan together for another successful school year.

Sincerely,

Glenn Mitcham,
Principal
Central Middle School

Dave Washburn,
Principal
Eastern Middle School

Nancy Susterka,
Principal
Northern Hills Middle School

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EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANS (EDP)

The Michigan Merit Curriculum (MMC) legislation states, “each pupil in grade 7 is provided with the opportunity to develop an educational development plan, and that each pupil has developed an educational development plan before he or she begins high school. An educational development plan shall be developed by the pupil under the supervision of the pupil's school counselor or another designee qualified to act in a counseling role under section 1233 or 1233a selected by the high school principal and shall be based on a career pathways program or similar career exploration program.” (MCL 380.1278a)

The EDP is a secondary/post-secondary planning tool that directs the educational plan and career planning activities schedule. In their EDP, students identify a career pathway and write employment, education, and training goals. They also identify a course of study (the credits that will be taken) intended to provide the skills and competencies needed to be successful in the next steps after high school. EDP's are “living” documents that are updated as students' age and their interests and abilities become more obvious and focused. It is recommended that the EDP be updated at least annually in conjunction with other planning activities designed to support student achievement. (MDE MMC Guidelines v.12.07)

Forest Hills students begin planning for their EDP in seventh grade during classroom guidance. Students are introduced to a web-based career and post-secondary exploration program called Career Cruising. Students and parents are issued an individual login so they may access the program from home as well as at school. Students complete state requirements for the EDP during eighth grade, including development of a four-year plan for courses they intend to take during high school.

Counselors work with students each year to update the EDP to ensure course selections align with their educational pathway, employment, education, and training goals. During high school, students and parents will also utilize Career Cruising, a web-based program that helps track EDP information, high school grades, test scores, extra-curricular activities, applications to college, and other post-secondary training programs.

TWO-YEAR COURSE SELECTION PLAN

The Two-Year Course Selection Plan should reflect career goals and post-secondary plans as indicated on the student's Educational Developmental Plan (EDP).

7 TH GRADE	
<u>1st Semester</u>	<u>2nd Semester</u>
(1) Language Arts 7	(1) Language Arts 7
(2) Mathematics 7	(2) Mathematics 7
(3) Life Science 7	(3) Life Science 7
(4) Word History	(4) World History
	(5) Sem.Elective
	(5) Sem. Elective
(6) Music or 2 Elective	(6) Music or 2 Electives
Music is a Full Year Elective	
Semester = 18 weeks	
<i><u>SI and CHI students- see specific grade level requirements on pg.6/7</u></i>	

8 TH GRADE	
<u>1st Semester</u>	<u>2nd Semester</u>
(1) Language Arts 8	(1) Language Arts 8
(2) Mathematics 8	(2) Mathematics 8
(3) Foundations of Science 8	(3) Foundations of Science 8
(4) U.S. History 8	(4) U.S. History 8
(5) Sem. Elective	(5) Sem. Elective
(6) Music or 2 Electives	(6) Music or 2 Electives
Music is a Full Year Elective	
<u>*Spanish 1, French 1 and Chinese 1 are Full Year Electives (considered HS course/grades will be posted on the HS transcript.)</u>	
Semester = 18 weeks	
<i><u>SI and CHI students- see specific grade level requirements on pg.9/10</u></i>	

SEVENTH GRADE

REQUIRED COURSE SELECTION INFORMATION:

- Seventh grade students are required to take a full year of math, science, language arts, social studies (These classes will be automatically scheduled). SI students will take social studies and language arts in Spanish.
- **Spanish Immersion** seventh grade students are required to take one semester of the **21STCENTURY COMPARATIVE LANGUAGE** course.
- **Chinese Immersion** students are required to take all four core subject classes and Chinese Language and Literature 7

REQUIRED CORE SUBJECTS

LANGUAGE ARTS 7

In the seventh grade, students are exposed to a variety of selections in literature (mystery, poetry, drama, mythology, and legends) as well as outside readings. Students develop reading and writing strategies, whole building vocabulary, spelling, speaking, and listening skills. Understanding thematic units and thesis support writings are a focus at this grade level. This curriculum is aligned with the Common Core Standards adopted by the State of Michigan.

SPANISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE 7 (Spanish Immersion Students Only)

This course is designed to meet the new language arts standards as defined by the “Common Core” while also meeting the National Foreign Language Standards. By carefully implementing instruction to increase students’ L2 proficiency levels (aligned by ACTFL to the Common Core State Standards), teachers will “immerse” their students in authentic literature and informational media. These are written or created by the Spanish-speaking community, connecting with social studies topics and global issues.

WORLD HISTORY 7

The seventh grade social studies curriculum introduces students to the beginnings of the human story. As they explore the great early civilizations of the eastern and western hemispheres, students discover the secrets of these ancient cultures that continue to influence the modern world. (Beginnings through 300 C.E./A.D.)

SPANISH E. HEMISPHERE EXPLORATIONS 7 (Spanish Immersion Students Only)

The seventh grade social studies curriculum introduces students to the beginnings of the human story. As they explore the great early civilizations of the eastern and western hemispheres, students discover the secrets of these ancient cultures that continue to influence the modern world. (Beginnings through 300 C.E./A.D.) This will be taught in Spanish.

MATH 7

Math 7 develops mathematical concepts and skills in four important mathematical strands: Number and Operations, Geometry and Measurement, Data Analysis and Probability, as well as Algebra and Functions. Students will engage in a research-based, problem-centered learning environment to develop proficiency in both mathematical reasoning and communication.

LIFE/ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE 7

The general science curriculum is well balanced between content and process with a heavy emphasis on ecology and human environmental impacts. Main units include: ecology and ecosystems, cell functions and heredity, plant processes, fossils, and an introduction to meteorology.

SI- 21st CENTURY COMPARATIVE LANGUAGE 7-Semester Course

This course is designed to foster the metalinguistic awareness of students' first language (eg. English) through the comparative study of their second language (eg. Spanish). This course will facilitate learning through project based opportunities to dissect language and its structure in order to accurately construct and convey meaning. The objective of the course for second language learners (immersion) is to elevate the quality of the four modes of communication (reading , writing, speaking , and listening) in their primary language as well as other acquired languages.

CHINESE LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE 7 - This is a required full year course for Chinese Immersion students.

This course is designed to meet the new language arts standards as defined by the "Common Core" while also meeting the National Foreign Language Standards. By carefully implementing instruction to increase students' L2 proficiency levels (aligned by ACTFL to the Common Core State Standards), teachers will "immerse" their students in authentic literature and informational media. These are written or created by the Chinese-speaking community, connecting with social studies topics and global issues.

SEVENTH GRADE CHALLENGE COURSES

Forest Hills School District strives to meet the needs of our students with strong academic potential, demonstrated academic achievement, and a high level of motivation by offering Challenge Classes in language arts, math, social studies, and science at the middle school level. These classes are open to students who apply and meet the entrance criteria.

Challenge classes in the core content areas are distinguished from "regular" classes by an increase in pace, breadth, and depth of instruction. They are designed for students who are "willing to engage" and exhibit high levels of commitment and achievement. Students selected for these classes should have excellent study skills and time to devote to significantly more homework.

Before applying for a Challenge Class, parents and student should consider the independent work habits, motivation, interest, and current work/activity load of the student. Students in these classes should expect additional assignments and projects to be completed outside of the classroom. A minimum of a "B" letter grade must be maintained to remain in challenge classes.

CHALLENGE LANGUAGE ARTS- 7

In the seventh grade, students are exposed to a variety of selections in literature (mystery, poetry, drama, mythology, and legends) as well as outside readings. Students develop reading and writing strategies, whole building vocabulary, spelling, speaking, and listening skills. Understanding thematic units and thesis support writings are a focus at this grade level. The pace is much faster, and involves more in-depth, advanced and challenging readings, projects, tests, language study, writings, and discussions.

SI CHALLENGE 21ST CENTURY COMPARATIVE LANGUAGE -7- 1 SEMESTER-

This course is designed to foster the metalinguistic awareness of students' first language (eg. English) through the comparative study of their second language (eg. Spanish). This course will facilitate learning through project based opportunities to dissect language and its structure in order to accurately construct and convey meaning. The objective of the course for second language learners (immersion) is to elevate the quality of the four modes of communication (reading , writing, speaking , and listening) in their primary language as well as other acquired languages. The pace of the challenge class is much faster and involves more in-depth and advanced /challenging readings, projects, tests, language study, writings, and discussions. (Student must be enrolled in the Spanish Immersion program.)

MIDDLE SCHOOL CHALLENGE MATH -7

This is the first year of a two-year course that covers three years of math curriculum aligned with the Michigan Academic Standards, including Math 7, Math 8, and High School Algebra I standards. After successful completion of this two year course, students are prepared for Geometry. Students enrolled in this course will be eligible to take the Advanced Placement Calculus or the Advanced Placement Statistics course their senior year of high school. Please note this is a two year program. Upon successful completion at the end of eighth grade, students will receive high school credit.

CHALLENGE LIFE/ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE -7

The science curriculum is well balanced between content and process with a heavy emphasis on ecology and human environmental impacts. Main units include: ecology and ecosystems, cell functions and heredity, plant processes, fossils, and an introduction to meteorology. Challenge Science 7 pacing moves much faster and involves more in-depth, advanced and challenging readings, projects, tests, writings, and discussions.

CHALLENGE SOCIAL STUDIES- 7

Challenge Social Studies 7 follows the regular curriculum for the subject area at the seventh grade level. The pace is faster, and involves more in-depth, project-based learning, writings, and discussions. Connections between ancient civilizations and our modern world will strengthen students' awareness and knowledge in the focus areas of college, career, and civic readiness.

CHALLENGE SPANISH E. HEMISPHERE EXPLORATIONS- 7 (Spanish Immersion Students Only)

Challenge Spanish Social Studies 7 follows the regular curriculum for the subject area at the seventh grade level. The pace is faster, and involves more in-depth, project-based learning, writings, and discussions. Comparisons to current events and public policy issues will be a focus of this class.

Must be enrolled in the Spanish Immersion Program.

SEVENTH and EIGHTH GRADE ENHANCEMENT COURSES

Research demonstrates that a student's future academic success is closely aligned to his/her acquisition of the necessary grade level standards in mathematics and English. We value opportunities to provide each student with additional core content area support. Your child's academic progress will be assessed in an ongoing process along through a review of standardized test data and ongoing dialogue with core teachers. These classes are prescribed for students on an individual basis and we recognize some students may require more than one marking period in order to refine their skills. Parents may also elect these courses for their child.

ENHANCEMENT COURSE SELECTION INFORMATION

Enhancement offers teacher-directed assistance with all core subject assignments, tests, projects, and homework. A variety of good study skills are reviewed to aid students in successfully using the homework agenda and completing course requirements, especially homework. Recommendation of a teacher or counselor is needed to enter this class. Recommendations will be based on the following criteria: Academic assistance needed with homework, students struggling with understanding concepts, and students experiencing significant academic difficulties.

ACADEMIC SUPPORT – one semester

Academic Support offers teacher-directed assistance with all core subject assignments, tests, projects, and homework. A variety of good study skills are reviewed to aid students in successfully using the homework agenda and completing course requirements, especially homework. Recommendation of a teacher or counselor is needed to enter this class. Recommendations will be based on the following criteria: Academic assistance needed with homework, students struggling with understanding concepts, and students experiencing significant academic difficulties. Students requesting more than one semester require counselor and administrator approval.

****Minimum enrollment required to offer this class that students are placed in by teacher, counselor, or parent request.***

MATH POWER HOUR – one semester

Do you sometimes look at a problem in math and wonder where to start to find the answer? Do you frequently come up with the wrong answer because you don't understand the process you need to use to find it? Does math sometimes seem like a foreign language to you? Math Power Hour will review the most troublesome areas of math for you so that you can find success in mathematics! *Minimum enrollment required to offer this class that students are placed in by teacher, counselor, or parent request.

EIGHTH GRADE REQUIRED COURSES

The guidelines listed below are for eighth grade students to follow in their course selection for the school year.

REQUIRED COURSE SELECTION INFORMATION:

- Eighth grade students are required to take a full year of math, science, language arts, social studies (These classes will be automatically scheduled). SI students will take social studies and language arts in Spanish.
- Spanish Immersion eighth grade students are required to take one semester of the **21STCENTURY COMPARATIVE LANGUAGE** course.
- **Chinese Immersion** students are required to take all four core subject classes and Chinese Language and Literature 8

LANGUAGE ARTS- 8

In the eighth grade, a continued development of composition skills occurs with emphasis on writing from selected topics. Grammar, writing, and reading comprehension are strongly emphasized. Extended learning in poetry, short stories, and dramatic techniques through selected topics in literature are three major units of study. This curriculum is aligned with the Common Core Standards adopted by the State of Michigan.

SPANISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE- 8 (Spanish Immersion Students Only)

This course further develops the strong foundational language skills and cross-cultural knowledge base students acquire in SI 7 while also preparing them to meet the more academically challenging setting of high school. By continuing to meet both the Common Core State Language Arts Standards and National Foreign Language Standards through the study and analysis of authentic literature and informational media, teachers will intentionally foster the L2 linguistic development necessary to support students' increased cognitive capacity.

U.S. HISTORY 8

The Study of American History will begin with the fight for independence through the Civil War and Reconstruction. The purpose of social studies is to prepare young people to become responsible citizens in our democratic society. The social studies curriculum emphasizes historical knowledge, thinking skills, a commitment to democratic values, and citizen participation.

SPANISH EXPLORING AMERICA- 8 (Spanish Immersion Students Only)

The Study of American History will begin with the fight for independence through the Civil War and Reconstruction. The purpose of social studies is to prepare young people to become responsible citizens in our democratic society. The social studies curriculum emphasizes historical knowledge, thinking skills, a commitment to democratic values, and citizen participation. This will be taught in Spanish.

MATH 8

Students who successfully completed Math 7 in seventh grade, will be enrolled in Math 8. Curriculum is based on the Grade Level Content Expectations established by the Michigan Department of Education. Major areas of study include: Number families, rate of change (increases, decreases, and percentages), families of functions, linear equations/inequalities (also systems), polynomials, quadratics, shapes and area, volume and surface area, and data and probability. There is also an extensive emphasis on graphing. This curriculum is aligned with the Common Core Standards adopted by the State of Michigan.

FOUNDATIONS OF SCIENCE

The foundations of science course acts as an introductory science course that explores several concepts integral in the application to higher-level high school science courses as well as a richer understanding of the world around us. The first semester includes the study of forces and motion, sound and light, as well as an introduction to matter. The second semester is an overview of the main concepts in Earth science. Students who demonstrate mastery of the course content will earn up to one Michigan Merit Curriculum science credit.

SI- 21st CENTURY COMPARATIVE LANGUAGE 8 -Semester Course

This course is designed to foster the metalinguistic awareness of students' first language (eg. English) through the comparative study of their second language (eg. Spanish). This course will facilitate learning through project based opportunities to dissect language and its structure in order to accurately construct and convey meaning. The objective of the course for second language learners (immersion) is to elevate the quality of the four modes of communication (reading, writing, speaking, and listening) in their primary language as well as other acquired languages.

CHINESE LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE- 8 (This is a required full year course for Chinese Immersion students.)

This course further develops the strong foundational language skills and cross-cultural knowledge base students acquire in CHI 7 while also preparing them to meet the more academically challenging setting of high school. By continuing to meet both the Common Core State Language Arts Standards and National Foreign Language Standards through the study and analysis of authentic literature and informational media, teachers will intentionally foster the L2 linguistic development necessary to support students' increased cognitive capacity.

EIGHTH GRADE CHALLENGE COURSES

Forest Hills School District strives to meet the needs of our students with strong academic potential, demonstrated academic achievement, and a high level of motivation by offering Challenge Classes in language arts, math, social studies, and science at the middle school level. These classes are open to students who apply and meet the entrance criteria.

Challenge classes in the core content areas are distinguished from "regular" classes by an increase in pace, breadth, and depth of instruction. They are designed for students who are "willing to engage" and exhibit high levels of commitment and achievement. Students selected for these classes should have excellent study skills and time to devote to significantly more homework.

Before applying for a Challenge Class, parents and student should consider the independent work habits, motivation, interest, and current work/activity load of the student. Students in these classes should expect additional assignments and projects to be completed outside of the classroom. A minimum of a "B" letter grade must be maintained to remain in challenge classes.

CHALLENGE LANGUAGE ARTS 8

Challenge Language Arts 8 follows the Common Core standards for eighth grade. In addition, students will analyze the identity struggles of literary characters. During this process, students will explore their own belief systems and examine how those beliefs have come to shape their identities and worldviews. A heavy emphasis is placed on effective writing skills, collaborative projects, and public speaking.

SI CHALLENGE 21ST CENTURY COMPARATIVE LANGUAGE 8- 1 SEMESTER

This course is designed to foster the metalinguistic awareness of students' first language (eg. English) through the comparative study of their second language (eg. Spanish). This course will facilitate learning through project based opportunities to dissect language and its structure in order to accurately construct and convey meaning. The objective of the course for second language learners (immersion) is to elevate the quality of the four modes of communication (reading , writing, speaking , and listening). In their primary language as well as other acquired languages. The pace of the challenge class is much faster and involves more in-depth and advanced /challenging readings, projects, tests, language study, writings, and discussions. (Student must be enrolled in the Spanish Immersion program.)

MIDDLE SCHOOL CHALLENGE MATH 8

This is the **second** year of a two-year course that covers three years of Common Core math curriculum, including **Math 7, Math 8, and High School Algebra I** standards. After successful completion of this two-year course, students are prepared for Geometry. Students enrolled in this course will be eligible to take the Advanced Placement Calculus or the Advanced Placement Statistics course in their senior year. Please note this is a two-year program. Eighth grade students who have selected Challenge Math 8 will have both their grades and credit earned for the class reflected on their high school transcript and applied toward the high school graduation requirements.

HONORS FOUNDATIONS OF SCIENCE

Honors Foundations of Science follows the essential and core Earth Science and Physical Science high school content expectations. However, this course moves at a faster pace, involves more in-depth instruction, higher-level thinking applications, and project based assignments. Students who demonstrate mastery will earn up to one Michigan Merit Curriculum Science credit. **Final semester grades and credit will be recorded on the student's high school transcript.**

CHALLENGE SOCIAL STUDIES 8

The eighth grade Challenge Social Studies class follows the regular curriculum for the subject area at the eighth grade level. The pace is faster, and involves more in depth, project-based learning, writings, and discussions. Comparisons to current events and public policy issues will be a focus of this class.

SPANISH CHALLENGE EXPLORING AMERICA 8

Challenge Spanish Social Studies follows the regular curriculum for the subject area at the eighth grade level. The pace is faster, and involves more in-depth, project-based learning, writings, and discussions. Comparisons to current events and public policy issues will be a focus of this class. **Must be enrolled in the Spanish Immersion Program.**

WORLD LANGUAGE COURSES

INTRODUCTION TO SPANISH - One semester

This course is meant to bridge students' previous World Language exposure to a future high school Spanish experience. Students will practice all four language components: reading , speaking, listening and writing in Spanish. Students will also participate in activities, games, songs, and utilize technology to further their skills. Project-based learning will be utilized as a way to learn about Spanish and Latin American cultures, and literature.

INTRODUCTION TO CHINESE - One semester

These semester introductory courses are designed to give middle school students beginning exposure to the study of a foreign language, and the cultures in which it is spoken. Participation in a semester introductory course is not a prerequisite for enrolling in Spanish 1 or Chinese 1 in eighth or ninth grade. Project-based learning will be utilized as a way to learn about Spanish and Latin American cultures, and literature.

FOR EIGHTH GRADE STUDENTS ONLY:

FRENCH I - Full-year course

SPANISH I - Full-year course

CHINESE I - Full-year course

Students will become immersed in the language and culture through a variety of listening, reading, writing, and speaking experiences. Students will take the equivalent of the high school final exam at the end of the year. **Students who demonstrate mastery of the course content will earn up to one Michigan Merit Curriculum Foreign Language credit.** Eighth grade students who have selected foreign language will have both their grades and credit earned for the class reflected on their high school transcript and applied toward the high school graduation requirements. Full-year foreign language classes in 8th grade are designed for the student who may be interested in pursuing 5 full years of foreign language study. Enrolling in a full-year language course in 8th grade is much like adding a 5th core class. The staff, prior to enrolling a student, examines a variety of student success predictors. If the demand for the class exceeds space available, a selection process based on demonstration of the predictors of success will be implemented. STUDENTS CHOOSING THESE COURSES SHOULD POSSESS A SOLID ACADEMIC FOUNDATION IN THE FOUR CORE AREAS AND EXHIBIT GOOD STUDY HABITS.

****Minimum enrollment numbers are required. If this quota is not met, students may be required to walk to NHS if they wish to take the class. ****

MIDDLE SCHOOL ELECTIVE COURSES

MUSIC COURSES

BAND 7 – Full-year course

This course is for students who have completed one year of study on the instrument that he/she is planning to play in Band 7. Exceptions are made with director approval. Students new to Forest Hills should contact the band directors to determine skill level. A variety of band literature is studied and performed. Practice at home and attendance at all performances is required as well as included in the student's grade. The bands perform several concerts throughout the year and attend MSBOA music festivals. Opportunities also exist through solo and ensemble festivals. Students are expected to make a commitment to these performances and all requirements of band class. *Students are expected to remain in the class for the entire year.*

BAND 8 – Full-year course

This course is for students who have completed two previous years of band. Exceptions are made with director approval and appropriate tutoring in private lessons. Students new to Forest Hills should contact the band directors to determine skill level. Students are expected to remain in the class for the entire year. Prerequisite: Completion of Seventh Grade Band and/or the Standard of Excellence, Book 2 Method Book. If your child does not meet this prerequisite, please contact the Music Department Staff. A variety of band literature is studied and performed. Practice at home and attendance at all performances is required as well as included in the student's grade. The Band performs several concerts throughout the year and also attends MSBOA music festivals. Opportunities exist for individuals through solo and ensemble festivals. Students are expected to make a commitment to these performances and all requirements of band class.

ORCHESTRA 7 – Full-year course

Orchestra is offered on a daily basis for students who have prior experience on violin, viola, cello, and bass. This could also include a Suzuki background. Emphasis is placed on gaining technical skill through performance of different types of literature, and on music theory as it relates to string playing. Computer-assisted instruction will be incorporated into the curriculum. A year-long list of required performances is given in September. **Practice at home and attendance at all performances is required as well as included in the student's grade.** *Prerequisite: Completion of Sixth Grade Orchestra and/or the Standard of Excellence, Book 1 Method Book. If your child does not meet this prerequisite, please contact the Music Department Staff.*

ORCHESTRA 8 – Full-year course

Emphasis is placed on refining and improving an individual's music skills to a higher degree of proficiency. A variety of orchestral literature is studied and performed. **Practice at home and attendance at all performances, including district and state music festivals, is required as well as included in the student's grade.** Students are expected to remain in this course for the full year. *Prerequisite: Completion of Seventh Grade Orchestra. If your child does not meet this prerequisite, please contact the Music Department Staff.*

CHOIR - 7th or 8th Grade – Full-year course

Students will develop the ability to sing with good tone and diction, to sing and read parts, to learn to read music, and to develop a greater understanding of music. Activities include sight-reading exercises, daily choral rehearsals, and performances. All students learn the basics of music theory, music history, sight-reading, and proper vocal production. Several concerts are given each year. Performance demeanor, responsibility to the group, and teamwork are stressed. **Attendance at all performances is required as well as included in the student's grade.**

All members of the NHMS music department are expected to wear a white tuxedo shirt (can be ordered from the school), black pants, black shoes, black socks, cummerbund, and bow tie for all performances. The school will supply the cummerbund and bow tie. Families requiring financial assistance should contact a building administrator.

ART COURSES

DRAW, PAINT, PRINT – One Semester

Whether you are just starting out or already a young Picasso, this class will help you improve your skills! You will experiment with a variety of drawing, painting, and printmaking techniques and media, including pen and ink, watercolor, pastel, linoleum block, mixed media, acrylic, pastel, and charcoal. Work in the class will stress skill development, creative problem-solving, and visual literacy. Cross-curricular connections are made throughout the course.

PHOTO, YEARBOOK, AND CREATIVE IMAGING – Full Year Course

The primary focus of this course is production of the Northern Hills Middle Yearbook. Students will begin with learning basics of digital photography, then use those skills as they take the photos that will be in the NHMS Yearbook. Along with photography, students will study page design, layout, theme development, and other production considerations. Some time commitment outside of the scheduled school class period (before or after school) is expected for Yearbook work. The course will finish with an exploration of a variety of media in the creative image making process.

ART EXPLORATIONS – One Semester

This class provides the opportunity for students to dive into a variety of creative experiences in both two- and three-dimensional design. Drawing, painting, sculpture, crafts, computers, and cartooning are just a few of the means students

may explore for creative expression. Students will increase their skill levels and visual literacy as they study and use the elements and principles of design. Cross curricular expressions are made throughout the course.

DIGITAL IMAGING – One Semester

A fantastic blend of technology, creativity, and you!! In this class you will learn the basics of digital photography, including composition, lighting, camera types, and camera settings. You will learn to use Adobe Photoshop Elements, a layered photo-editing program, as you manipulate and modify your photographs. Having explored both the camera and editing program, you then will be equipped to choose how you will do your creative work in response to several challenges given. This course may involve some drawing and/or painting according to student interest.

CLAY & SCULPTURE – One Semester

In this class, clay and its many possibilities will be explored. Several hand-building methods and glazing techniques will be presented. Both functional and nonfunctional pieces will be encouraged. Sculpture and design in materials other than clay will form a portion of the course as well.

COMMUNICATION COURSES

DRAMA/CREATIVE WRITING- One Semester

This class will focus on the excitement of creative dramatics and writing! Enjoy skit writing and performing, set and costume work, and a group production. As you interact with classmates in creative ways, stage directions and acting techniques are taught. This is a wonderful class to practice getting over stage fright and learn to think on your feet. It is also an opportunity to use the writing workshop method: time, ownership, and response, engaging in a writing process that is sure to develop creative writing potential.

CHINESE DRAMA/COMMUNICATION CLASS-7/8- One Semester

Prerequisite- Must be enrolled in the Mandarin Immersion Program to enroll in this class that will be taught in Mandarin. This course is similar to our drama class description and will be customized to meet the needs of both 7th and 8th grade Mandarin language students. This is an exploratory course to nurture the enjoyment of the second language as students learn the many facets of dramatic presentations.

LEAD THE WAY/GLI 7/8 – One Semester

If you are interested in learning how to make a difference in your world, your school and your community, this class is for you! Sponsored by the school district's Global Learner's Initiative, the LTW (Lead the Way) - GLI class will explore leadership for global citizens and intolerance from a social-science perspective in order to further the mission of respect for all people and future success in a global society. Instruction will incorporate leadership skills and styles, service learning and volunteerism to expand the spirit and practice of inclusion and open-mindedness for the participants and for our entire school. All activities organized by the students (community service and global awareness projects, dances, spirit weeks, (etc.) are designed to progressively put student learning into action! Parent permission is required for LTW-GLI. Forms are received on the first day of class.

This class will benefit students who can work maturely outside of the classroom. Students will need to be available outside the scheduled class period for some projects. **Students must be passing all core classes.**

TECHNOLOGY / SCIENCE and HEALTH COURSES

OUTDOOR EXPLORATIONS 7/8 – One Semester

This activity-based class will take students out into the natural areas surrounding the school to engage in a variety of studies. Topics include, but are not limited to: wild edible plants; Stream Search and water quality; habitat and wildlife; compass work and survival skills. Plan to spend time in the woods, by the stream, in the fields – as well as in the classroom – as we learn about the natural environment and our interactions with it! Special activities may include making/flying paper airplanes, egg drop contests, and pentathlon. This course is intended for students who have a real interest in “hands-on” science.***Weather during the winter months could impact daily activities.***

INTRODUCTION TO ENGINEERING/ROBOTICS - Technology 1 (One Semester)

This is a beginning course in robotics. We will be utilizing Lego Mindstorm kits, EV3 software and various Lego Robotics materials. The objective of this course is to introduce the student to basic programming as well as problem solving strategies. This course will involve students in the development, building and programming of a LEGO Mindstorm robot. Students will work hands-on in teams to design, build, program and document their progress. Topics may include motor control, gear ratios, torque, friction, sensors, timing, program loops, logic gates, decision-making, timing sequences, propulsion systems and binary number systems.

ENGINEERING/ROBOTIC- Technology 2 (One Semester)

*****Prerequisite: Introduction to Engineering/Robotic Technology 1*****

The LEGO MINDSTORMS Education EV3 Software can be used as a powerful tool for scientific inquiry. Students can use it to predict, collect, analyze and manipulate data as they carry out experiments. Students also dig into related math, engineering, and robotics concepts. This course combines two advanced programming elements: Variables and Logic Switch blocks. Variables are useful for keeping score of a game, tracking the number of attempts or goes, or comparing logic values. Switches are great on their own for 'if/else' statements, and can also be quite useful within themselves for enhanced coding and user options. This course will further develop understanding of important programming skills using robotic elements.

COMPUTER SCIENCE DISCOVERIES 1 & 2

Semester 1: CS Discoveries: Exploration and Expression

The first semester of CS Discoveries introduces students to computer science as a vehicle for problem solving, communication, and personal expression. As a whole this semester focuses on the visible aspects of computing and computer science, encouraging students to see where computer science exists around them and how they can engage with it as a tool for exploration and expression.

- Students will explore what it means for something to be a computer.
- Students will develop their own web pages from scratch using just HTML and CSS.
- Students will start off with simple primitive shapes and build up to more sophisticated sprite-based games.

Semester 2: CS Discoveries: Innovation and Impact

Where the first semester centers on the immediately observable and personally applicable elements of computer science, the second semester asks students to look outward and explore the impact of computer science on society. Students will see how a thorough user-centered design process produces a better application, how their personal data is collected and used on the web, and they will work with bare circuit boards to see how computers collect input and return output in a variety of ways. Through the entirety of this semester student groups will continue to iterate on and refine a mobile app that integrates everything they've learned throughout the course into one capstone project.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION- (One Semester required each year during 7th and 8th grade)

The physical education curriculum focuses on recreational/life-long activities, individual, and group sports. The program's activities encourage physical fitness, student responsibility, self-discipline, respect for self, and others, and cooperation. Seventh grade students are expected to take one semester of physical education. (These classes will be automatically scheduled)

ACADEMIC EXTENSIONS AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR OPPORTUNITIES

ACADEMIC EXTENSIONS

AMERICAN MATHEMATICS COMPETITION

All Challenge Math students and other interested students may sign up to compete. Sign-ups typically occur in late October. This particular competition yields a student score, but does not lead to other competitions. The 45-minute math test is held in mid-November.

MATHCOUNTS®

The mission of MathCounts is to increase enthusiasm for math and enhance achievement in middle school. Participants will develop high-level mathematical skills through solving problems, as individuals, and as a team, in preparation for the regional MathCounts Competition. This experience enhances mathematical skills, provides an avenue for students with common interests, and challenges those students who have a strong aptitude and interest in mathematics. MathCounts meets both during school and after school.

MIDWEST ACADEMIC TALENT SEARCH

An opportunity provided through Northwestern University for students to take the SAT and/or ACT as a middle level student. Northwestern often invites top performers to participate in additional academic opportunities at the university. Taking the SAT also qualifies students for the ATYP program (accelerated math and language arts opportunities available through the Kent Intermediate School District). The deadline for participation typically falls in early November.

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC BEE

Sponsored by National Geographic, all NHMS students participate in first round of the National Geography Bee through social studies classes in December. Building-wide top performers advance to the school competition in early January. Students wishing to “study up” can find more information at <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/geographybee/>.

ODYSSEY OF THE MIND

Odyssey of the Mind allows students to work in teams to create a solution to a problem. Odyssey problems encourage students to “think out of the box” and allow them to use their performance skills in a way the regular classroom doesn't provide. Teams of 5-7 students formulate a solution for the problem they select and present at the regional competition in mid-March. Meeting times are determined by the team members and may be held at school in the evenings, although much of the problem solving can be done outside of meetings. An information meeting is typically held in fall and copies of the problems are available in the main office. Because of the group work required to be successful, students are encouraged to form their own teams.

SCIENCE OLYMPIAD

The goal of our NHMS Science Olympiad team is to improve the quality of science education and increase student interest in many areas of science. Through team building and problem solving activities, students develop an enthusiasm for our Science Olympiad team that was formerly reserved only for varsity sports. Practice sessions are held after school two days a week. Students “try-out” for the team with a general science knowledge test and problem-solving activity just after the Thanksgiving break.

SCRIPPS HOWARD NATIONAL SPELLING BEE

Students who love to spell are encouraged to participate in the NHMS Spelling Bee. Students may sign up at school in December and January. Study guides typically arrive in December. The school competition occurs in mid-January. The NHMS top finisher continues at the regional competition in February and hopefully the Greater Grand Rapids Final Spelling Bee and beyond.

EXTRA CURRICULAR OPPORTUNITIES

INTERSCHOLASTIC AND RECREATIONAL SPORTS

A variety of interscholastic and recreational sports are being planned. A brochure with sports information for 2010-2011 will be mailed home and/or will be available at each middle school building.

SCHOOL PARTIES

Fun after-school events hosted by our Highly Involved Parent Group (HIP) or Lead the Way students. The school party provides a variety of activities to meet the interests of a wide spectrum of developmental levels. Students can choose to attend open gym, dance, play board games, or grab a snack with a friend.

GLI (Global Learners Initiative Student Group)

This initiative/program will be facilitated through our student leadership group (LTW). Students meet during class and discuss issues of diversity along with developing ways to create a globally competent school environment. These students will participate in an annual student "think tank" event combined with our other representatives of Eastern Middle and Central Middle schools.

TALENT SHOW

Students with a passion, a hobby, or even a talent are invited to perform for their peers. This informal show typically occurs the last week of school. Individuals and groups of students are encouraged to participate.

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SPANISH IMMERSION PROGRAM

(Ada Vista, Northern Trails, Northern Hills Middle, Northern High)

The Forest Hills Spanish Immersion Program began fourteen years ago through the combined efforts of a committed group of staff, students, and parents who believed in the importance of early acquisition of a second language. Originally housed at Ada Elementary School, the program grew from one section of students, who are now entering 12th grade at NHS, to over 650 students. The K-4 Spanish Immersion Program was moved to its own facility, Ada Vista Elementary School, in 2002. Northern Trails 5/6, Northern Hills Middle School, and Northern High School were selected as the sites to host the Spanish Immersion Program in the higher grade levels.

Students who participate in the Spanish Immersion Program are taught primarily in Spanish. While they cover the same curriculum content as their peers in all the other schools in Forest Hills, they learn, speak, and write in Spanish. In third grade, some classroom instruction begins to occur in English, to ensure students can also read, write, and speak correctly in both Spanish and English. In 5th and 6th grade, students are taught in Spanish for core classes, while elective classes are taught in English. By middle school, students are scoring at a fluency and comprehension level comparable to college graduates who have majored in Spanish. Immersion students participate in two classes, taught entirely in Spanish, each day, and join their classmates at Northern Hills Middle for other classes for the remainder of their schedule. The high school component of the Spanish Immersion program also will offer students the opportunity to take two classes each year taught entirely in Spanish, along with Advanced Placement and dual enrollment opportunities.

CHINESE IMMERSION PROGRAM

(Meadowbrook, Northern Trails, Northern Hills Middle, Northern High)

The Forest Hills Chinese Immersion Program began seven years ago through the combined efforts of a committed group of staff, students, and parents who believed in the importance of early acquisition of a second language. The elementary program, housed at Meadowbrook Elementary, has grown from one section of 34 students to a current 356 students from K- 8th grade. The first group of Chinese Immersion program will advance to Northern High School in the Fall of 2017.

Students who participate in the Chinese Immersion Program learn the Mandarin language through content classes during the elementary phase of education. At the secondary level, students will take all cores in English, one class in Mandarin Chinese, and an additional focused literacy class during the homeroom experience at the 7th grade level.. The primary purpose of the program is to develop a high level of language proficiency that can lead to Advanced Placement or dual enrollment opportunities.

EARNING HIGH SCHOOL CREDIT (MCL 380.1278)

The Michigan Merit Curriculum lays out a new foundation for “credit” by requiring that credit be awarded not by the commonly used Carnegie unit, which is based on seat time, but based on a student’s demonstration that he or she has successfully met the content expectations for the credit area.

A credit is a completed unit of study as measured by proficiency in a predetermined set of content expectations (e.g., Algebra I, Biology). Students earn credit – students take a course.

Students may earn credit if they successfully demonstrate mastery of subject area content expectations or guidelines for the credit. The assignment of credit must be based, at least in part, on student performance on subject area assessments, which measure the extent to which they meet the credit expectations and guidelines. Credit can be granted in a variety of ways (e.g., end-of-course exams with a passing score; dual enrollment; testing out with a minimum score of 77% per state law, accelerated, honors, and/or advanced placement (AP) courses; summer school makeup classes).

Middle school students who successfully complete one or more high school credits before entering high school and meet the same expectations and proficiency level as high school students will receive high school graduation credit.

Once a student registers for and attends a class, he or she agrees to the district’s requirements for earning a grade in the class, including attendance, homework, etc. However, the district must grant credit if a student passes an end of course exam, which the district has determined measures a student’s proficiency in meeting the Michigan Merit course/credit content expectations.

A student will not be granted more than 1 credit per course for a course/credit area required under the Michigan Merit Curriculum, with the exception of Algebra II, which the law explicitly allows to be delivered over two years.

If a student fails a required course for graduation, credit is not granted and the class must be made up. Since there is little room in a student’s schedule each year for makeup classes, the failed credit can be recovered in various ways, such as after school credit recovery options, summer school, taking an online class, repeating the course, or testing out.

Forest Hills Graduation Requirements

--Aligned with the Michigan Merit Curriculum approved by the Michigan Legislature in 2006, and designed so that students will have taken the appropriate courses in preparation for the Michigan Merit Exam.

Subject Area Credit Requirements	Personal Curriculum (PC) Modifications (Sequence and delivery up to district; support courses can count for credit regardless of year)
4 English Language Arts (ELA) Credits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · 1 credit in 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grade · All credits aligned to state content expectations 	*No modification except for students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) and for transfer students who have completed 2 years of high school
4 Mathematics Credits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · 3 credits aligned with the required state content expectations (i.e., Geometry, Algebra I, and Algebra II) · 1 math or math-related credit (not required to be aligned with state content expectations) · 1 math or math-related credit required in the final year which could include any of the 4 credits described above or may be an additional district credit · Note: Students may earn 2 math credits for Algebra II when the credit earned over 2 years or 1.5 credits over 1.5 years, without requesting a personal curriculum 	*1 credit of Algebra II may be modified to ½ credit *Additional modifications allowed for students with an IEP and transfer students who have completed 2 years of high school
3 Science Credits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · 1 Biology credit · 1 Chemistry or Physics credit · 1 additional science credit · All credits aligned to state content expectations 	*No modification except for students with an IEP and transfer students who have completed 2 years of high school
3 Social Studies Credits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · ½ Civics credit · ½ Economics credit · 1 U.S. History and Geography credit · 1 World History and Geography credit · All credits aligned to state content expectations 	*No modification of Civics *Minimum of 2 social studies credits prior to modification *1 social studies credit (other than Civics) can be exchanged for an additional English language arts, math, science, or world languages credit *Additional modifications allowed for students with an IEP and transfer students who have completed 2 years of high school
1 Physical Education (.5) and Health Credit (.5) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Credit aligned to state guidelines 	*Credit can be exchanged for an additional English language arts, math, science, or world languages credit *Additional modifications allowed for students with an IEP and transfer students who have completed 2 years of high school
1 Visual, Performing, and Applied Arts Credit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Credit aligned to state guidelines 	*Credit can be exchanged for an additional English language arts, math, science, or world languages credit *Additional modifications allowed for students with an IEP and transfer students who have completed 2 years of high school
Begins with Class of 2016: 2 World Languages Credits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Two high school credits earned in same language OR Novice High Proficiency acquired in grades K-8 or other settings 	*No modification except for students with an IEP and transfer students who have completed 2 years of high school
Online Learning Experience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Online course, learning experience, or experience is incorporated into one or more required credits 	*No modification except for students with an IEP and transfer students who have completed 2 years of high school
16 Total Subject Area Requirements (18 for class 2016)	
6.5 Electives (4.5 for class 2016)	
22.5 * Total FHPS Requirements	Personal Curriculum Guidelines / June 2010

* Based on taking six classes each semester for four years, students may earn 24 credits. Students also may take a seventh class with permission of the principal, or earn additional credits(s) through testing out, approved summer school or Michigan Virtual courses.

NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY

It is the policy of the Forest Hills Public School District that no person shall on the basis of race, age, color, religion, national origin, sex or handicap be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program of the District, including employment.

Any questions concerning Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, including athletic issues, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex, or inquiries related to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of handicap, should be directed to:

Ms. Christine Annese
Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources
Forest Hills Public Schools
6590 Cascade Road, SE
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49546
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